

BELMONT COUNCIL ON AGING
MEETING MINUTES
August 2020
(August 3, 2020)

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: November 22, 2021
TIME: 9:29 AM

1. Call to Order: 7:02 pm

Attendees: Chair, Chao-Qiang Lai, J. Singler, E. Hamann, E. Sullivan, M. Cahalane, T. Dukas, M. Scali, T. Olson, Ex-officios N. Niv-Vogel, Director, D. Leavitt, Assistant Director

Members not in attendance: M. Paolillo, J. Semuels

2. Senior Citizen Concerns:

- Maryann reported that Seniors are concerned about the upcoming November Override and how it may affect them.
- Maryann reported that Seniors have expressed how much they have enjoyed and appreciated the "Wellness Series" talks that have been given over the last many months and hope that they will continue.
- Maryann reported that Seniors are constantly asking when the Senior Center will be able to open.

3. Treasurer's Report:

- \$103 in the bank. In order to build up the balance for future needs, Board Members can donate \$10-\$20 if they are inclined. Checks can be mailed to Maryann Scali at 19 Prospect Street.

4. Review of Past Meeting Minutes:

- July minutes were reviewed and approved as amended.

5. Discussion of Fact Sheet Addressing Scope of COA Activities since Lockdown in March

- Nava had all Board Members review this document and asked for feedback and how to distribute this document.
- Feedback included: 1. Moving the section of the document that shows the statistics comparing the level of services in FY 2019 (when COVID was not a factor) vs FY 2020 (when COVID IS a factor) and the statistics showing the large # of new services and programs provided to address the new set of needs as a result of Covid to the beginning of the document so that it catches the reader's eye. 2. Highlight the # of seniors in our community (26%).

- Suggestions for distribution of document included: 1. Send to Citizen Herald for publication. 2. Send to Town Clerk for distribution to all Town Meeting Members, Select Board members and Financial Task Force Members. 3. Distribute in Senior Newsletter. 4. Dana/Nava contact the Media Center for publicity via an interview.
- Board Members felt it was important to send the document now and update the numbers in the fall, if needed.

6. Schedule FY'21 Monthly Meetings and Assignments of Minute Takers

- Tuesday, Sept. 8th: T. Olson
- Monday, Oct. 5th: M. Scali
- Monday, Nov. 9th: M. Cahalane
- Monday, Dec. 7th: E. Sullivan
- Monday, Jan. 4th: J. Singler
- Monday, Feb. 1: E. Hamann
- Monday, Mar. 1: C. Lai
- Monday, April 5: T. Dukas
- Tuesday, May 4: New Member
- Tuesday, June 1: J. Semuels
- Monday, July 12: M. Paolillo

7. Impact of November Override on FY'22 Budget and Proposed Social Worker Position on Seniors

- Tomi and Maryann attended the Zoom Select Board Meeting about the November Override that was held several weeks ago and reported on the discussions.
- If the Override fails in November, the town can come back with another option in April,
- There is a lot of concern about the possibility of the COA being eliminated and how the COA should be prepared to counter any possible elimination threat.
- More detailed information, transparency and education of the citizenry needs to take place so that everyone understands the override numbers and specific impacts on services.
- There is another Select Board and Financial Task Force tomorrow morning (August 4th) which will have more discussion.
- Board Members will continue to follow the discussions and report back.

8. Volunteer Driver Program

- Nava reported that it had been brought to her attention that Belmont Helps has been offering medical rides to Seniors. That is a concern for two reasons: 1. Safety of the Seniors (volunteers aren't properly vetted and trained) 2. Duplication of our Volunteer Driver Program.

- Discussion took place regarding Board's thoughts on resuming the Volunteer Driver Program.
- Mike suggested that Nava contact the Board of Health and ask for their advise and recommendations. Board Members agreed with this suggestion.
- Nava will contact the Board of Health and report back.

9. Fire Chief Search Committee Questions

- Maryann asked if the COA would like to ask any questions of the candidates? If so, please let her know.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, September 8th at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Sullivan