

Minutes of COA Board Meeting – December 12, 2018

Board Members Present: Pat Gold, Carol Airasian, Burt Greenberg, Esther Keaney, Mary Keenan, Janet McCullough & Arlene Smith

Staff Members Present: Anne-Marie Gagnon, Director; and Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk

Excused Absences: Bertha Anderson and Dorothy-Jean Brown

Pat Gold called the meeting to order at 4:09.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the November 14, 2018 meeting. Mary Keenan made a motion to approve and Carol Airasian seconded; Passed.

Review of Financial Statements

Anne-Marie Gagnon reviewed the financial statements noting that we will have more projections at the January meeting. Project Bread was used to purchase Stop & Shop gift cards for Food Pantry consumers which was reflected in this month's financials. Anne-Marie announced that she created and manages the Facebook page for the Watertown Food Pantry. Pat Gold asked about donations to the Food Pantry which Anne-Marie reported there have been food drives with the Boy Scouts, a few Church groups as well as local companies. Monetary donations continue to come in. Arlene asked about coordination between the St.Patrick's/Sacred Heart Food Pantry. Anne-Marie explained since they moved to East Watertown it has helped to fill the gap for residents living in that end of town and that we continue to see new visitors to the Watertown Food Pantry.

Holiday Party Review (Held 12/7/2018 at Hibernian Hall, Watertown)

Anne-Marie thanked the Board for all of their help with setting up for the Holiday Party and thanked all who attended. Mary Keenan was "thrilled with Santa's visit" and "was glad to meet him." Arlene Smith is married to Santa, Ray Smith, who has played Santa for 30 years for various events. Anne-Marie thanked Arlene for arranging the visit. He is already scheduled for next year. Carol Airasian loved the music and the sing-a-long, she also liked that there was plenty of parking at the venue and that carpeting buffered the sound and you could converse with your neighbor. Anne-Marie reported we had a lot of wonderful reviews with 130 guests and the Hibernian Hall turned out to be a great space for the event. We enjoyed a luncheon of salad, lasagna with meatballs and tiramisu for dessert. Town Council President Mark Sideris, Police Chief Lawn, Police Captain Dupuis and Governor's Councilor Marilyn M. Petitto-Devaney were also in attendance.

Grants Update

The Watertown Community Foundation Annual Party was held on December 12 at the Commander's Mansion at 6:00 PM. The Senior Center was awarded two different grants, one for a \$900 for a Senior Supper Club (during summer evening hours) and the other for \$750 for a "Zen Art and Mindfulness" program with our art instructor, Dawn Scaltreto.

2019 Programming Discussion

Anne-Marie reported on future programs which will include a discussion with Town Auditor, Tom Tracy, Treasurer/Collector, Nancy Heffernan and Earl Smith, Town Assessor, on taxes and exemptions on January 9, 2019. We will also hold "Adapting to Changes in Vision" with Mike Cataruzolla from Perkins School. The "Singing Grandpops" will perform in January, Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan will present on "Winter Scam Awareness". A Valentine's Day celebration is planned as well as a Potato Bake and the "Volunteer Appreciation" supper will be held again in April. Pat Gold commented on the "Coping with the Holidays after a Loss" lecture. Anne-Marie will look into the possibility of doing it again. Mary Keenan said it would be nice for a follow up or a "part-two". Arlene Smith will be holding her Easter egg hunt again in the Spring at the Brigham House and will ask our volunteers to fill the eggs with candy again. Last year over 1,000 eggs were filled. Arlene thanked all who attended the holiday decorating and sing-a-long that the Senior Center hosted with Watertown Families Together. Arlene suggested another event for children and seniors for Valentine's Day. Anne-Marie will discuss with Debbie Dunn. Regular exercise classes will continue as well as SHINE counseling and Metro West Legal Aid. Anne-Marie is also hoping to provide a program about Advance Directives (healthcare proxies and end of life choices) with Honoring Choices Massachusetts.

Round Robin

Pat Gold asked for an update on the snow removal program that Councilor Ken Woodland held in the past. Anne-Marie will be meeting with Recreation Director Peter Centola to discuss the future of the program. Peter Centola will take the lead on the project and use the model Ken used, reaching out to the school department. There are many pieces to the project including, who would get help, how many students would participate, and how many seniors could be served. Hopefully it will be in place soon. It is a coordinated effort and Ken did a great job.

Esther Keaney asked about the "Whooley Foundation Toy Drive" which the Police Department is running. It was reported that the gift donations will be picked up the week of December 18th.

Anne-Marie reminded the Board of the "snow day" policies at the Senior Center. If Watertown schools are closed all classes at the Senior Center are cancelled but the center is open during regular business hours. The only exception would be if the Town

Manager closes the building. During a delayed school start, the 1st run of the shuttle bus is cancelled and programs are held at staff and instructors' discretion. Safety is first.

Janet McCullough asked if taxi services were any better since the closing of McCue's which Anne-Marie reported yes and that Watertown Taxi is doing their best to provide seniors with timely pick-up. Seniors are also being referred to the Springwell Medical Escort service program and are reminded that they need to make reservations 2 weeks prior to their appointments for that program. Seniors are to call Springwell directly.

Arlene Smith thanked Esther Keaney and the Knitters for the baby hat that she delivered to a new baby in Watertown and asked Esther for a time to continue to talk about that partnership.

Adjourn

Mary Keenan made a motion to adjourn and Carol Airasian seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:58 PM

***Respectfully submitted,
Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk***