

Minutes of COA Board Meeting~ January 11, 2017

Board Members Present: Patricia Gold, Carol Airasian, Bertha Anderson, Dorothy-Jean Brown, Burt Greenberg and Linda Moffitt.

Excused Absence: Mary Keenan and Alice Wadden

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

Pat Gold called the meeting to order at 5:30

1. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the December 14, 2016 meeting. Dorothy-Jean Brown made a motion to approve and Bertha Anderson seconded. Passed.

2. Review of Financial Statements

Anne-Marie noted that the Food & Related line item will be spent down with purchases made in January through June.

Medical Transportation line item changes will be reflected on February financials showing a rollover of \$474.50. Deborah mentioned we incurred more costs due to Springwell's funding for Busy Bee which was not available for the months of August and September. The Marshall Home Fund made an additional donation of \$1,000 which will be used to support the taxi transportation service.

Pat Gold asked about the electricity account usage which seemed higher than in the past and most likely was due to air conditioning costs.

Carol Airasian made mention of the gym floors being cleaned and Deborah reported that Steven Romanelli, Director of Facilities for the school department along with custodian, William, have been very attentive to our needs and have been maintaining the gym floor nicely.

Deborah noted the Food Pantry received substantial donations over the holidays: the Watertown Commission on Disabilities donated \$1,500 and the Watertown Community Foundation donated \$2,000. Carol Airasian offered to write thank-you notes to the Watertown Commission on Disabilities, The Watertown Community Foundation and The Marshall Home Fund (transportation donation).

3. Preview of FY18 Council on Aging/Senior Center Budget

Anne-Marie provided an overview of the FY18 budget. She discussed adding additional funds in Building Maintenance for more regular cleaning of the Center as we add more programs and serve more people.

Anne-Marie would also like to see additional funds in Medical Transportation which pays for the cost-sharing of the Busy Bee Transportation program.

Anne-Marie discussed how the Marshall Home Fund Taxi Grant is used by residents with a guideline of 5 rides per senior or expenditure of \$100 per calendar year. Anne-Marie made mention of the possibility of investigating a voucher program and making comparisons with what other towns are doing. Deborah noted some towns have a Transportation Coordinator that works strictly with seniors and their transportation needs. She also noted that a lot of time is spent on calls and coordination with bus rides as well as taxi rides.

Anne-Marie would like to see an increase in the Program Services line item so she can provide more activity services to seniors and keep class costs affordable. Dorothy-Jean commented that some seniors are on fixed

incomes and that classes could run \$15-\$30 a week. Cost comparisons with other towns will be investigated. Carol Airasian said she would rather come to the senior center for her classes and Bertha Anderson feels socializing is part of our center and seniors are happier to attend classes here.

Anne-Marie informed the Board of the town-wide building survey that took place in the Fall and that improvements to the Senior Center were suggested with attention to the roof, the front portico, lighting at the front of the building and repairs to the sidewalk and walkway. These issues will continue to be discussed and renovations planned for as time and budget allows. Budget information is due to the Town Manager on January 25, 2017.

4. Volunteers at the Senior Center

Anne-Marie interviewed 10 residents for this year's Property Tax Work-Off Program. Starting this month, 3 seniors will be working at the Senior Center and the other 7 will be working in other town departments. Each volunteer will work a total of 68 hours in exchange for \$750 off their 2017 tax bill.

5. New Business

Deborah is planning more activities for 2017 which will include a February Valentine's Day luncheon in the multi-purpose room similar to the sing-a-longs held in January. There will be a Valentine floral arranging class in February as well.

The February lectures will include "Diabetes and You" by the American Diabetes Association. There will be a Panel Discussion on "Caring for Those You Love, Caregiver Issues & Resources" and a lecture on "Know Your Blood Pressure numbers" with Mt. Auburn Hospital.

In March there will be "potato bar" luncheon with Irish music where the preschool students at the Watertown Integrated Preschool will be invited to participate in a St. Patrick's Day decoration activity. And the preschool has invited the seniors to "The Bubble Man" performance they will be having in March.

Dorothy-Jean asked how "Coffee with the Chief" is being received. Anne-Marie said that it is well received and the seniors actively engage. Captain Dupuis usually attends and we have had a few other officers stop to discuss different topics. On January 24th Captain Nicholson from the Watertown Fire Department will stop in to discuss Fire Prevention.

Linda Moffitt asked when the AARP tax preparation will begin. The appointments will be Monday, Tuesday and Friday with times increasing from 1 hour to 1 ½ hours at the request of AARP starting in February. Deborah said that once we have the schedule from AARP we can schedule appointments.

Dorothy-Jean also asked about the launching of My Senior Center which Anne-Marie noted will begin this week. One of our Property Tax Work-Off seniors is familiar with the program and will be inputting information. It was also noted that the intake form would be updated for easier streamlining of the project.

Anne-Marie mentioned that Board training may be available through the Massachusetts Council on Aging.

Dorothy-Jean Brown made a motion to adjourn and Carol Airasian seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Rae Grassia
Principal Account Clerk