

COA Board meeting – February 7, 2022

Present: T. Olson, Chair, E. Sullivan Vice Chair, A. Paschal, N. Niv-Vogel (Ex-Officio), J. Semuels, J. Shapiro, C. Qiang Lai, M. Scali, K. Donelan & T. Dukas, D. Bickelman (Ex-Officio), M Paolillo Select Board Liaison

Not Present: M. Wayne, J. Morrison

Guests: Wesley Chin

Call to order at 7:02 pm by T. Olson, Chair

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: March 8, 2022

TIME: 2:54 PM

1. Review of Past Meeting Minutes

- A. The minutes from the January 3, 2022, meeting were unanimously approved as amended.

2. Guest Speaker: Wesley Chin, Director, Belmont Board of Health, stated that the town has provided COVID tests to residents, students, and employees. 464 were sent to COA on Friday. Town still have 800 available. Town is developing a plan to distribute remaining tests to town residents. 95% of town residents 65+ are fully vaccinated. 75% have had boosters as well. 91.5% of 75+ age group is vaccinated and boosted.

Asst. Director is working on getting a booster clinic, and opening it up to under 65 residents. Considering giving vaccines in addition to boosters. Social worker doing a video to show how to administer COVID self-test. Will consider having Chao to translate.

3. Citizens' Concerns-

M. Scali

M. Scali raised concern about vaccination status of Senior Center users. T. Olson and M. Scali visited the Jenks Center in Winchester, which requires visitors to show proof of vaccination or negative test. Nava stated that she is not receiving feedback that people are not coming to the center due to not knowing vaccination status of other visitors. M. Paolillo stated that the town does not have a vaccine mandate, only a mask mandate, so town cannot require one for the senior center. There is town reporting requirement for positive COVID tests. Other than enforcing mask wearing, there is nothing else to be done with regard to senior center usage on COVID concerns.

4. Updates and Correspondence

A. Director's Report

N. Niv-Vogel

Report provided in advance, with following updates:

- Friday weather event caused programs canceled, including breakfast and lunch. Transportation DID happen.
- Inquiries on Senior Center rentals have increased. Pricing for rentals is on the website. Generally \$600-\$1000 for use of multi-purpose room and kitchen. Post event cleaning was done by center's custodian, involving

‘fogging’, but not sure if this is still standard as the COVID spread is not due to surface contact.

B. Assistant Director

D. Bickleman

In addition to circulated report:

- No podiatry service available at this time. Dr. Alpert has left; looking for replacement. J. Shapiro had a recommendation, and K. Donelan suggested contacting other facilities such as Neville Center and Belmont Manor.
- Parking permits/renewals applications going well. Publicized availability via newsletter, online/website, robocalls (renewals only) Belmont media (Citizen Herald and Belmontonian).
- Supper club at Red Heat Tavern in Bedford.
- M. Scali suggested communicating grocery digital program availability/process for signing up via newsletter.

C. Friends

J. Semuels

- Membership drive is still ongoing.
- Next meeting is in June
- Looking for COA BOD people to write articles for their newsletter

D. Springwell

J. Shapiro

Springwell and another agency, Baypath, are seeking to merge. In total will service 22 communities. Reasons include cost savings, efficiency, better recruiting/hiring. Will need permission of AG and approval from office of senior affairs. July 1, 2022 is target date. J. Shapiro will ask what can be shared with the COA board.

E. Transportation Working Group

E. Sullivan

Working group includes K. Donelan, M. Cloherty and J. Morrison. \$15K budget will allow 3 round-trip rides to destination of choice (some areas are excluded). M. Cloherty will coordinate through Belmont Taxi. Funding consideration/options:

- Monthly letter to seniors receiving services soliciting voluntary contributions and value of service rec'd (e.g, MGH trip \$85).
- Listing other transportation resources, such as Springwell, private services, The Ride, religious organizations. Many medical facilities have shuttles from various locations.
- Dedicated services from Lyft/Uber – group didn't find much information around this.
- Relaunch volunteer driver program. Volunteers are protected/covered with regards to liability, and service recipients sign a waiver.

E. Sullivan received info from other community. Will review with M. Cloherty. Ongoing conversations on fundraising. Private funding/donations to COA general fund is an option.

5. Old Business

- A. Relationship with Belmont Housing Authority T. Olson
- T Olson asked Janet to have concerns put in writing, which she declined. Issue considered closed.
- B. Creating Inclusiveness and Making the COA Welcome to All T. Olson
- Lunar New Year event.
 - Grant to have translators (Mandarin, Spanish) for COA communication such as the newsletter, which could include items such as the grocery coupon program and parking permits.
- C. Safety at the Senior Center N. Niv-Vogel
- Nothing new to report. There are cameras installed at the center, but not currently working. Camera costs are covered. Problem with video is that someone would need the exact time something happened in order to narrow down correct footage. There is no audio. Discussion around whether visitors to center need to know that there are cameras. In general, in a general public space, notice is not required. N. Vogel and T. Olson to work through issues on policy for surveillance in public building and will talk to Chief McIsaac.
- D. Fostering Stronger Intergenerational Programming N. Niv-Vogel
- Despite the director's efforts, she's been unable to get the school superintendent to have a rep assigned. Age-friendly COA declined naming someone. Chair suggested attending school board meeting and bring some ideas. Asst director will explore connections through recreation, library, and BASEC (Belmont After-School Educational Collaborative). There is a community service requirement that should be looked at. Also, houses of worship often have community outreach programs. Board should consider forming a subcommittee.

6. New Business

- A. Director soliciting suggestions for flyer content from COA board.
- B. COA Board fund - \$10 donation suggested; mail to M. Scali.

The next meeting is scheduled for 3/7/22.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Paschal, Board Member