

Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting

May 8, 2025

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

COA Staff: LaTanya Steele, Director Jessica Moss Assistant Director of Counseling & Volunteers, Aicha Kelley, Assistant Director Programming & Transportation

Friends of the CATH: Beverly Pavasaris

Call to Order The meeting was called to order by Ms. Schaller at 5:07 pm combination in person and on Zoom

Ms. Schaller noted the big news is that Town Meeting approved the \$395,000 for the three requested design plan projects at the CATH.

2. Social Work, Ms. Jessica Moss

Ms. Moss noted that the Boston College intern has completed her semester; she will be hiring another intern from BC this fall. The new intern will be collaborating with the assistant director at the library Diana Fendler on joint programming.

Ms. Moss is looking for more volunteers; Needham Cable just did a program on the need. The work is needed for 1 off errands, light housework and companionship.

Ms. Moss thanked Ms. Mullaney for all her work with the tablet distribution and tracking the results. So far the tablets have seemed to help with social isolation and people do feel more connected with the device.

Short term counseling has a short wait list.

Ms. Moss new twice a month crafting group at the Housing Authority is also going well..

The existing volunteers are all doing fine; the gift shop had training on the payment system; front desk will have this training week of May 11th.

3. Programming, Ms. Aicha Kelley

Ms. Kelley noted the July/August Compass is in process. Activities are planned through October

The new calendar pages in the April/May issue met with praise.

There are still issues with payment as payment was required before sending Zoom links. . Ms. Kelley noted that some patrons have not paid since 2022 but there are still many complaints. There seems to be more compliance when patrons understand that the fees pay for the instructors.

Ms. Kelley noted they are keeping track of payments on a weekly basis and she has requested an email blast through my senior center from the technical staff.

A brief discussion ensued on whether my senior center could be used to text rather than email patrons.

Ms. Kelley noted new programming which includes expanding field trips. This is the new theme of "Heros Hit the World" for vets only the first trip was to the Lexington Historical Museum, the next will be to the Heritage Museum.

The partnership with North Hill is going well.

Expansion plans are in the works with BEI to have programming around palliative care,

Ms. Kelley noted that there is a need for paper plates donations to help with craft programs as well as with breakfast.

The volunteers have beautified the deck with flowers, vegetables and herbs. More plants will be added in the week of May 11th all donated by Volante Farms.

4. Director's Report, Ms. Latanya Steele

Ms. Steele noted she is only providing highlights as the Board report outlines the full month.

Ms. Steele noted has been visiting other COAS to study their kitchens and the uses when a full commercial kitchen is in-house. She noted E. Bridgewater was impressive; Barnstable and Andover visits are upcoming.

Ms. Steele noted that MCOA Lobby Day is May 13 at the State House. COA Director's will be there to lobby for the Formula grant funding increase from \$14.00 per senior to \$16.00 per senior.

5. Chairman's Report, Ms. Colleen Schaller

Myles Tucker has requested any changes to Board membership and if the Board needs replacements.

She also noted that new patio furniture has been ordered; 2 large tables and 2 small thanks to a donation from The Exchange Club.

6. Minutes

Ms. DerMarderosian made a motion to accept the April 10 Board minutes as written. Ms. Grossman seconded. The Board minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

7. Update on Veteran's Affairs, Mr. Ted Prorok

Mr. Prorok noted that April 19th Needham to Arlington walk was a success with good coverage from the Needham Observer. Thirty people walked, forty more were on the bus.

He also noted that at Town meeting number 41 on the docket the property tax work off for veterans was approved.

The flag replacement at Needham Cemetery will be May 19th and at St. Mary's Cemetery on May 21.

May 17 and 18th will be the annual poppy drive at both Roche Brothers and Sudbury Farms.

6. Friends of the CATH

Ms. Pavasaris noted that Dan Iannotti from the North Bennett Street School who is a piano technologist came into tune the CATH's piano on April 11th. Ms. Pavasaris noted it is a true antique a Fisher built between 1840 and 1850 out of cherry wood. He noted the ivory keys are starting to chip so the piano needs to be covered. He noted that the paper rollers for the player piano should be kept though the wires are severed and so they cannot be played but they could be repaired at a future date. The Friends are considering the funding at a future date.

Ms. Pavasaris noted the Ice Cream Social and Dance Party is August 14th; the CATH Open house is September 5; with the swag being a wristband for holding keys/ID cards.

The Annual Friends Board Meeting is on September 12th at 1:30 with strawberry shortcake.

The Halloween party on October 31st will have ice cream sodas root beer with vanilla ice cream and orange soda with vanilla ice cream to match the colors of the holiday.

7. Old Business

Ms. Steele noted she needs volunteers for the May 15th Dinner Bells. Ms. Robey volunteered.

8. New Business

Mr. Goldberg noted that the Envision process for downtown Needham has been postponed for 6 months. Since one of the aspirational plans includes removing parking spaces and this effects senior transportation there may need to be input from the Board. Public meetings will take place over the next 6 months with the first one being May 13 in Powers Hall.

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 6:10 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,
Faith Crisley
Recording Secretary