

Minutes of COA Board Meeting- October 14, 2020

Board Member 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

Anne-Marie called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM. This meeting was held via Zoom.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting, September 9, 2020

The Board reviewed the Minutes. Carol Airasian made a motion to approve. Approved.

Comments on Programs: Arlene Smith commented that she is willing to offer an in-person activity (not at the Senior Center) but outside which is positive for those willing to participate and when the weather gets nicer. The Health Department is also sponsoring a walking program. Arlene contacted the Food Pantry Coordinator on the possibility of a toiletry drive. There is also a walk in the Common Street cemetery that Margie coordinated with The Historical Society.

Marina thanked Margie for coordinating the outdoor cemetery walk with Bob Childs. 10 people have registered. Margie will see if another walk could be arranged with The Historical Society. Arlene mentioned Audrey Childs possibly doing a painting demonstration. All agreed that the outdoor activities are a positive thing. Tom Lewis commented that Filippello Park has a nice area for outdoor seating. Janet McCullough agreed that any opportunity to get together with other people while social distancing and precautions in place is very beneficial. ZOOM access to events has been very well received. Anne-Marie thanked the group for all their ideas. All Senior Centers are looking for ways to reach out to residents during COVID.

Review of Recent Participant Survey

Margie reported about the 120 surveys that were sent out to participants of the ZOOM programs. As of last Friday she had received 35 back. Most participants attend 1 to 4 sessions a week. Comments have been very positive with content meeting the expectations including instructors. Margie feels we are doing all the right things according to the responses. Some participants do not use social media but would watch on cable if it were available. The preferred methods of learning about programs are the monthly newsletter and notify me. Participants thanked the staff. Anne-Marie thanked Margie for the report. Araxie agreed it was a very good survey. Tom Lewis asked about other topics which Margie explained were requested with exercise being the most popular. Marina reminded everyone about the

Armenian Cooking class on Friday. Anne-Marie reported that it is good information for us to have so we can change our schedule for what people want. We appreciate the feedback. Marina is doing a great job.

Discussion of Donations for Programs

Anne-Marie reported that this has been a transition for all and would like to open discussion on donations moving forward. In the past most exercise classes were a suggested donation of \$3.00. Tom Lewis would be willing to make payments for classes. Araxie asked if it would be monthly or weekly and how would we know attendance. Although the Senior Center is closed, the staff continues to use the My Senior Center system to log in participants of classes, so we do know who is in attendance. Janet agreed we could ask for donations or even possibly at a reduced amount. The Senior Center Staff will revisit procedures and report again.

Update on Senior Shuttle Bus Operations

The Senior Shuttle has been on the road for the last 4 weeks. Margie reported that 88 letters went out to riders regarding new restrictions for the shuttle. We have gotten some response. The first week we served 17 riders. Riders have been asked to call on Fridays to schedule for the next week. We are hoping that as we move forward we can take more people. The bus holds 20 people but we can only have 4 riders with the driver with 3 runs per day due to COVID restrictions. We do have funding for more days per week and we will be surveying riders for other options for holiday shopping. We have fewer people using the service than we thought and are looking forward to serving more. Carol Airasian asked if we are using the “senior hours” for shopping. No one has really asked to go that early, it just isn’t as popular. The earliest shuttle run is 7:45 AM.

Member Items

Arlene Smith feels we need to concentrate on things that bring happiness and joy to people and asked if there would be a possibility of an animal program, therapy horse or therapy dog. Arlene asked if there were any indoor programs that people could sign up for where there would be a limited amount of people. Anne-Marie explained at this time we cannot do in-person events due to COVID restrictions. We could try a ZOOM program with people and their pets.

Adjourn

Tom Lewis made a motion to adjourn and Esther Keaney seconded.
The meeting adjourned at 4:56 PM

Respectfully submitted, Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk