

Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting

April 11, 2024

Present: Colleen Schaller, Chair, Penny Grossman Vice Chair, Carol De Lemos, Beverly Pavasaris (Friends), Helen Gregory, Ed Cosgrove, Kate Robey, Liane Relich, Ted Prorok, VFW Representative

COA: Latanya Steele, Director; Jessica Moss, Assistant Director of Counseling, Aicha Kelley, Assistant Director of Programming

- 1. Call to Order** The meeting was called to order by Ms. Schaller at 5:10 pm combination in person and on Zoom.
- 2. Programming, Ms. Aicha Kelley**

Ms. Kelley noted that programming continued to be busy with a new Compass finished two days ago. Ms. Kelley gave a shout out to the entire team social work and programming. She also noted that today, a typically busy day shows that the Needham Center does more in one day than many centers do in a week. Today included a lunch and learn, a cooking class and a concert and this does not include all the social work outreach. Ms. Kelley also noted it would be good if more accolades were heard and the diligence that the entire staff is working on every day passed on around the Town.

Aging Services Division

- 3. Social Work, Ms. Jessica Moss**

Ms. Moss noted it has been a busy month. The numbers have been adjusted up slightly for February and March and there is now a waiting list for short term counseling. She has decided not to apply for the grant for a social worker to counsel in the home as it is too cumbersome to apply for and is likely not to target the population we want to serve in Needham. Needham as a FY 25 SNAP outreach site was approved. Ms. Cusack's new group "Circle Around; A women's Empowerment Group" is going week as a 6 week course. The statistics and sustainability course at Olin College taught by an adjunct professor is moving forward to research social isolation; the hold up in the research is that the tablets to be distributed have not arrived for the second month in a row. Ms. Moss noted they will continue the partnership with Olin. The Homelessness Prevention Council continues to meet. Ms. Moss also noted that Isabelle Dick's weekly meetings at the Needham Community Council have further assisted with spreading the word about CATH's services. Ms. Moss noted that kitchen volunteers are still needed from 11 to 1 as a pilot program. There are many questions by seniors at lunch that Springwell gets questions on and the answers need to come from the COA.. Ms. Moss noted the volunteer application is now online as well as paper which should help attract volunteers to both the kitchen and the boutique.

- 4. SHINE, Ms. Jessica Moss on behalf of Ms. Michelle Gucciardi**

Ms. Moss noted that SHINE is busy with new counselor information session followed by the training which will begin at the end of April. One of the volunteers at the CATH Jess Rice is one of the new trainees. The SHINE program is coming to the end of the earmark grant that hired two part time administrative assistants but they have been instrumental in both outreach and training.

- 5. Directors Report, Ms. Latanya Steele**

Ms. Steele noted the new Springwell statistics report in the Board packet will be part of the packet each month going forward. The SHINE evening presentation date is coming up and Ms. Steele will email the Board the date later in the week.

Ms. Steele raised the issue of charging a fee for drop in visitors. The suggested fee for the fitness room is \$8.00. Board members raised the issue of charging the same fee for those who want to drop in on a class. **Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to charge a drop in fee in an amount to be determined by Ms. Steele for both programming with fees and for fitness room access on a one day or more basis. Ms. Robey seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.**

6. Transportation Update, Ms. Steele on behalf of Mr. Grably

Ms. Steele presented his report. Ms. Steele noted that number of rides on the vans is increasing with the warmer weather. Two of the vehicles had their scheduled maintenance. The medical transportation grant should cover rides to Boston through early summer. Kimmy, in charge of this system, can provide numbers if needed. The Board discussed requiring those who use the vans for grocery shopping to see this as a fee not a donation because it actually helps cover the costs.

7. Ms. Schaller noted there is no Chairman's Report this month.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to approve the March 14, 2024, minutes. Ms. De Lemos seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by voice vote with one abstention Ms. Schaller who did not attend the March meeting.

8. Mr. Ted Prorok, VFW Representative

Mr. Prorok thanked Ms. Robey for her help at the Post with the Vietnam Veteran's lunch March 29 after the ceremony at the memorial. Mr. Prorok noted she often helps out.

Mr. Prorok noted that the Poppy Drive will be May 18/19 and returns to both Roche Brothers and Sudbury Farms.

The Memorial Day event will be multi-location including placing flags at the two Needham cemeteries and with representation from both the Police and Fire Departments.

Mr. Prorok noted he needs to follow up with Representative Garlick on the Veteran's simplified application for the Community Preservation Act real estate tax abatement program as well as the tax work off program for Veterans. Board members recommended that Mr. Prorok also speak to the Selectboard about moving this issue forward because it is a local tax issue.

Mr. Prorok noted that a flag was needed at the Police Station and Ms. Robey texted the correct person in meeting and the flag is on order.

9. Friends—Ms. Beverly Pavasaris

Ms. Pavasaris noted they are still having issues with the nonprofit rate for mailing the Compass that were raised at the March meeting. The difference is \$5874.00 per year. She was able to contact Senator Markey's office on April 10 and a helpful gentleman named Mark Lanagan who is an expert on the USPS

will get back later this week. The difference in mailing costs is substantial; Friends are currently paying \$12201.00 for a year with the nonprofit rate; it would go up by \$5874.00 per year if we had to use the for profit rate. Our printing company uses the ads to cover their costs so that the money does not need to come from the Friends. This arrangement allows the Compass to be lengthy and informative.

Ms. Pavasaris also noted she applied for a grant from Panera in 2021. She is revitalizing this application as if you qualify the leftover breads and pastries could be used for CATH breakfasts. Doughnation is designed to reach those who are food insecure. Mr. Prorok noted that the West Roxbury and Jamaica Plain VFW participate in this program so Ms. Pavasaris will call them as well to see if she can get a contact as the Needham Panera branch cannot help and there is no phone number for the program.

She also noted the Volunteer lunch is April 17.

She also noted that the gift shop is doing well rebranded as the Boutique and revenue from this stream continues to be strong. She noted there will be a Mother's Day ½ price sale and another special event to be determined for Father's Day.

10. Old Business

Ms. Schaller noted she will keep the Board abreast of the HONE discussions. The Board discussed that both the long range housing plans and the definition of affordable are poorly understood. A discussion ensued about the best time to invite Ms. Heidi Frail to speak about the initiatives and the decision was made that September prior to Town meeting would be a suitable time. Meetings at Town Hall on this and other issues have been well attended.

11. New Business

None

12 Motion to Adjourn

Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Robey seconded the motion. **The Board meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 5:57 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary