

Minutes of Belmont Council on Aging Meeting Monday April 4, 2022

Via Zoom

Present: T. Olson- Chair, Ellen Sullivan- Co-Chair, K. Donelan, T. Dukas, C. Lai, J. Morrison, A. Pascal, M. Scali, J. Shapiro, M. Wayne, J. Semuels, Nava-Niv-Vogel, D. Bickelman, ex-officios

Absent: M. Paolillo- Select Board Liaison

Call to Order: 7:01 p.m.

1. Senior Citizens Concerns: None

2. Review Of Past Meeting Minutes: The minutes of the March 7th meeting were corrected for minor errors and passed by unanimous vote.

3. Updates and Correspondence:

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: May 4, 2022
TIME: 2:46 PM

A. Director: Nava announced that she is retiring at the end of June. She said that she had learned a lot about retirement, when and how to retire from seniors throughout the years. She said the right time is now. It has been the honor of a lifetime. The Board heaped praise upon Nava for her 22 years of talented and capable work, since August of 2000. She is leaving after Town Meeting and the Covid situation is stabilizing. Discussion ensued about the process the Selectboard would use to find a replacement Director, the role of the C.O.A. Board in the process, how Dana will take on both duties in the interim. She mentioned that David Stevens of M.C.O.A. is a good resource but is leaving due to illness at the end of the month. She mentioned that the population of Belmont has increased since 2020 Census, but the number of 60 plus seniors has decreased by 200. This is contrary to what was expected by demographers. We have received inquiries about Ukraine. We are doing a program on Ukraine April 19th at 1:30. Chinese seniors are being asked to sign in for each program they use to prevent an undercount. There are 262 people taking advantage of the Senior Parking Permit Program. Judy Morrison and Andrea have the Age Friendly group going. The Board will have to be in contact with H.R. and determine if we need to form a hiring subcommittee. Judy recommended a transition plan. Joel recommended Nava do a “best practices” document for each month’s duties, e.g. “what has worked.”

B. Assistant Director: Dana stated that March was a really good month. The Belmont Historical Society, Wendy Murphy, International Women’s Day were well attended. For April, we have Ukrainian Easter Egg Program, Ukraine War Talk, Covid sniffing canine dogs, falling and head injuries. There will be a second Strength & Flexibility fitness class offered. Programs to honor Mother’s Day and Asian Heritage month and education regarding healthy diets, digital grocery shopping coupon are in the planning stage.

C. Friends: J. Semuels, President of the Friends announced that the annual newsletter had gone to the printer and would soon be in mailboxes of those age 45 and older. He thanked Nava, Dana and the other article writers. The Tom Nutile Fall Fundraiser is set for Thursday September 29th.

We are looking for a volunteer to work with Karen on the Craft Fair in November. We are meeting June 9th at 3pm on Zoom and will concentrate on future C.O.A. funding requests.

D. Springwell: Jane Shapiro mentioned the merger with Baypath, which cover 14 towns and Springwell, which cover 8 towns. There is a number of legal and financial issues involved in this move. Food quality and loneliness issues were addressed at the recent Springwell meeting. At this point in the meeting Nava said the breakfast program is ending at the end of this month as authorized by the Select Board.

E. Transportation Working Group: Ellen Sullivan stated we've stopped meeting, but we are in good shape. Taxi medical driver program is in good shape-folding in with Judy's Age Friendly Action Committee. Taxi Medical rides were slow in March but we are getting a lot of requests for April & May, maximum 3 round trips per senior. Long term goal is to sustain the funding through sponsorships. We are sending letters to recipients of rides seeking a donation. Cost of one round trip can be up to \$85. One person has made a donation to the taxi ride program. Ellen stated the volunteer driver program will be starting again soon. Nava sent the Covid waivers for drivers and passengers to Town Counsel for approval. Lexington has volunteer driver program called FISH not run by C.O.A. Getting more information. We are seeking \$4000 or \$5000 from the Uber funding for the taxi program.

4. Old Business:

A. Creating Inclusiveness and Making the C.O.A. Welcome To All: Tomi Olson mentioned that food is the key. The Flyer is printed and should be out in the mail in two or three weeks. Talked with Fran Yuan, Kim Haley Jackson. May 11, 12 to 1:30 we are doing a box lunch as follow up to the messaging of the flyer. At that event COA staff will ask them to share their ideas about how we can be a more inclusive community. COA wishes to make center be welcoming by offering programs for Holidays coming up like, Asian Heritage Month, Pride Month, Juneteenth (June 19th).

B. Fostering Stronger Intergenerational Programming: Nava stated that Dana, Tomi & Jane met with Mr. Shu who is a guidance counselor at the high school. Brought him update on past intergenerational cooperation. Alice Melnikov, the Community Service coordinator retired last year. High school students can no longer come to the Senior Center to work with seniors during the school day. The issue appears to be related to liability. Tomi completed the conversation by stating that the COA will keep working with BHA and other nearby schools.

5. New Business:

A. Discussion of Diversity Task Force Report and Recommendations: Tomi Olson moved to table discussion until the next meeting due to the late hour. Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting Tuesday May 3rd at 7 p.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joel M. Semuels, Board Member