

Council on Aging Minutes for Virtual Meeting on June 15, 2022. Approved July 27, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. A roll call identified those present: JoAnn Bernhard (JB), Susan Gomberg (SG), Janis Gray (JSG), Susan Millinger (SPM), and Linda Avis Scott (LAS). Absent: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil. Guest: Elizabeth Fernandez-O'Brien (EFOB) from Village Neighbors.

Minutes of the Meeting of May 11, 2022: Tabled until the June meeting.

Business:

Updates:

Financial Update: Review of expenses:

Balance as of May 31, 2022 according to the Town Accountant: \$3,132.71

A request from the Library Director for the first quarter of FY 23 was tabled until the July meeting, when a record of expenditures for FY 22 will be available.

Presentation from Village Neighbors (VN): Elizabeth Fernandez-O'Brien and Jeanette Stockton, members of VN's Board, plan to alternately attend COA meetings. Elizabeth commented on Village Neighbors' desire to collaborate with Shutesbury's COA.

Information sharing is one way to work together. EFOB gave as an example information about the Franklin County Regional Transit Authority's program to provide transportation to otherly-abled seniors in hilltowns not otherwise served by it. Wendell and New Salem are currently participating in this program. Another example is LifePath's new Farm to Home Food Program, about which the COA is already informed.

Village Neighbors has asked LifePath for a curated (virtual) tour of its resources and services; it wonders if the Shutesbury COA wishes to participate.

VN suggests the COA consider a collaborative activity.

EFOB also asked about the Shutesbury COA's financial commitment to VN, and was informed that it is on-going.

Discussion of *The Geezette*: Discussion of content and factors influencing date of publication continued from the May meeting. Former editor Sally Fairfield no longer wishes to lay out the newsletter, but is willing to write articles for it. LAS suggested that members of the COA could also write articles for *The Geezette*.

Possible Content or the summer issue:

- Material which JSG had to cut from *Our Town* because of lack of space, including a piece on Valley Eye radio, currently on the website.
- Material from the website, including a piece on the various sources for food (incorporating the information on LifePath's new program.)
- Interview with the Police Chief, which Sally Fairfield, if interested, is to be asked to have available by July 13.

- LAS will ask for a concise article by Town Administrative Assessor Kevin Rudden on the various tax breaks available for seniors.
- JB suggested a re-running of the piece JSC wrote for the *Geezette* in 2019 about the TRIAD organization's program by which seniors can borrow durable medical equipment. JSG plans to look for the piece and ensure it is still correct.
- Repetition of information about COVID tests.

Preparation for publication: JB will work on a new spreadsheet of seniors in town based on the Town Clerk's records, which LAS will request.

Goal: to publish in July or (more likely) August. An August publication would fit well with VN's plan to publish their newsletter in July and September.

Foot Clinic: SG reported that clients are waiting to learn when the Foot Clinic can return to Town Hall. LAS indicated that she would contact the Town Administrator for that information.

Report on LifePath focus groups on the Age- and Dementia-Friendly program. JSG reported on the focus group which she attended on July 8. Some participating were present virtually, others were there in person. Most of those attending seemed to be from COAs or Senior Centers. Two interns from UMass will transcribe the discussion. JSG told Nour that he needed to provide more advance notice of meetings. She also commented on the need for greater diversity among the participants.

News from Lifepath: JSG learned that there is a move to change terminology: 'older adults' would replace 'senior' or 'elder.' A program for veterans of all ages was suggested. Nour's next event is a focus group for LGBTQ+.

Training: Five members (all the active members) of the COA have successfully completed the LGBTQI required training.

Membership: LAS explained that reappointment to committees occurs at the last Select Board of the fiscal year; letters are sent out after that meeting with instructions for the reappointed. The terms of JB, JSG and SM all expire at the same time.

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried unanimously by a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 4:54.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 13 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Millinger, Secretary