

Draft Minutes of the Belmont Council on Aging Board Meeting,

Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. at the Beech Street Center 2016 JUL 18 AM 9:07

Present: Maryann Scali Vice Chair, Ethel Hamann, Jim Staton, Chao Qiang Lai, Joel Semuels, Carolyn Bunyon, Ted Dukas, Judy Singler, Penny Schafer, Tomi Olson, Nava Niv-Vogel, ex officio

Absent: Michael Cahalane

1. Call to Order: Vice Chair Scali called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

2. Senior Concerns: A senior voiced concern about being unable to attend the Age Friendly Forum. Another reported concerns about the affordability of Town after being solicited for funds for a Town High School alumni fund and being unable to get to vote on last year's Override. Nava mentioned COA transportation to the polls is available and stated that the COA will increase voter education efforts.

3. Review Past Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the May 3, 2016 C.O.A. Board meeting were reviewed and approved by a unanimous vote with the following amendments:

The Formula Grant paragraph is amended to state "This could add extra funding for senior programs of about \$5000 per year based on the number of seniors served in Belmont." The Friends of the COA section is amended to clarify that each C.O.A. Friends Board member was responsible for selling "10" tickets to the Fashion Show fund raiser, not "20". The Springwell section is amended to state that "The State budget had passed for Elder Services including Springwell." Also the last sentence of that section is amended to read "The Financial portion of Town Meeting will be held in June."

4. Updates and Correspondence:

A. Director's Report: In addition to her written report, Nava reported on a new program to be offered by the C.O.A. at the High School Pool,

"Aqua Aerobics". It will be offered weekly during the summer with the Town Recreation Department and be led by Susan Barbuto. Nava also discussed a potential Ceramics Class with the School Department and existing Zumba. Nava reported that there had been 4 seniors falling at the Center, 2 in aerobics. She went over the C.O.A. protocol of calling 911 in these cases. Mr. Semuels suggested testing the monitor-alert system of the Fitness Room to be used in case of a user having a medical problem. Also, volunteers at the Center front desk have requested training on terrorism situations. The police have been contacted and are looking into this issue for the Center. Adoption of the same protocol in use by the schools is unlikely. Getting a P.A. system is one suggestion, but this may be too invasive for programs. Electronic access to the Center by the police was discussed. The Center pool table has been resurfaced with Town tax check-off funds. Ms. Schafer questioned the C.O.A. lower rides numbers. Nava reported the illness of the dispatcher and backup driver and that repair work was done on one of the vehicles. The bus is being used more and the van less. A suggestion was made by Ms. Olson to seek retired firefighters to serve as backup dispatchers. She will look into this. The Warrant Committee has suggested that C.O.A. rides be done through a private ride sharing service, "Uber". Nava stated that the response to this was that Uber rides require the caller to have a "smart phone" and most seniors at the Center do not have "smart phones."

B. Friends of the C.O.A.: Joel reported that the C.O.A. Friends Fashion show grossed over \$4000. He mentioned the fact that Anne Lougee was leaving as Treasurer of the Friends and that the Friends group is seeking a new Board member to serve as Treasurer. Nava offered to help publicize the need for a Treasurer. Mr. Semuels reported tentative plans for a September 15th, 7 p.m. Al Natale fund raising concert at the Center and a November 19th (not Thanksgiving Saturday November 26th) fund- raising Craft Show also at the Center.

C. Springwell: Judy had no new report.

D. Search for Replacement on the Springwell Board: Ms. Singler reported that the Springwell Board is still seeking a Belmont replacement representative.

E. Budget FY '17: Nava reported that the state Executive Office of Elder Affairs C.O.A. formula grant to the Belmont C.O.A. has been raised from \$9 per senior in Town to \$10 per senior. This is based on the 2010 census.

F. Follow Up on Policy for Political Group Presence in the Center: The following policy was discussed and unanimously adopted by the Board:

"The Board of the Belmont Council on Aging wishes to preserve the integrity and value of our programs. Therefore, patrons of the Center are requested not to circulate petitions, including nominating petitions within the building. Candidates for election are welcome to introduce themselves informally to the Center's users. They are requested not to leave campaign literature. Similarly, people supporting sides on political issues are requested to leave no literature. No solicitation of money is allowed by state law. We will work to accommodate formal appearances by candidates providing all candidates can appear simultaneously. Similarly, when political issues are in public debate, persons formally representing issues must appear simultaneously with persons representing the opposite sides of those issues."

This policy will be forwarded to the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Administrator.

G. Discussion of Age Friendly Community Initiative: This was a follow-up to the May 18th Age Friendly Planning Process regarding identification of important issues facing seniors. Belmont Housing Trust will meet at the Center on June 14th at 7:30 p.m. UMass data will be presented. Selectman Mark Paolillo wants Nava to come before the Select Board with the UMass Report and move on feedback

recommendations. The next step is to formalize the process and begin working with AARP. After discussion, Nava stated that we know the needs and do not need a new extensive needs assessment as one was recently done by the C.O.A.. The most pressing need is Senior affordable housing in Belmont.

H. New Business: It was announced that Penny Schafer is leaving the Board at the end of this month. Many Board members spoke to laud her many years of outstanding service on the Beech Street Center Building Committee and C.O.A. Board. She was toasted with kind words, cider and cake.

I. Next Meeting: The next C.O.A. Board meeting will be Monday, July, 11, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.

J. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Joel Semuels