

Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting

June 13, 2024

Present: Colleen Schaller, Chair, Penny Grossman Vice Chair, Carol De Lemos, Helen Gregory, Ed Cosgrove, Kate Robey, Kathy Whitney, Ann Cosgrove, Ann DerMarderosian, Dan Goldberg, Sue Mullaney, Ted Prorok, VFW Representative

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

Friends of the CATH: Anne Brain

SHINE: Michelle Gucciardi

1. Call to Order The meeting was called to order by Ms. Schaller at 5:09 pm combination in person and on Zoom.

2. Aging Services Division

a. Social Work, Ms. Jessica Moss

Ms. Moss noted it has been a busy month. The numbers have been a little down but Jessica Rice has been training with SHINE which explains this. Ms. Moss is still consulting with the Olin College students on coordinating the iPad tablet project and a representative to the homelessness prevention coalition though one of the faculty. The ipads 96 in all have been ordered through state procurement. Importantly, BEI Needham has hired an emergency room case manager who will work with social work staff at the CATH to provide continuity. The coffee hours at Housing continue to go well. There are 23 active volunteers. The Homeless Prevention coalition is taking the summer off and will be active again in September. Ms. Kelley organized an active shooter training course for staff and volunteers with the Needham Police which was successful.

b. SHINE, Ms. Michelle Gucciardi

Ms. Gucciardi noted the training included Ms. Jessica Rice so they trained nine four professional staff and five volunteers. It was good to have several volunteers west of Rt. 128. Mr. Goldberg is mentoring several of the new trainees in the next phase. A party for volunteers will take place at the end of June. SHINE numbers continue to increase between billboards on the highway especially the one on the Mass Pike and with an advertisement before major chain movies.

c. Ms. Latanya Steele, Director's Report

Evening Transportation. Some drivers have capacity within their 19.5 hours so in the fall a phased evening program will be in place. The staff are studying schedules over the summer. Ms. Schaller and Ms. Steele noted they do not want to rely on volunteers to drive patrons' home from Dinner Bells or other programs.

Ms. Steele also noted in her discussions with Mr. McDonald there is money to fund extra fitness center hours so if the trainers can work ½ hour earlier in the mornings and an evening this would help alleviate the high usage issues with overcrowding. Highest morning usage is Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The room only comfortably holds ten and has regular usage of fourteen.

d. Programming Report, Ms. Steele on behalf of Ms. Aicha Kelley

Programming has been gently pushing our participants to pre-register and pay for programs. We have started a new system of printing rosters off for in-person and emailing them for zoom in the hopes of increasing these numbers. The fitness programs are all growing by leaps and bounds. Stephen's arthritis and Drum Fit classes are standing (and sitting) room only but we keep squeezing them in. LaBlast and Ballroom Dance are growing as well. We just added Beginner Ballroom Dance. Lisa Cadigan's Stetchology and a new drum class are also raising interest with new faces. And of course, Sandi's Yoga, Scotty's Tai Chi, and Pearl's Strength Training are always popular. Our wellness programs are also still popular. We had great entertainment - as always! Our New England Conservatory partnership ended the season with a blind violinist, Julia LaGrand, who was so inspiring. She is a blind student who came with her service dog, Otto. She did an incredible program where she not only played but talked about music and disability. We also had Mark West, Mel Stiller, Frank King, Joy and Queen Elizabeth (Sheryl Faye!). Another moving presentation with Yom HaShoah: Holocaust Remembrance. Amy came and spoke about her family's experiences with the Holocaust. We are booking through October and a few are scheduled for December.

Board members asked about the lack of credit card payments. Ms. Steele noted that the staff are awaiting a meeting with the new town treasurer on adding this feature to my senior center as my rec will not be operational for the COA.

3. Chair Report and Approval of Minutes, Ms. Colleen Schaller

Ms. Schaller noted that the fitness room has continued to be overcrowded up to fourteen people and since there is no funding for moving the room she recommended advocacy over a longer period of time to raise awareness among the Selectboard and others for future funding requests. Ms. Mullaney noted she met with Joshua Levy on the Selectboard and made him aware of the staff's hard work and the need for expanded fitness room. He has invited members of the Board to one of the fall meetings to explain the needs. Other Board members recommended advocacy with other Selectboard members, the finance committee and Kate Fitzpatrick, town manager. Ms. Moss noted she can provide usage statistics to the Board on behalf of their advocacy.

Approval of May 9, 2024 Minutes. Ms. Schaller noted two changes to the May minutes. Kate Robey's name was mentioned twice in attendees, second Kate removed. Also Ms. Schaller's name is misspelled in Chairman's report. This was corrected. **Mr. Goldberg made a motion to approve the May 9, 2024, minutes as amended. Mr. Cosgrove seconded the motion. The amended minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.**

4. Mr. Ted Prorok, VFW Representative

Mr. Prorok noted the Memorial Day events were well attended though a little less at St. Mary's cemetery. An especially full house at the VFW Hall.

The Needham Channel is working on a program centered around Needham veterans. Derek Risner is the contact if any Board members can recommend veterans to him.

5. Old Business

None

6. New Business

Vote on CATH Parking Space Request

Mr. Goldberg made a motion to support the Town of Needham efforts to purchase from the MBTA the first row of commuter rail parking spots alongside Hillside Avenue for use of CATH patrons. Ms. DerMarderosian seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

7. Friends of the CATH

Anne Brain noted two upcoming events

August 7th Ice Cream Social

September 13 Annual meeting with strawberry shortcake

Their Board approved from the enrichment funds the reupholster of 9 chairs—4 on the 2nd floor of the CATH and 5 in the Library.

Ms. Schaller noted in conjunction with Ms. Brain that the Exchange Club Foundation has approved \$10,000 to the Friends. This will be for replacing furniture and some other things—more information forthcoming at the September meeting.

8. Motion to Adjourn

Mr. Goldberg made a motion to adjourn. Ms. DeLemos seconded the motion. **The Board meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 5:55 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Faith Crisley

Recording Secretary