

Council on Aging Minutes for Meeting of February 12, 2020

Present: Linda Avis Scott, Susan Gomberg, Janis Gray, and Susan Millinger. Absent, JoAnn Bernard and Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil. Guests: Sally Fairfield, *Geezette* editor; Nancy Spittle of Wendell COA and Village Neighbors and Miriam DeFant also of Village Neighbors.

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m. by co-chair Linda Avis Scott.

Business:

Newsletter business:

COA members gave suggestions and made corrections to the draft of the *Geezette*

Folding will take place on Wednesday, February 19 at 5:30 p.m.

Minutes of the Meeting of January 22, 2020: Motion to approve as read was made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Presentation by Village Neighbors' delegation: Nancy Spittle, the chair of Members/Volunteers; Miriam DeFant is on the Board of Directors and the Fundraising committee. (Spittle can be reached at 978-544-6760.)

Collaboration, both financial and programmatic, with the COAs of the four towns is desired. VN would like to provide more opportunities for socialization, and more socializing with the COAs.

VN plans an April Forum focused on Collaboration with the COAs, tentatively on a Saturday morning, say 10-12. All members of COAs will be invited; some members of VN will be invited. The COAs will be asked to describe what they do and what they'd like to do: are the latter things VN could help with?

There might be one project a year on which COAs and VN could work together. One possibility mentioned was an hour-long information session for the general population (town officials would be especially invited) focused on the Dementia-Friendly training in which Spittle is skilled. A "Dementia Café" for dementia patients and their caregivers is a possibility.

General collaborative possibilities: VN could support one town's event as well as a multi-town event. As an example, VN is currently providing rides to members to Wendell's weekly meal. VN could provide publicity and transportation to a Shutesbury event.

Better understanding of what LifePath, VN, and COAs do is needed. The VN delegation showed a list drawn up of what COAs and VN do.

VN wants new members. The process is not speedy, since VN does home visits and a CORI check. The home visit is an assessment, to find out what people need and to be sure prospective members understand what VN involves.

Financial Collaboration:

Village Neighbors (VN) is now free. The organization runs on a bare bones budget which supports little beyond phone service and software. The work is done by volunteers. Sources of

revenue: asking for donations; fundraising events such as (in 2020) April Full Moon Coffee House. The golf tournament played in memory of David Dann may become an annual event. Also interested in application for grants. VN is hoping to receive some financial assistance from Shutesbury COA. DeFant told the Shutesbury COA we should expect a letter soon from VN asking for money.

Financial collaboration could involve grants from the COAs. The Executive Office of Elder Affairs has said that it is proper and appropriate for COAs to give money from their grants to VN); sharing expenses of events of mutual interest would advantage both COAs and VN.

One or more COAs might be asked to support grant applications by VN. Also, grant applications could be written by multiple COAs, though one COA would need to be responsible for the financial arrangements.

Next steps: the April forum; letter requesting funding.

For assistance to the COA members in discussing this presentation at the March meeting, Scott passed out a copy of the original Warrant article (accepted at a Special Town Meeting on October 30, 1973) initiating the Council on Aging. The handout also included the relevant section of the General Laws, Chapter 40 Section 8B "Council on aging; establishment; annual reports; recommendation by department; clerks and employees."

Updates:

-Community Lunch: A good turnout of 11 at the lunch on February 7. The March lunch will be on the second Tuesday because the Primary Election is on the first Tuesday. Janis donated a set of four soup spoons to COA flatware holdings.

-Med-Ride: Two rides in February.

-Foot Clinic: Susan Gomberg reported that February is full, with five on the waiting list; March is full, with two on the waiting list; April is full.

-Senior Housing: No time this meeting for a brainstorming session on survey of senior residents. Information on such surveys: Janis Gray has accessed the AARP Age-Friendly Community Survey results; she will generate just the questions asked. Janis will also ask Berkshire County to send the actual survey it used. Still no response from Brian McHugh of the Franklin Regional Housing Authority, who offered (see November 2019 minutes) to provide sample survey forms and advice on the kind of information we would need.

Status of the State Grant: News about the amount the COA will receive from the State remains pending. The COA has learned it will be at least \$5,200.

Current COA Financials as of 2.12.2020:

FY20 Grant Budget

Foot Clinic: \$500

Newsletter: \$500

Med-Ride: \$1,000

Program: \$3,000

Total: \$5,000

Use of the FY20 Grant thus far:

Foot Clinic: \$446.00

Newsletter: \$149.34

Med-Ride: \$121.65

Programs: \$1,400.00

Total: \$2,116.99

Balance: \$2,883.01

Use of Town Budget \$200 Expense Line

Staples: Seals \$18.91

Revolving Fund (Donations in/Program Costs Out)

Foot Clinic donations: \$1,394

Foot Care by Nurses: \$1,394

There is a carryover balance of \$946.93 in this account which represents the remainder of a \$1,000 donation from the Shutesbury Education Foundation earmarked for Village Neighbors.

Future expenditures estimated to meet or exceed funds allotted:

The Foot Clinic is likely to need another \$350 for the year. Gomberg will put up a card saying something like "Donations of \$35 a visit are requested" to remind clients of the expected donation.

Program costs: The Library Director, Mary Ann Antonellis has requested an additional \$160; the memory of COA members is that at a fall meeting, Antonellis requested considerably more than she was granted. She will be asked to attend the March meeting to see if she plans an additional request for her programs.

Meeting adjourned, 7:02 p.m.

Next Meeting: Regular March Meeting, the second Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.
Agenda: discussion of V presentation of Village Neighbors delegation; brainstorming on survey questions.

Next Community Lunch: Tuesday, March 10.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Millinger, secretary

