

## **Council on Aging Minutes for Virtual Meeting on February 9, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. A roll call identified those present: JoAnn Bernhard (JB), Susan Gomberg (SG), Janis Gray (JSG), Susan Millinger (SM), and Linda Avis Scott (LAS). Absent: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil. Also present were guests Acting Chief of Police Kristen Burgess and (later) Library Director Mary Anne Antonellis.

**Minutes of the Meeting of January 5, 2022:** A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved by a roll call vote to accept the minutes of the meeting of January 5, 2022 as presented.

### **Business:**

**Foot Clinic:** There were five clients in January.

### **Financial Update:**

As of the January minutes, \$306.61 remained in the FY21 grant. Since the COA is anticipating a grant of \$6,000 for FY22, the balance would be \$6306.561.

January expenses:

\$180 for Footcare by Nurses

\$650 for Therapeutic Yoga through January 20

Including the grant for FY 22, there remains in the grant budget a balance of \$5476.61

Estimated future expenses include \$625 for the Foot Clinic and \$500 committed to Village Neighbors as an annual grant. Subtracting these, \$4351.61 is available for expenditures.

### **Acting Chief Burgess's proposals for planned age-friendly activities of the Police Department**

The Acting Police Chief wanted the COA's response to two programs to aid Shutesbury seniors she is planning.

The first program is "Sand for Seniors." Donated large buckets would be filled with sand and offered to seniors who request the sand for problems with ice. Seniors could request refills. Burgess sees this as an important opportunity for police and seniors to get to know one another, and for police to assess seniors' needs. Seniors and the disabled aren't the only possible recipients; anyone who would appreciate the help will be encouraged to contact the police.

The second program would also involve the use of buckets, which would be filled with donated items useful for those stuck at home because of bad weather or power outages. The goal is to provide a three days' supply of non-perishable items. Both programs depend on donations of both the buckets and the supplies.

COA members were very enthusiastic about Sand for Seniors. Burgess asked for suggestions about how to contact seniors for this program, to be initiated this winter. The COA noted the limited number of email addresses of seniors it has, and suggested Town Announce and the COA website. Perhaps Village Neighbors might mention the program in its newsletter. Fire Chief Tibbetts was suggested as a source of

knowledge about townspeople who might value this help. Word of mouth will no doubt help to spread the information; people might be asked to speak to neighbors who would benefit.

JB offered to help with advertising Sand for Seniors on Town Announce.

### **Library Requests for financial assistance for physical activity programs**

The second guest of the meeting, Library Director Mary Anne Antonellis, was present to request continued COA support for physical activity classes whose participants are primarily seniors. Her requests:

\$1300 for Therapeutic Yoga with Dr. Kathy Sward (Thursdays at 9 a.m. from February 17 until the end of the fiscal year: 21 classes; 12-16 participants.)

\$1,040 for Gentle Yoga with Jeanette Stockton (Wednesdays at 9, from January until the end of the fiscal year: 26 classes; 12-18.)

\$1, 250 for Zumba Gold, a low impact dance class (Fridays, January until the end of the fiscal year: 25 classes; 4-10 participants.) Antonellis is considering changing the time to attract more participants.

Total Request: \$3,590.

The COA discussed this request. Because of known commitments and the possibility of expenses related to the Age- and Dementia-Friendly Communities project, a motion was made to commit to contributing \$2,340 to support these valuable Library programs. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

### **Age- and Dementia-Friendly Communities Survey Update:**

JSG reported on the questions she asked Nour Elkhataby Strauch, the program director at LifePath, after the COA's discussion at the last meeting of his expectations of the role of Shutesbury COA in distribution of the surveys. The paper surveys are ready to be sent out; Nour reported that 55 from Shutesbury had already filled out the survey online.

After discussion of the details of distribution that made most sense to the COA, it was decided that paper surveys would be sent to seniors 80 and above (some 57 people.) 65 copies will be requested from Nour; JSG will draft a brief cover statement to be copied by LAS and added to the surveys during the stuffing process. LAS will create the mailing labels: two sets are needed, one for the addresses of recipients and the other set for the return envelopes. SM will arrange to pick up the surveys at LifePath's Greenfield office; the COA will hold a stuffing party at 11:30 on Friday, February 18.

**Reminder of the required *LGBT and Aging in Massachusetts* online training for COAs:** JB will send us the link.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 9 at 5:30 p.m.**

**Motion to adjourn** was made, seconded and carried unanimously by a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:24.