

COA Meeting Notes

January 10, 2024

Peg called the meeting to order at 10am. Members present: Peg Nogueira, Earl Pearlman, Carol Kotros, Diane Howell, Dona Son, Phil Cieply, Ann Vandersluis and Director, Amy Wilson-Kent. Also present: Carolyn Wass, new Friends' President; Susan Edmondson, new Friends' Vice President and Friends/COA liaison; Alejna Brugos, Select Board/COA liaison and Tom Fichtner, Expansion Committee volunteer.

As there were new people present, Peg had us identify ourselves with our titles.

The Secretary and Treasurer's reports were unanimously approved. Amy provided a brief Director's report: the 30 y/o power motor for the garage door was replaced by Jolicoeur and sadly, the SMOC fuel assistance application process is behind again which is very upsetting to staff and clients. The remainder will be interspersed throughout.

Tri-Valley Report: Dona Son said mostly budgetary again. Amy asked her to find out at the next meeting if there will be any funding for transportation.

Friends' Report: Susan Edmondson reported that their first meeting for 2024 was held on January 8 with low attendance following the previous day's snowstorm. The new slate of officers was sworn in. Officer's and Committee reports were given. Yearly \$5 dues are now being accepted. They are seeking a volunteer to oversee monthly refreshments for their meeting. They will continue discussing the mission statement, job descriptions and the Friends' role in fundraising for the new center.

Old Business

Food Pantry Update—we need to add hours for self-serve, possibly one Wed night a month from 3:30-5:30pm; Amy's Facebook contact continues to advertise needed items which always produces a rapid and fruitful response.

S.C. Expansion Update—Phil reported they hope to get bids in soon for the well and septic; soil testing will cost \$3000; architect is supposed to have detail cost by February; Finance will be attending the next meeting to discuss impact; Anne Mazar is willing to support CPA funds for the project; Tom Fichtner attended our meeting to discuss messaging to the community; do we want the new center to be described as a Senior Center, Community Center or combination? A lengthy round table discussion followed and our thoughts and opinions will be brought to the January 16 expansion committee meeting.

Holiday Program f/u—Minstrels Concert & lunch, Tri-Valley Holiday meal; Nipmuc Jazz/Acapella Group and New Year Celebration with DJ Chris were all well received and enjoyed by everyone who attended.

Staffing Update—the new Admin Assistant is from Mendon and comes with a long list of experience. She is a former World Band employee. She will be starting on January 22 if approved by the Select Board on January 17.

FY25 Budget—Amy finally received a request to submit the budget; the requests are mostly level funding with a few increases for admin assistant hours, building maintenance, fee per senior based upon census numbers.

Facebook Appointment—Dona Son has agreed to accept this position to post photos and give weekly updates.

New Business

Capital Planning Requests—1/10/24—Amy called the interim town administrator and requests have to be over \$25,000 so she put in for a new van as the current one is getting old and for the new center for which she has no \$\$ amount yet.

Increased Transportation Needs—we do not provide rides over 15 mile radius; outside vendor is very costly \$250 per ride; should we use the substitute van driver and electric car? Or have volunteer drivers take seniors to medical appts? Or use some funds from the Friends' transportation fund for an outside vendor? We decided to table this to the next meeting.

Goals & Events For 2024—Amy distributed a tentative Calendar of Events both weekly and monthly; we discussed several dates and events for the upcoming months.

Friends' Funding Requests 2024—Amy will meet with the Friends to discuss a budget.

Staff/Board Training—postponed to a future date.

Yearly Conflict of Interest Acknowledgement—Amy forwarded us the link; acknowledgement is due Feb 21 and ethics test due March 19.

Open Forum

Amy said the police have asked us to provide a letter of support for Mental Health and Opioid Crisis.

Meeting adjourned 12:18pm. Next Meeting February 7, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Vandersluis, Secretary