

Minutes of COA Board Meeting- February 10, 2021

Board Members Present: Carol Airasian, Esther Keaney, Mary Keenan, Tom Lewis, Janet McCullough, Araxie Poladian and Arlene Smith

Staff Members Present: Anne-Marie Gagnon, Director; Marina Kirsanova, Program Coordinator; Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk; Margie Wayne, Program Services Assistant

Absent: Pat Gold, Dorothy-Jean Brown

Anne-Marie called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. The meeting was held via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting, January 13, 2021

The Board tabled until March meeting. Board Member Araxie Poladian did not receive via e-mail.

Updates and Status Reports

a. Program Advisory Committee Report

Carol Airasian reported on meetings held on January 20th and February 3rd. There was a wonderful acceptance of the Pet Lovers Group. Everyone was excited about it and is working on trying to get a veterinarian to call in on a future meeting. The virtual Museum trips have been well received also. People are missing the in-person games but the group is looking at online games such as mahjong or bingo. They are going to work on reviewing other towns' newsletters to get more of those ideas to Marina. Carol also suggested possible Vaccine Committee or Building Committee. Anne-Marie thanked the group including Helen Dempsey and will discuss additional subcommittees shortly. Tom Lewis feels it is a good and robust committee.

b. February 18, 2021 Grab-n-Go Meal Event

Marina reported on the Grab-n-Go for Valentine's Day for February 18th. Over 100 people are registered and will receive a catered chicken parmigiana and lasagna meal by Maria's Catering. Marina just finished planning the meal for March. A St. Patrick's day meal will be corned beef and cabbage catered by Donohue's Grill, another local Watertown business, for March 16. Anne-Marie thanked Arlene Smith and Carol Airasian for their handy work on the paper craft Valentine's. Everyone will receive a meal, dessert, a Valentine and a disposable mask. After lunch Marina has planned a Love Song Program with John Clark. Coffee with Anne-Marie will be on March 17th and Chief Michael Lawn will play his accordion on March 18th via Zoom. We are looking forward to an enjoyable month of activities. The March newsletter is ready to go to print tomorrow. Tom Lewis suggested the calendar page be sent out in advance. Anne-Marie

asked that all sign up for “Notify Me” on the Town’s website (www.watertown-ma.gov). You can access all towns’ department news as it becomes available. You will also receive a weekly blast of events. We also have our Facebook page and will add the “Notify Me” information back into our newsletter.

Covid-19 Vaccine Update & Discussion

Anne-Marie reported that Governor Baker announced on January 27th that seniors over 75 would be eligible for vaccines. Since then sites have opened up for vaccines that can be accessed on www.mass.gov. Watertown was waiting for the State to release vaccines to the town. We have been taking calls since that day as well as the Health Department. We worked on compiling lists of frail, older seniors without computers or someone to help them make an appointment. Since that time the State has released a 211 call line for anyone needing help signing up. Watertown could not schedule appointments without being sure we would get the vaccine. We were notified that Watertown would have a clinic with 200 vaccines available for seniors over 75. We helped register seniors that needed help. The link was posted on the Town’s website and all appointments were booked in a matter of hours. The Health Department and the Police Department did a great job with logistics to get everyone with parking, seating, checking people in and being sure no one had a reaction. Arlene Smith reported that an announcement was made today with regard to chaperone vaccines. Anne-Marie clarified that the Watertown Clinic is not included in the chaperone system. That is only for large mass sites. Margie reported that our senior shuttle driver Bob Horrigan took approximately 10 on the bus with retired Sergeant John McClellan transporting additional seniors. As of this afternoon CVS was also starting a clinic.

New Business and Member Items

Anne-Marie read a letter from Peter Centola, Director of the Watertown Recreation Department, to use our activity room from February 23rd to April 1st on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 2:45-5:00 for a program. They would be using long tables with 10 students only and will be responsible for all set up and clean up including sanitizing. The Recreation Department will no longer have use of the field house locker rooms with sports starting up again at Victory Field. Arlene commented that if the staff is comfortable with it, it should be fine as long as rules are adhered to. Araxie Poladian commented it would be helping the children. Carol Airasian asked for confirmation on days and times. Tom Lewis was concerned with the welfare of the staff and the nature of the cleanup, if the rules were adhered to it should not be a problem as long as staff was comfortable with it. Esther Keaney felt it would be fine. Anne-Marie did confirm that there would be no food, no snacks and parents are not allowed in

the building. We also have daily cleaning of the center. All tables and piano will be moved out. If we can make it happen in a safe manner we will proceed.

Anne-Marie reported to the board regarding the school building project. The plans are being revisited. Anne-Marie feels we should form a subcommittee regarding any future plans for the senior center in the next few months. Tom Lewis felt we need a time line to discuss future planning.

Arlene Smith discussed her craft kit project and that Kathy Cunningham asked her for a few for her food pantry families. Arlene would like to try and continue a seasonal craft program if anyone was interested, setting up a scheduled project. Tom suggested posting the program in the newsletter.

Arlene also wanted to discuss attendance to our monthly meetings. We have had a few folks that have been absent quite a bit and was there a possibility of having stand-ins available. With some members not being Zoom savvy or not able to access meetings online it has been difficult for some. Janet McCullough calls in. Dorothy-Jean Brown does call in or watch the local cable meeting from home when she can. There is a piece in the by-laws relating to attendance and leadership. Pat Gold has been absent from many meetings. It was previously discussed having a vice-chair that could run the meetings working with Pat. Anne-Marie feels we should look at that for the next meeting along with other subcommittees. Carol Airasian feels it is very important to be involved.

Carol also asked about Arlene funding the craft project. Tom supports the wonderful idea of the craft project. Marina and Arlene will discuss future programming.

Anne-Marie asked Esther Keaney for an update on the new Zoom knitting group. There were only 2 attendees and she will work on building participants for future meetings. Anne-Marie thanked the board.

Adjourn

Tom Lewis made a motion to adjourn and Carol Airasian and Araxie Poladian seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM

Respectfully submitted

Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk