

**BELMONT COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MINUTES
NOVEMBER 2022
NOVEMBER 7, 2022**

DATE: December 6, 2022
TIME: 9:05 AM

Board Members Present: Tomi Olson, Ellen Sullivan, Margie Wayne, Jane Shapiro, Joel Semuels, Chao-Qiang Lai, Andrea Paschal, Maryann Scali, Karen Donelan, Dana Bickelman (Ex-Officio)
Board Members Not Present: Judy Morrison, Mark Paolillo (Select Board liaison)

Call to Order by Tomi Olson: 7:06 pm

1. Senior Citizen Concerns:

- Maryann expressed that seniors had concerns about raking and shoveling and how they could get help with these chores. Dana said that seniors should contact her to get on the list and hopefully we'll have enough volunteers to fulfill these requests.
- Maryann asked how seniors could request a ride through the volunteer driver program. Ellen told her that seniors should reach out directly to Marty Cloherty (Transportation Coordinator) and he would put their request into the volunteer driver database.
- Maryann expressed concerns about the cleanliness of the Center since we have lost our full time custodian. Dana said that she is aware of the issue and she has been in touch with the Town- hopefully the custodian position will be filled soon and the cleanliness will improve.

2. Review of Past Meeting Minutes:

- October minutes were reviewed, amended and approved.

3. Updates and Correspondence:

a. Director:

- Dana reported that the new Volunteer Coordinator, Aimee Lebrun, will be starting November 10th.
- Marty Cloherty, Transportation Coordinator, applied for and received a \$10,000 grant from Mass Development for the medical taxi ride program.
- COA program attendance is beginning to pick back up. There is a very full slate of programs for November.
- The preliminary COA budget was submitted to the Town and Dana is waiting to hear back about next steps.

b. Assistant Director:

- See notes under Assistant Director Update (5a).

c. Friends:

- The Crafts Fair is scheduled for Saturday, November 19th and the Friends of the COA are busy organizing and getting everything ready for it
- Joel reported that Rosemary Dulac (617-484-7888, Dulac66@me.com) and Karen Nichols (781-646-8287, graystreet@aol.com) are the people to contact if you are interested in baking for the upcoming Crafts Fair.
- Pizza will be served to vendors ONLY upstairs at the Center on the day of the Crafts Fair

- Set Up for the Crafts Fair will take place on Friday, November 18th at 3 pm. Volunteers are always needed.
 - Joel reported that there are fewer Crafts Fair Vendors this year (around 40) because of COVID concerns and wanting to make sure that there is enough room around tables and in the aisles for proper movement.
 - Masks will be required at the Crafts Fair and a \$1 donation will be charged at the door.
 - Annual Membership Letters for the Friends of the COA are going out now. There are approximately 350 members currently. It costs \$15 for an individual to become a Friend and \$25 per family. Please be on the lookout for these letters and let Joel know if you do not receive one.
 - The Tom Nutile Concert resulted in a record \$3800 profit. There were 24 sponsors of the concert.
- d. Springwell:
- Jane reported that the last meeting was held on October 26th and a lot of financials were discussed. Most of the meeting was dedicated to merger related activities.
 - Tomi expressed long-time concerns that Springwell is not willing to share financials with individual towns. Tomi thought it would be helpful to know what Springwell pays towards supporting Belmont Seniors. Joel said that you would need to contact somebody at the State level to ask about funding.
- e. Transportation Working Group:
- Ellen reported that there are currently only 3 volunteer drivers for the Volunteer Driver Program and we are in desperate need of more volunteers.
 - Margie and Dana are looking into all the funds that were directed towards the Medical Taxi Ride Program and trying to put together a better accounting system to keep better track of the funds so that we can plan these rides accordingly.
- f. Age Friendly Action Committee:
- Since Judy was not present, Karen said that she had recently spoken with Judy about some of the work this committee was doing. Karen reported that they are looking into data from the state about elder falls and the state has reported very small #'s for Belmont. Karen also reported that they are looking at sidewalk and walking safety and are reaching out to the School Group (Safe Routes to School) who have studied this issue to learn more. In addition, Judy was reaching out to the Highway Department to learn about any complaints they have received with regards to walking safety. Finally, the group is looking at AARP programs for walking safety.
 - Andrea reported that the next meeting of the Committee will be 11/10. One of the items that the Housing sub-group of the Committee has worked on is a brochure for seniors who are aging-in-place. The brochure is almost done. A department in the high school is helping to compile and print the brochure- which will hopefully be done by the end of the year and mailed in the spring. AARP may provide funding for the printing of the brochure.
 - Andrea reported that the outdoor spaces sub-group of the committee is still waiting for a representative from the Recreation Department.
 - The Communication sub-group is just getting up and running.

- The Committee is also looking for indoor walking facilities for Seniors in the winter. Karen volunteered to look into this further.

4. Old Business

- a. Volunteer Coordinator/Snow Shoveling and Raking
 - The volunteer coordinator will be starting November 10th and will hopefully hit the ground running in order to start coordinating the snow shoveling and raking volunteer program.
- b. Other old business
 - The COA Policy on Political Campaign Presence at BSC-2017 was reviewed and discussed. After much discussion, the Board agreed that the policy should stay the same and it should be posted in the Senior Center (especially during election times).

5. New Business

- a. Assistant Director update
 - So far, 4 interviews have taken place and 1 person just withdrew themselves from consideration today. 2nd interviews will begin taking place shortly.
 - Dana said that she has reached out extensively to get more candidates and we just aren't receiving a lot of interest. As all employers are experiencing right now- most people want a good work/life balance and want to work from home some time and not be in an office full-time.

Next Meeting will be held December 5, 2022 at 7 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Sullivan