

Belmont Council on Aging
Board Meeting Minutes June 6, 2023

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: July 11, 2023
TIME: 1:50 PM

Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Present: Tomi Olson (Chair), Dana Bickelman (Director ex-officio), Ted Dukas, Andrea Paschal, Maryann Scali, Jane Shapiro, Chao Qiang Lai, Ellen Sullivan, Karen Donelan, Joel Semuels

Not Present: Judy Morrison, Mark Paollilo, Pierce Ellinwood (Assistant Director ex-officio)

Agenda

1. Senior Citizen Concerns - M. Scali

BBQ done by Springwell was not good. The appreciation lunch today was wonderful. Many compliments to Dana and Pierce.

Movie 1x a week should help bring more people in.

Cribbage – how to learn? Dana will ask weekly group if they would be willing to teach.

At Town Meeting, \$10K was authorized from Uber/Lyft collections. In the past, COA has gotten 50%. Dana is looking into whether and when funds will be allocated to COA. There is still approx. \$29K that needs to be dispersed for the COA. Needs to allocate to transportation. Dana will contact town accountant (Donna Tuccinardi) to discuss. At Town Meeting, budget was authorized/approved. COA cap is \$150K. Dana believes that spend will be going down from prior year. Does the \$29K need to be earmarked for transportation? Dana will confirm, but that is likely. In prior years, unclaimed money went to Community Development fund; COA needs to claim money that is available to it. Tomi will review prior Town Meeting for prior funding amounts and what the articles state. Revolving accounts – can different subaccounts be set up? Eg., set asides for specific things like transportation, senior center.

Margie Wayne has stepped down from the board; will need a new secretary.

2. Review/approval of past meeting minutes:

April 3, 2023 – approved as written

May 2, 2023 – approved as written

Dana will send meeting minutes to Town Clerk.

3. Updates and Correspondence

a. Director - Dana Bickelman – report review:

Social worker (Lynn) has resigned, and leaving at end of May. Dana is meeting with town manager and HR person to discuss whether to replace or revise position. Dana is unsure how position will be posted. Two social work interns are coming in at the end of summer/fall. Karen Donelan expressed that the Senior Center needs to have a social worker. Dana stated that the prior job description was vague. Karen volunteered to review job description.

All fitness room equipment has been repaired. Need to set up our maintenance agreement next, but all the equipment is repaired and working! The facilities department has been coming

in regularly to help the building get back to where it should be. Someone was just recently out to look at the floors in the large MP room; expect them to clean them soon. Tape will be put back down for pickleball.

No new custodian has been hired yet by Facilities.

Budget F.Y. '23 and '24: Approved at Town Meeting - \$405K.

b. Assistant Director - P. Ellinwood

Previous Months Events/Programs: May was our busiest month in a long time. We had a violinist from the New England Conservatory, Viktoria Haase of the Belmont Historical Society, Illusionist Lyn Dillies, Kevin Bouck of the Dept. of Public Waste, Wendy Murphy, and our own Joe Brown talking about art history. We are also launched weekly “movie nights” on Tuesdays which have slowly been gaining a regular audience.

This Coming Month: June kicked off with a presentation on hearing health with Dr. Jill Rosenberg of Audiology Services this past Friday. We have a number of good programs coming this month, starting with our volunteer luncheon and “8 Weeks in Ukraine” tomorrow and then feature a good mix of entertainment and wellness offerings. We’ll have a card making workshop, Dr. El-Abbadi on nutrition for seniors, the Albert Einstein one-man show, an interfaith singing group in honor of Juneteenth, and a Jeopardy! game at the end of the month. We’ll also have newly-elected Select Board member Elizabeth Dionne come in for a meet and greet and the follow-up vaccine clinic for shingles.

Future Programs: July will slow down a little bit after a few months packed full of programming, but we will still have some good events. It will see the start of ice cream socials on Friday afternoons, which will carry through August. We’ll also get several entertainment events, like a piano performance from crowd-favorite Michael Leidig, a folk music concert, and the Retro Polatin Duo, who will be performing songs from the 50s and 60s.

Question about using Senior Center as a cooling station – Dana is meeting with police chief and others in town about the logistics and will involve Pierce.

Historical Society is moving into Beech Street in August.

c. Friends - J. Semuels. The Board meeting is tomorrow, June 7, so there is not much to report. New treasurer is being considered. September 28 is the next concert; fundraising will begin. Joel is stepping down as president and from the Friends board after October meeting. Exact number of open seats will be known after meeting tomorrow.

d. Springwell - J. Shapiro

RFP was released last week to local COAs. Dana should have gotten it. Also available on the Springwell website. Community grants.

Springwell invites you to submit a proposal for funding under Older Americans Act Title III funded programs, including legal assistance, outreach for older adults with the greatest social and economic need, including LGBTQIA+ older adults, learning and development to provide educational programs for the utilization of digital technology, evidence-based programs, access programs to address food insecurity, and regional and local transportation to medical appointments, caregiver programs, and home-based mental health services. Title III awards will be made for federal fiscal year FFY24 –

October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024. Award contracts are renewable for one additional year, contingent upon satisfactory program performance and availability of federal funding. Title III funding will be awarded in amounts up to \$15,000. Springwell reserves the right to award funding amounts above this to organizations addressing specific organizational needs such as legal services with awards up to \$100,000 and regional transportation with awards up to \$50,000.

Completed Letters of Intent must be received at Springwell no later than June 22, 2023 by 5pm (electronic copy only). Full proposals must be received by June 29, 2023, by 5pm (electronic copy only) in order to be considered for funding.

e. Transportation Working Group - E. Sullivan. With more funding, we will consider expanding reach of medical taxi rides. Program has served 90 seniors. Margie Wayne is staying on with doing the transportation, including dispatching.

f. Age Friendly Action Committee - Judy Morrison was not present but sent the following:

Housing – Please continue to share brochures at the Center and Town hall. ADU – we are meeting Wednesday to refine discussion document to share with “partner” organizations (LWV – would love to get on your agenda Marianne!) in the fall.

Outdoor Spaces – Drafted outdoor space guidelines to be shared in next month’s COA meeting, Rec. board meeting and other town organizations.

Communication – Meet with those starting Newspaper and discussed how to take some of the COA content and share via Newspaper and other sites. Library representative, May Forkin now providing support for Digital Library resources at Beech St Center every 2 weeks.

Walkability – we now have some key point people (thanks Tomi and Dana) who can help support our goal to align with Safe School routes and will begin meeting in mid-summer/ fall.

4. Old Business

A. Companion bathroom – checklist report completed by Norma Masserotti on May 17th. Dana will follow up with her on what/whether modifications are needed, and will also resend the report.

5. New Business

Some COA Board reappointments are coming up, including Tomi and Ted Dukas.

Payson Park music festival starts Wednesday June 14th and every Wednesday after until August 30th. Will be at the Underwood Pool greenspace, since Payson Park is undergoing renovation.

Meeting adjourned 8:22 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Paschal