

Minutes of COA Board Meeting – November 13, 2019

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

Staff Members Present: Anne-Marie Gagnon, Director, Marina Kirsanova, Program Coordinator and Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk

Absent: Pat Gold

Carol Airasian called the meeting to order at 4:09 PM

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the October 16, 2019 meeting. Dorothy-Jean Brown made a motion to accept the minutes Tom Lewis seconded. Passed.

Review of Financial Statements

Anne-Marie Gagnon reviewed the financial statements stating we are on target. Senior Center Revolving funds are deposited with bills being paid out for services. The Food Pantry has a healthy balance. The Project Bread donation has come in and gift cards have been purchased with the cards going to families who continually use the food pantry with coordinator discretion. Tom Lewis asked if there are criteria for using the food pantry and Anne-Marie explained that all are welcome. Arlene noted that the Food Pantry sign has really made a difference which Anne-Marie put in place a few years ago. Kathy Cunningham, Food Pantry Coordinator, may be able to attend the January meeting as she has been very busy.

Araxie asked how the Program Services line item is used. Anne-Marie explained that this is a town budget item that supplements the balance of what seniors pay for classes and other activities.

The fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th.

Programs & Services Updates

12 new registrants in My Senior Center. The bus rider numbers may be down a bit due to a scanner glitch. We do have 2 scanners and are working on that issue.

Esther Keaney asked how the taxi services are working after the closing of McCue's Taxi. We are working with 2 other taxi services to provide rides and do encourage clients to use the RIDE as well.

Food Pantry statistics from Kathy Cunningham show an increase partially due to the move of the Watertown Catholic Collaborative food pantry move to the East End of Watertown. Clients can visit both pantries.

Marina is still working with clients as she can along with her Program Coordinator duties. Mary Keenan asked if the new Case Worker is close to starting. Anne-Marie reported we are close.

Tom Lewis asked the scope of case work. Anne-Marie explained the job consists of emergency assistance applications, home visits and outreach, information and referral, fuel assistance, SNAP (food stamps) and other assistance applications.

Tom also asked about getting more men to attend senior center activities. Anne-Marie suggested a possible survey.

Watertown Community Foundation grants are due the end of the week. Last year, we received aid for food pantry assistance and programs like last summer's Art with Dawn series and a senior supper program over last summer. Anne-Marie will provide an update at next meeting.

Final Bylaws Review

Anne-Marie reached out to COA colleagues regarding conflict of interest. Officers can be members of both Board and Friends but not serve as officers on both. The Friends operate on their own and file forms with both state and federal levels.

Article II Section 7 Removal Strike 2/3 vote and have letter written by majority to Town Manager. Article VI is 60+, not senior member. Keep Article VIII-Friends Group as written for now.

Report from the Friends of the Watertown Council on Aging

The Friends have about 30 RSVP for the Annual Meeting with 110 invites sent out.

The boutique made about \$800.00 so far but it was noted that we did not receive donations of items that we had last year. The turnout was not as expected

We are looking forward to the Holiday Party at the Hibernians on December 13th.

Anne-Marie thanked everyone for all their hard work on the boutique and party.

The next Friends meeting is tomorrow and the letter campaign was successful, we'll have statistics at the next meeting.

Anne-Marie acknowledged the Department of Public Buildings on repair to front of the building which included the brick walkway, the rotted wood on the canopy and the addition of motion lights. We are very happy with the work.

Anne-Marie announced that the new Case Worker will be moving into the conference room. It is important that the Case Worker have private space for phone calls and outreach.

Anne-Marie provided the Board with the report on Mobility of Older People in Watertown: An Assessment of Needs and Recommendations by Watertown For All Ages. We can discuss the report at the December meeting. Arlene Smith suggested a directory of events for seniors like a "Parents Paper" for seniors. Mary Keenan mentioned the Watertown Savings Bank voting campaign.

Adjourn Mary Keenan made a motion to adjourn and Carol Airasian seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM
Respectfully submitted,
Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk