

Council on Aging Minutes for Virtual Meeting of March 10, 2021 final

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. Attendance was taken by calling the roll. Present: JoAnn Bernhard, Susan Gomberg, Janis Gray, Susan Millinger and Linda Avis Scott. Absent, Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil.

Minutes of the Meeting of February 10, 2021: Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made, seconded, and passed unanimously by roll call vote

Business

Financial Update: Recent expenses:

\$500 in annual donation to Village Neighbors

\$180 for Foot Care in February

Total recent expenses: \$680

At that point, in grant line: \$404.44

in contribution from Town: \$200

Status of grant: Scott has asked the Town Administrator about the receipt of our funds, and of the formal contract that the Town Administrator signs. Bernhard will contact Adam Frank at EOE for information about when we can expect to receive our grant.

Request from the Library Director that COA fund the cost of two programs until the end of the fiscal year. Needed:

\$640 for Wednesday Yoga from March 17 to June 30

\$720 for Saturday Strength Training from April 3 through June 26.

A motion to fund the Library Director's request of \$1360 for the cost of two fitness classes until the end of the fiscal year was made, seconded, and passed by roll call vote.

Foot Clinic/Foot Care by Nurses: Discussion of a letter received by Scott from Footcare by Nurses of planned changes in billing. The plan was initially written with a September 2020 return to pre-Pandemic Footcare Clinics in mind; the date of such a return is currently unknown. However, since it is clear that this will eventually become FootCare by Nurses (FCN)'s billing practice, COA members learned what the changes will be, and how COA might best meet the increased cost.

FCN's plan is intended to enable them to meet most of their costs. Instead of charging the COA \$35 for each client the nurse sees, FCN plans to charge \$45 for each hour the clinic is scheduled plus \$20 per person the nurse sees.

Gomberg explained what this would mean for COA. For a four-hour clinic seeing 8 clients, FCN would charge \$340 (\$180 for the four scheduled hours plus \$160 for eight clients at \$20 each.) The Foot Clinic has been telling clients who ask that \$35/session covers COA's costs. If this would continue, and all eight contribute \$35, the COA would receive \$280, and owe FCN at least an additional \$60 per month.

Gomberg suggested that if COA were reluctant to commit to \$720 a year, there are two possibilities.

One is to decrease the length of the Clinic to three hours, limiting the number of clients to six. Another possibility is to increase the amount of a suggested donation to \$45.

Scott pointed out that the decision does not need to be made immediately. This information was provided to prepare members of COA for a future decision.

Document Review: Discussion of a revised version of “How to be prepared for a medical emergency involving you or your family members” proposed by Bernhard. The revision was well received by COA members. The focus of the discussion was then how to publicize its existence to the Town and other interested individuals and groups (such as Village Neighbors) and make it available to those who would like to see and/or download it. At Bernhard’s suggestion, it was decided that the document will be posted on the COA website, and the document and its presence on the website will be publicized in the next Our Town newsletter. Millinger was asked to inquire whether Village Neighbors would like to publicize the document.

The Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community Initiative: At the February meeting, the COA requested Millinger seek a clearer statement on this Initiative from Nour Elkhattaby Strauch, LifePath’s Age-Friendly Program Manager. Only after reviewing that could COA decide whether to forward his request to the Select Board for space on a future agenda to describe the program and seek the Select Board’s support. Having interviewed Nour and consulted relevant documents at the AARP website, Millinger provided a report for the March meeting. The COA decided that it preferred to wait to forward the request after the LifePath-sponsored Initiative had developed one or more programs in which the COA would like to participate. Since a town can apply to become an Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community at any time, this opportunity will continue to exist.

Website Development: Gray has been actively adding materials to the website and making changes there. She shared screen to show us what was there and ask for suggestions. All were impressed with what she has done to the site. Given space limitations, however, Gray was encouraged to condense the sections on Village Neighbors, LifePath, and the Shutesbury Food Program, and to post the recently-approved list of documents needed in a medical emergency. The secretary was asked to see if the Town Clerk needs new copies of the missing minutes of October and November 2020.

Senior Housing: Next Steps: A reminder of where we are. COA needs to survey the town on the topic of senior housing (among other senior needs.) Needed: a survey form, and a means by which to reach Shutesbury seniors. For the latter: it was proposed to use Town Announce to explain the survey and provide a link to the form. For the less computer-using members of the community, a written form would be available with self-addressed stamped envelopes. A likely site for the forms would be the Library. For the survey form itself: Scott reminded COA that Brian McHugh suggested that a helpful survey would be general. Members should all look at the earlier Shutesbury COA survey and at Wendell’s survey, and then brainstorm. Scott will look for the older local survey, scan and send the two surveys.

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried unanimously by a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 14 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Millinger, secretary

