

COA Board Meeting Minutes

**Date**November 12th, 2025**Time**

4:00pm

**Location**

Virtual Zoom - WCA-TV Broadcast

**Roll Call Attendees**

9 Person

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| • Helen Dempsey
Chairperson | • Russ Arico
Board Member | • Ryan Nicholson
Board Member |
| • Dan Unsworth
Board Member | • Arlene Smith
Board Member | • Gina Brennan
Board Member |
| • David Blake
Case Worker | • Lydia McCoy
Director of Senior Services | • Sheri Melenciano
Program Coordinator |

Agenda**Topic****Presenter**

Motion to Approve Minutes

- Review of prior Meeting Minutes from October 08, 2025, will be reviewed at a later time.

Helen Dempsey

COA Updates & Resources

COA Updates:

Lydia McCoy

- Helen reviews letter that she wrote in regards to changes happening in town.
- Lydia thanks Helen for acknowledging that current crisis the state is in. Currently SNAP is a benefit that is being impacted by the government shut down. SNAP is a program that is designed to help individuals and families purchase groceries. Due to the government shut down over 800 seniors in Watertown have been affected by not receiving SNAP benefits in a timely manner. We have raised funds to add in addition to our Emergency Assistance Funds and Marshall Home Funds Grants to assist seniors during this food crisis based on income eligibility.

Additional Nutrition, Food, & Housing Program Resources:

- City of Watertown Human Services - Watertown Food Pantry
- Watertown Community Fridge
- Watertown Catholic Collaborative Food Pantry
- Centre Street Food Pantry
- Springwell - Meals on Wheels
- Project Bread
- MetroWest Housing Collaborative
- Metro Housing Boston
- SEB Housing
- Watertown Housing Authority
- Eat, Live, Well
- Watertown SSRS (for under 60 years of age)

Agenda

Topic

Presenter

COA
Updates
&
Resources

- Community Dispute Settlement Center
- Eliot Community Human Services
- Fair Housing Project
- MetroWest Legal Services
- Greater Boston Legal Services
- Housing Families
- Volunteer Lawyers Project
- LHEAP
- Community Action Program Intercity
- Action for Boston Community Development

Lydia McCoy
Dan Unsworth
Russ Arico
Arlene Smith

Additional Comments:

- Dan stated the Watertown Police Department also has some additional funding available to assist people in need.
- Lydia stated the Financial Assistance application is on the city website under Senior Services - Programs & Services - Emergency Assistance Application. The Case Management Referral form is also located there.
- The city is doing a Community Food Drive. The city has provided locations on where food can be dropped off for donations.
- Russ asked how do we keep financial and personal information private. Lydia explained the only staff that has access to this information are those that submit the application and approve the application. Everything is stored in a locked file cabinet and information submitted to City for payment is basic information for them to payout companies.
- Arlene suggested that we utilize the churches as a form of advertisement. They have a big audience and it can be spread more widely by them putting a small blurb in their newsletters for seniors in need of food. Arlene also suggested reaching out to the group Community Cooks a larger organization to get seniors to the Friday dinner program they offer.
- Lydia ask everyone to join forces during such a financial difficult time to assist our seniors. Please let us know of additional help and resources available.
- Lydia Thanks Julie Barnette for her period on the Board and wishes her the best of luck on her move.

Motion to
Adjourn
Meeting

**Motion to adjourn the meeting, all in favor the board approves.
Meeting adjourned at 4:48 PM.**

Helen
Dempsey

Minutes

COA Board Meeting Minutes respectfully created and submitted by Sheri C. Melenciano, **Program Coordinator of Senior Services**

Sheri
Melenciano