

Needham Council on Aging Board Meeting

June 12, 2025

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

COA Staff: LaTanya Steele, Director Jessica Moss Assistant Director of Counseling & Volunteers

Friends of the CATH: Beverly Pavasaris

SHINE: Michelle Gucciardi

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

2. SHINE, Ms. Michelle Gucciardi

Ms. Gucciardi noted they are training eight new counselors. The most recent Health and Human Services federal grant as of June 1 included funding for FY2026 so the program will be funded for the upcoming year.

Ms. Gucciardi is confirming with the State the final budget as federal FY is different from State. FY 2026 is good either through March 2026 or June 2026.

3. Social Work, Ms. Jessica Moss

Ms. Moss noted the MTOA grant came through so contract with MASS DOT will be able to continue the Go Go Grandparent medical ride service.

The application is in for another Boston College intern this fall.

Ms. Moss is trying to save money on the budget in case there are predicted federal cuts to the SNAP program.

Ms. Moss with Ms. Mullaney will present PowerPoint on the tablet program in September.

In answer to Board questions Ms. Moss noted that the Traveling Meals program is homebound any age and more specific nutritional needs that it addresses. Springwell is seniors only and if not qualifying for the free meals seniors can pay for the Springwell meals. However, if you qualify as a senior for Traveling Meals coverage; then you cannot receive Springwell meals as well. Springwell delivers to CATH; the COA as a courtesy continues to deliver meals. Ms. Moss noted they are currently delivering in the about 50 range.

4. Chair Report, Ms. Colleen Schaller

Ms. Schaller noted that the later bus is not running as often as the Board had hoped. The original plan was every day. It is currently requiring a 48 hour notice to use and this may be a barrier as seniors would like to be able to decide closer to the actual date. She will speak to Mr. Grably to see how the later bus affects the drivers and to get his opinion on a shorter reservation window/other issues.

Board Meetings for 25-26

Ms. Schaller noted that unless anyone objects the Board will continue to meet on the second Thursdays of the month at 5 pm for the 25-26 year.

She asked for representatives in case any business arose over the summer. Mr. Goldberg and Ms. Grossman agreed to meet with Ms. Schaller if needed

6. Minutes

Ms. Mullaney made a motion to accept the May 8 Board minutes as written. Mr. Cosgrove seconded. The Board minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

7. Programming Discussion

Ms. Schaller noted that the payment complaints have slowed down a bit though complaints are still coming in by phone, email and face-to-face both to her and the COA staff.

Ms. Schaller noted that both Natick and Wellesley have a monthly payment cycle. Ms. Schaller noted that many people were not paying voluntarily before the 2 month fee schedule was established.

Ms. Schaller noted that the payment policies are noted in the Wellesley COA newsletter and recommended we should have them in the Compass so that the policy is clear.

The Board discussed the issues and noted that with a monthly payment cycle seniors can be reminded that classes may be cancelled if there is not enough interest for the second month.

They also discussed that the town policy in other programs such as Park & Recreation is refunds are only provided if a class is cancelled.

Ms. Steele noted that my senior center cannot accept credit card payments. It was chosen over Park * & Recreations my rec software because it provides confidentiality for social services notes.

A general discussion ensued on not having consolidated IT help for a master email list and other centralized data for the COA.

Mr. Cosgrove made a motion to change they programming pay cycle to a monthly basis and the policy includes no refunds will be given unless the instructor cancels a class. Mr. Goldberg seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor by voice vote.

The change will take effect in September and the instructors will be updated on the new policy.

Ms. Steele noted that Ms. Kelley will remind seniors of the scholarship opportunity if they cannot afford classes.

8. 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 that MCOA continues to provide opportunities for advocacy.

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

Mr. Prorok noted that the Poppy Drive on May 17 and 18th at both Roche Brothers and Sudbury Farms went well. He noted that the World War 2 veteran who is 101 could not make it and was missed.

Mr. Prorok also noted the Memorial Day events also went well with great attendance and coffee and donuts provided by the Exchange Club which was most welcome.

He noted the new Post commander began June 5.

He noted there will be a VFW float in the July 4th parade and he and other Veterans will be riding on the float.

Finally, he noted that the State started a new recognition program an annual military appreciation day. The first one was on May 22. One hundred and thirty four veterans attended chosen by state representatives or senators and 2 citations were read by the House and Senate representative. A luncheon was held in the Hall of Flags at the end of the event.

10. Friends of the CATH

Ms. Pavasaris noted the new tables on the deck funded by the Exchange Club are a great addition. The Friends are working with the DPW on the possibility of adding an awning.

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.

Ms. Pavasaris noted the volunteers have been cleaning out the Boutique and it looks great.

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

11. New Business

A brief discussion on a new group that is interested in limiting the size of new construction. Board members noted this could affect seniors who need top money from the sale of their homes as it is so expensive to move anywhere else.

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 5:55 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,
Faith Crisley
Recording Secretary