

**Belmont Council on Aging
Minutes From December 5, 2022**

**TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

Meeting Called to order 7:00 PM

RECEIVED

DATE: January 11, 2023

TIME: 10:06 AM

Present: Dana Bickelman (ex-officio), Ted Dukas, Ellen Sullivan, Chao Qiang Lai, Andrea Paschal, Maryann Scali, Jane Shapiro, Margie Wayne, Judy Morrison

Not Present - Karen Donelan, Tommasina Olson, Mark Paolillo (Select Board liaison), Joel Semuels

AGENDA:

1. Senior Citizen Concerns - M. Scali
 - Kitchen – Stove is difficult to light. Dana noted they should use the convent oven which has been repaired.
 - Other towns have a property tax reduction for seniors. It was suggested we consider researching how other towns offer this as a model for Belmont.
 - Follow up on Traffic Concerns in front of post office – Maryanne and Jane will write a letter from COA board to Traffic Advisory Committee expressing seniors' safety concerns on Concord Ave at Post Office. Letter to be signed by Tomi.
2. Review of Past Meeting Minutes- M. Wayne Minutes reviewed and approved with edits.
3. Updates and Correspondence:
 - A. Director - D. Bickelman
 - Deep Clean done over Thanksgiving break and will do fitness room first Sat of each month.
 - Asst. Director search update – found local person and expect to make offer this month.
 - New Volunteer Coordinator started – Aimee LeBrun and working on volunteer matching for snow shoveling.
 - Budget Review – Dana did first round with Town Administrator and two members of the Warrant committee. Overall good review. They had questions around potential increase in Transportation needs for Seniors in Belmont.
 - i. Dana requested additional \$10K in budget for transportation as more seniors may stop driving particularly in Winter.
 1. Discussed ways to provide resources for seniors and their families on how to make the decision to stop driving
 - ii. Dana presents to Select Board Dec 13 at 10am. Dana will find out if Board members may attend as well and will find the best way to share the budget with the board.

- December 19th the HS Chinese AP class will come to Sr. Center to speak Mandarin as well do some more cultural activities with Belmont Seniors.
 - Police and Fire will come in Jan. to brief Sr. Center receptionists about how to communicate and when to call police or fire.
- B. Friends - In absence of Joel Semuels, Jane Shapiro and Dana shared the success of the Craft Fair and bake sale. They raised over \$5k for Friends of COA.
- C. Springwell- J. Shapiro
- AAA grants are awarded every 2 years. The next one starts in the spring.
 - Transportation for medical appts is limited now as their vendor increased rates.
 - No changes to contact info for Springwell.
- D. Transportation Working Group -E. Sullivan • Great need for Volunteer drivers.
- Taxi Medical ride well used – 14 rides (round trip) ○ Dana is tracking down getting \$4K from town Uber fund ○ Marty applied for grant from Mass Development (\$10K). He is following up to see when funds are dispersed. ○ Received \$45.00 donation in November for the transportation as well as notes from seniors how much they appreciate the rides. E. Age Friendly Action Committee -J. Morrison
- AFAC will provide update to Select Board in January after reviewing with COA board.
- Housing- ○ Home Modification companion guide to AARP Home Fit guide being designed by High School class. First draft by Holidays.
 - Judy to get Copy of AARP Home Fit Guide in Chinese ○ ADUs – In January AFAC housing subcommittee to begin working across town organizations to support Policy in allowing ADUs in Belmont with appropriate guidelines.
 - Transportation / Walkability – ○
 - Transportation – see above.
 - Walkability – Belmont’s Safe Routes to School liaison (Lucy) is joining the next AFAC meeting to explain the student map process/method and David Coleman may join to provide a brief update on the work that the Transportation Advisory Committee is focused on.
 - Outdoor Spaced – ○ Recreation Director, Brandon Fits provided a summary of the
 - Inventory done by outside consultants assessing Belmont’s Outdoor recreational spaces. We discussed how AFAC and Seniors can partner as our parks and fields are being updated. ○ Community

Path Committee will come to Sr. Center in January to provide an open forum for review and comment on design.

- Communication –
 - Evaluating ways to connect (link to) all the town websites to build awareness of Sr Center offerings.
 - Library rep is researching how we might on Birbio to Sr. Center Site.
 - Birbio is an app that collects calendar activities/ events across many sites (Town, Library, Recreation, Sr Center sites) and shares them in one place for review.
 - Dana will Research how we might use PR consultant for the Town to help us build awareness of Sr. offerings and needs.

4. Old Business – completed in above notes

5. New Business – none

A. COA Budget – see Directors’ report above

Next Meeting will be – January 9th at 7pm via Zoom

Meeting adjourned at 8:03pm

Respectfully submitted by Judy Morrison