

COA Meeting Notes

December 13, 2023

Earl called the meeting to order at 10am. Members present: Earl Pearlman, Carol Kotros, Diane Howell, Dona Son, Phil Cieply, Ann Vandersluis and Director, Amy Wilson-Kent. Peg Nogueira was absent. Also present: Betsy Edsall, outgoing Friends' Vice President, Susan Edmondson, incoming Friends' Vice President and Alejna Brugos, COA/Select Board liaison.

The Secretary and Treasurer's reports were unanimously approved. Amy gave a brief Director's report with the rest interspersed throughout. November was a busy month with programming and coordination. The Fly The Flag program took place in Nov, the Tech Talk program on Nov 14 was well received, the Brothers coordinated with Janet to deliver Thanksgiving meals.

December is turning out to be a busy month, too. Amy coordinated with the YMCA for an exercise program when Faith was on vacation, Amy and Janet coordinated with St. Gabriel's for Christmas gifts for the needy, the Lion's Club has giving trees located around town, the Brothers will be caroling on Dec 19 at residents' homes previously contacted by Janet.

Tri-Valley Report—Dona Son said the last meeting was budgetary so nothing new to report.

Friends' Report—Betsy reported on Dec 11 they held their meeting and Yankee Swap. The Christmas Fair on Dec 2 was very successful. The new slate of officers will be sworn in January 2024 at which time the new officers will preside over the meeting. Susan Edmondson will take Betsy's place as COA/Friends' liaison. We all wished Betsy well as she steps down in this position.

Old Business

Food Pantry—Ann reported that the pantry continues to receive donations following the November Scout Food Drive. Also, Amy's Facebook contact recently sent a request for needed items and the response was quick and fruitful. The pantry is in good shape.

Senior Center Expansion—Phil reported their next meeting is on Dec 19 at 6:30pm. They will review the North Ave site which was chosen over the Hopedale St site, due to conservation restrictions and other issues which would slow the process considerably. They will discuss cost reduction and impact of Town funding. They will review the goals of the sub-committees. Jack Hunter will coordinate site engineering. They will decide which State and Federal representatives to invite into the process. They will convene again in January after the holidays. They will give a progress update to the Select Board in January.

Veterans' Breakfast—was very well attended; there were more volunteers than needed but everything worked out well; the Friends presented medallions to each Veteran; M&M Medical donated 40 gift cards; the Minstrels presented a moving patriotic musical program.

Holiday Programs—Dec 6 Holiday Luncheon sponsored by the Ferruccis' was a very special event with delicious food from Oliva's and generous door prizes given by Dick and Betty Ferrucci, the Dec 7 Misco 6th Grade Chorus was well attended and enjoyed by all; the Mendon Minstrels' Holiday Concert will be on Dec 14 at 11am followed by a luncheon; the Tri-Valley Holiday meal is on Tues Dec 19; the Nipmuc Jazz/Acapella group will perform on Dec 20 at 11:30am and finally, the New Year Celebration with DJ Chris is on Thurs Dec 28 coordinated by Diane Howell. Whew, December is a very busy month!

Staffing Update—on Dec 12 Earl, Amy and HR held interviews for Senior Center Admin Assistant position from 1-4pm at Town Hall. There are some good prospects with a few more candidates to be interviewed. They hope to have someone in place by January 2024.

FY25 Budget—Amy still hasn't been notified as to when to submit our budget; she was advised to request additional hours for the Admin Assistant position; Amy asked Alejna for guidance as to what figure to submit to Capital Planning for the new center; Alejna said it should reflect future operational costs; Phil said they will be working on getting a figure together.

New Business

Face Book Appointment—Dona Son said Peg had asked her to be our Senior Center Facebook representative regarding our activities; the COA Board felt weekly messages would be adequate.

Red Cross Evaluation—Amy met with Mark Bucchino and Red Cross personnel last Friday to review our requirements, generator capabilities, etc. The last evaluation was in 2009. Mark has an agreement with a facility in Blackstone to care for pets in an emergency. Mark asked about the possibility of installing security cameras at the center. Earl wants to know the cost as it could be unnecessary for an older building especially when we will be moving; we have sensor lights that come on when there is movement; the only thing that has happened off hours is someone using the dumpster without permission.

Training & Educational Opportunities—Amy took the updated computer course and found it very helpful; she will have the new Admin Assistant take the course as well; emails will be going out to individuals regarding Ethics Training and Acknowledgment of receiving Ethics materials; CPR training will be available for those who need it.

Discuss Associate/Non-Voting Board Members—Amy asked us if we think of anyone who would be well-suited and interested in monitoring our meetings to become familiar with what the COA Board does. Alejna said our meetings are open, so there should be no problem in inviting people to join us.

Open Forum

Amy said the 20 y/o refrigerator in the basement went kaput so we have a new refrigerator from Frank's Appliance; it's needed for the overflow especially when we have an event.

The fuel assistance application response has been slow this year but Janet said it is finally getting caught up.

Carol asked if we will be having a COA/Staff Training and luncheon. Amy will get one set up for Wed Jan 24 or 31, 2024.

Election of Officers—the current slate is willing to serve in 2024; there were no new nominees; Phil made a motion to accept the slate and Diane seconded; all approved. Peg and Earl Co-Chairs, Ann Secretary and Carol Treasurer.

Meeting adjourned 11:15am.

Next meeting: January 10, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Vandersluis

Secretary