

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 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). Guests: Martha Favre; Elizabeth Fernandez-O'Brien (EFOB) from Village Neighbors.

Announcement: The Massachusetts Legislature has extended virtual meetings for municipal governments until March 2023.

Minutes of the Meeting of May 11, 2022: a motion to approve the minutes of May 11 was made, seconded, and passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Minutes of the Meeting of June 15, 2022: a motion to approve the minutes of June 15 was made, seconded, and passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Business:

Updates:

Financial Update: Summary of COA's FY22 Expenditures:

Foot Care: \$2,030 (including June's \$230)

Fitness Classes: \$4,170

Museum Passes: \$670

MCOA Dues: \$230

Village Neighbors contribution: \$500

Survey Mailing: \$53.90

Total: \$7,653.70

Current Balance (including the \$6,000 FY23 grant): **\$7,747.71**

To be expended from that:

FootCare by Nurses: \$180 for July

Foot Clinic expenses for FY23: in FY 22, \$2,030 for the year; whether this cost will increase is unknown

MCOA dues (if we agree to continue our membership)

Annual contribution to Village Neighbors (VN) of \$500

Guest Martha Favre asked what the Foot Clinic involved: what services it provides, the schedule of care, and its cost to COA and clients, and these were explained by SG.

Martha also asked what services a membership in Massachusetts COA provides us. LAS reviewed these for all present before a vote was taken on whether to join for FY23. The MCOA does a lot of lobbying, advocating for COA concerns. Although much of its work aids larger COAs, there is an annual conference for rural COAs, and it provides weekly briefs on relevant developments as well as a chat line. MCOA has educational and training programs. Its newsletter contains an expanded dementia-friendly section. After receiving this information, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed by a roll call vote to join MCOA this year.

Another expense item: If the COA publishes two issues of *The Geezette*, each issue is likely to cost \$700-\$800.

Given our estimated expenses for FY23, and several unknowns, how should we respond to the Library Director's request for the first quarter of FY 23 for \$1,500 for four programs? We might well end up with about \$3,000 not already committed, so it seemed impractical to provide the Library programs with one-half of that for the first quarter programs. After discussion of how much to give, a motion was made to provide \$845 towards the first quarter fitness classes. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved by a roll call vote. A second motion was made to let the Library Director know that at this time, subject to change, the COA has a cap of \$3,000 for fitness classes in FY23. This motion, too, was seconded and unanimously approved by a roll call vote.

Update from Village Neighbors (VN): Elizabeth Fernandez-O'Brien (EFOB) asked whether VN might be able to help the COA put its newsletter together. Specifically, the COA was asked whether it would like to include items from the VN newsletter in *The Geezette*. VN will let the COA know when there are specific items it would like us to publicize. The next VN newsletter comes out in September.

Village Neighbors has asked if the Shutesbury COA wishes to provide a tour of its website. The COA is currently too busy to consider this.

EFOB has no further information about Franklin Regional Transport's program for un/underserved towns.

VN is interested in the LGBTQ+ training that the Executive Office of Elder Affairs required us to take; JSG offered to send VN the link for the training.

VN is meeting with UMass's Donahue Institute which helps organizations increase their capacity. VN is also pursuing the Rainmakers organization, which aids non-profits. VN's particular interest: to gain a paid assistant. VN wants to get towns to add a line item which would help support a paid assistant, shared by all four towns and VN. Their goal is for each town (and VN) to fund four hours of work a week, at \$25/hour: \$450/month. Martha Favre asked whether there was a job description for this assistant, and also whether VN is seeking a volunteer coordinator.

Discussion of *The Geezette*: Discussion of content and factors influencing date of publication continued from previous meetings.

Possible content of a summer issue

- a short article by Kevin Rudden on available reductions of taxes for seniors

two short information pieces that JB sent us:

- most recently a tip from SHINE on Medicare Savings Plans as a cost-saver
- a piece on Prescription Advantage:
- JSG's update on where medical equipment can be borrowed
- small pieces from the website which couldn't fit into *Our Town*, including a piece on Valley Eye radio
- a piece on Farm to Home and other sources of food

and if needed:

- a description of the FootCare program
- JB's piece, "How to Be Prepared for a Medical Emergency"
- Repetition of information about COVID tests

Preparation for publication: JB has done important work, inputting the names and addresses of 700 or so seniors on a new spreadsheet of Shutesbury seniors. LAS is now seeking to reduce the list by identifying couples.

Goal: It is hoped that the contents can be reviewed at the August 10 meeting. JSG plans to send all a draft. When in final form, *The Geezette* will go to Adams Direct Mail Service.

Vacancies is a topic to be discussed at the next meeting.

Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried unanimously by a roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 10 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Millinger, Secretary