

DATE: June 9, 2022  
TIME: 9:47 AM

Minutes of Belmont Council on Aging Meeting Monday, May 3, 2022

Via Zoom

Present: E. Sullivan (vice Chair), T. Dukas, C. Lai, J. Morrison, A. Paschal, M. Scali, J. Shapiro, M. Wayne, J. Semuels, Nava Niv-Vogel, D. Bickelman, ex. officios

Absent: T. Olson, K. Donelan, M. Paolillo (Select Board Liaison)

1. Ellen called to order: 7:01 p.m.
2. Senior citizens' Concerns: Nava reflected The Board of Health received a concern about the communication of vaccine booster clinic to the seniors - the notice one week advance was too short for most seniors to know about it. We hope next booster clinic can be planned in advance. The booster clinic service was excellent. However, Joel indicated two shots and two booster may not enough to prevent one from COVID infection. Wearing a mask is still recommended when gathering and travelling.
3. Past Meeting minutes reviewed, amended and approved.

4. Updates and Correspondence

A. Director N. Niv-Vogel: 1) Thanks to community support the art exhibit at the center is now curated by a group of volunteers led by Priscilla Mosca; 2) Marie Poore is retiring, effective by the end of May. She has been with COA for 23 years – the longest currently serving COA staff member. Marie was recognized for her contribution to senior's tax credit and tax exemption programs. HR will update the job description for the volunteer coordinator position before posting to hire into it. The position includes providing CORI checks on new employers and volunteers, providing training of volunteers, planning and coordinating the annual volunteer's appreciation dinners, etc. 3) Ellen Schreiber has become the new director of the Belmont Saving Bank Foundation (maybe under a different name now). She indicated that COA could apply for grants from the organization. Nava will meet with her tomorrow to discuss for potential support for Age Friendly Action Plan and transportation budget. 4) COA (Nava, Jane, and Tomi) met with Springwell about improving the quality of food at dinner sites. One main question COA asked for an answer is what the cost per senior lunch is and if we could have Chinese meal served at the center. The striking thing is that Springwell would not disclose details of their budget nor the cost per meal. The cost for a typical meal and Chinese meal are different; such information is not publicly available, which is of concern and needs follow-up. Nava will contact Executive Office of Elder Affairs for further information.

B. Dana Bickelman Report: April has been a good month for many activities. Presentations on Ukraine and training to prevent head injuries from Belmont Fire Department were well attended. May will be a very busy month as well as it is the AAPI month. We will be doing movies and cooking classes from Julia Lu from Pan Asian Group at Belmont. New exercise classes will begin. Dana is planning programs for Juneteenth and Father's Day. The Town will give employees day off on Juneteenth, so the center will be closed that day. May 11 will be diversity lunch day at the center – as of this date 21 persons (new persons joined) signed up the event. The flyer on the Beech Center was sent out and was well received and appreciated by the community. Belmont Media Center can help to establish hybrid program for seniors, so seniors can attend the programs by either Zoom or in-person. Participation rates at the center are still not normal as before, as some participants remain concerned about COVID infection, which is very

understandable. Dana met with Town administrator Patrice to discuss how to work as the acting director effective for the center after Nava's retirement by the end of June. The Board will 100% support Dana as the Acting director for the center.

C. Friends of COA – Joel: 1) The Friend is planning for the next Tom Nutile Concert, Thursday, Sept 29 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm and the contract entered between the band and the Friends last year will be the same seeking sponsors for the event. 2). The Craft fair is still in planning stage. A planning zoom meeting was set at 3 pm, June 9. 3) Nava added that Belmont Town Day is on May 21. COA will have a booth (Thanks to Friends for lending the tent ) asked for board members to sign up for 1-2 hrs block manning the booth from the 9 am to 4 pm. We usually have two persons manning the booth. The booth will be set-up around 8:30 am that day. Margie and Jane signed up for two slots.

D. Springwell - J. Shapiro. 1) The budget of Springwell has been stable for 3 years. The details cannot be disclosed. Special private care program is on-hold. 2) Springwell currently has five food staging sites and looks for suggestions for a new meal staging site in Newton area; Looking for suggestions from our COA board for where the location for food staging sites should be; 2) Springwell (8 towns) will merge with BayPath (14 towns) on July 1. The name remains as Springwell. 3) Springwell is currently lacking case managers. These workers are paid a low-wage and require using their own vehicle.

E. Transportation Working Group – Ellen Sullivan: The team is waiting for Town's approval for waivers on driver's liability. Will do soft launch soon after getting the green light from the Town and will do a big out-reach and seek more volunteer drivers in the fall.

F. Age Friendly Action Committee - J. Morrison:

Andrea is also a volunteer for the committee. Appointing people from School Committee and Recreation Department are key positions, and those seats are currently open. These positions are especially important for development of intergenerational programming.

Reports of the Four Sub-Committees are as follows:

1)Housing Committee has applied for AARP grant and expect to hear the results in May.

The purpose of the grant is to fund a guide for the elderly who want to make home improvements for aging in-place

2) Transportation and walkability. Parking benefits for the elderly are in place, so that part of the action plan has been achieved.

Another area of walkability is coordinating snow shoveling for seniors – The new hire (to fill Marie Poore's position) will be expected to focus on coordinating with volunteers from school for snow shoveling. In Watertown the Police Department has offered to coordinate with the Recreation Department to work with coaches and athletics of different sport teams to coordinate snow shoveling for seniors. This model can be investigated for Belmont.

3) Outdoor spaces – Tim Flood is teaming with Andrea to get started on the work of this sub-committee.

4) Communication – School board and library representatives have not been available to start.

#### 4. Old Business

A. Creating Inclusiveness and Making the COA Welcome to All (Tomi). Nava mentioned the flyer on the center was sent out; diversity lunch on May 11 was planned and making pitch to seniors to bring their neighbor. Will get more feedback from May 11 lunch at the center.

B. Fostering Stronger Intergenerational Programming (Nava). Aging Friendly Action Program. Dana reached out other schools and afterschool programs locally and waits for responses back. Nava want to write up a guest commentary (on paper) to share how important it is to bring the school community and senior community together for the benefit of the Belmont community as a whole before she leaves.

#### 5. New Business

A. Discussion of Diversity Task Force Report and Recommendations (Tomi).

Due to time constraints the discussion is deferred until next month.

MaryAnn pointed out the COA board should be representative in the search committee for the new director of COA should be representative.

Next meeting on June 7 (Tuesday), 7 pm. The Town Administration has not voted yet whether public meetings in June will be on Zoom or in-person yet.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Chao-Qiang Lai, Board Member