

## Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting

October 12, 2023

**Present:** Penny Grossman, Vice Chair, Helen Gregory, Dan Goldberg, Carol de Lemos, Kathy Whitney, Kate Robey, Lianne Relich, Ted Prorok, VFW representative

**COA:** Jessica Moss, Social Work

**Friends:** Anne Brain

**Member of the Public:** Peter O'Neil

**1. Call to Order The meeting was called to order by Ms. Grossman at 5:05 pm combination of in person and on Zoom.**

Ms. Grossman noted that both the chair Colleen Schaller and the Director of the COA Latanya Steele were at a Housing meeting and unable to attend tonight's Board meeting.

Ms. Grossman also noted that Ms. Steele's Board report will be delayed a few days due to the Housing meeting.

She also reminded Board members who wish to attend the next Dinner Bells program to confirm their attendance.

**2. Aging Services Division**

**a. Social Work, Ms. Jessica Moss**

Ms. Moss noted it has been a busy month with the new intern from BC Stephanie doing a great job and she will be noted in the upcoming Compass.

She also noted that the annual SNAP intake recertification of the CATH as an intake site went well. SNAP is the Massachusetts version of food stamps. She noted that the intake site allows staff to be reimbursed at an hourly rate whenever they assist a client with a SNAP application.

The social work staff is also assisting on reapplication for the federal fuel assistance program as well as new applicants to that program.

The staff continues to spearhead the Homelessness Prevention Program. The latest idea is to have a packet of information on shelters, and sources for food and clothing.

The staff is in the midst of applying for two grants:

Both grants are to fund our 'mobile market' idea which would provide prepared meals to supplement the needs of older adults on weekends, when other meal programs are not active.

- 1) A grant from the Tufts Foundation is to fund the "mobile market" idea which would provide prepared meals to supplement the needs of older adults with cognitive or physical impairments on weekends. Results of the application will be announced at the end of December.

2) The other grant is from the MetroWest Foundation to help fund the same “mobile market” idea.

**b. SHINE Update, Ms. Jessica Moss**

Ms. Moss noted they have been very busy with open enrollment starting Sunday October 15 and the staff attended training for counselors today. Neither SHINE staff member could attend tonight’s Board meeting because of this training.

SHINE has been active in advertising the program including at Maplewood Assisted Living, the Newton COA and the Sudbury COA.

They are also navigating earmarked funding from the Commonwealth to handle outreach.

Mr. Goldberg noted as a Shine Counselor his appointments are filled until Thanksgiving and that drug plans under Medicare have not changed this year but there will be big changes in 2024-2025.

Ms. Moss noted there are satellite appointments at the Needham Housing Authority for patrons who cannot get to the CATH.

**c: Programming Update, Ms. Jessica Moss**

Ms. Moss noted that the part time support specialist at the front desk has been a great help. The events continue to be in person and hybrid and that is the plan for FY 25 budget. Ms. Moss noted that all programming has been steadily increasing since FY 21.

**d: Transportation Update, Ms. Jessica Moss**

Mr. Grably is on vacation but he has upcoming Mass Dot training on October 16 and 17<sup>th</sup> that will allow him to train the COA drivers in house on use of the wheelchair lift.

The rides to the grocery stores continue to be popular.

In answer to Board questions Ms. Moss noted that the medical taxi use is slow but continuing. The issue has sometimes been that the company does not have drivers and the grant requires use of a taxi service. Few taxi services remain in operation.

The priority remains trips to Boston for medical appointments.

**3. Minutes**

**Mr. Goldberg made a motion to approve the June 8, 2023, Board Minutes. Ms. Robey seconded. The Board unanimously voted by voice vote to approve the minutes.**

**Mr. Goldberg made a motion to approve the September 14, 2023, minutes. Ms. Grossman made one edit-the second sentence under Ms. Moss's report was changed to read "is currently up to date with her help". Ms. Robey seconded the motion to approve the amended minutes. The Board unanimously voted by voice vote to approve the minutes.**

**In Ms. Schaller's absence there will not be a Chairperson's report**

#### **4. VFW Representative Report, Mr. Ted Prorok**

Mr. Prorok reminded the Board of the Voice of Democracy Patriot's Pen essay writing contest for high school students which provides scholarships for college. The deadline is the end of October. The top prize is \$35,000 but there are smaller prizes as well. He noted the Needham VFW essay winner last year made it number 15 in the 50 state contest in Washington, DC

He noted that on November 2 the VFW post will host its first dinner to honor and welcome paraplegic veterans since the pandemic in conjunction with the W. Roxbury and Brockton VFW posts. The grand prize for the card game winner will be a Patriot's signed football.

He noted that the transfer station flag recycling box continues to be used. The post is working with John Timmerman to find a disposal site on the Cape where Mr. Timmerman has contacts.

The December quarterly meeting with the West Suburban Veterans posts is upcoming. The September meeting had strong attendance both from veterans and the Town Managers in the five town area so he anticipates another productive meeting.

#### **4. Friends Board Report, Ms. Anne Brain**

Ms. Brain noted their second meeting was the first week of October. Donations are down so they are looking for ways to advertise the gift shop more and considering signage on the front lawn of the CATH for the three times yearly half-price sales.

#### **5. Old Business**

Mr. Goldberg asked if the landscapers could remove the foliage that is growing around the Fitness Center window edges; it prevents the windows from being opened.

He also noted there is no update yet on the MBTA parking request for more spaces.

#### **6. New Business**

Ms. Grossman noted the multifamily housing zoning informational card that was mailed to Needham households.

This has to do with MBTA requirements.

She noted that the upcoming informational meetings are November 7, January 18 and March 7 at 7 pm with the Planning Board.

She noted Ms. Schaller will provide updates at future meetings.

**7. Motion to Adjourn**

Mr. Goldberg made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Gregory seconded the motion. The Board meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 5:45 pm.

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary