

Minutes of COA Board Meeting – June 14, 2021

Board Member Present: Carol Airasian, Esther Keaney, 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; Jenya Kruglyansky, Case Worker; Margie Wayne, Program Services Assistant

Absent: Pat Gold, Dorothy-Jean Brown

In Pat Gold's absence, Esther Keaney called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. This meeting was held via Zoom. Resident Helen Dempsey was also in attendance.

Examination of Past Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the minutes of the meeting from May 12, 2021.

Carol Airasian made a motion to approve the minutes and Tom Lewis seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.

Subcommittee Reports

Program Advisory Committee Report

Carol Airasian summarized the May 19th meeting and the June 2nd meeting. Susan Fish moderated both meetings. Concerns with reopening the Senior Center were discussed. How many people could attend events? Possible time slots, gym and the multipurpose room use. Marina advised we should wait for guidance from the Health Department before planning reopening. Many people are comfortable with the ZOOM model. It was discussed whether the June 29th lecture with Senator Brownsberger could be hybrid with both in person and ZOOM. Concerns were made regarding the Hearing Loss lecture in May. There will be 2 Grab & Go this month, one will be a luncheon and the other will be a supper to celebrate Pride month. Marina will have a radio personality present at the LGBT Round Table. Fox Tours will possibly resume trips in September. Helen Dempsey suggested that each member of committee monitor other senior centers offerings and share information. Helen suggested and gave instruction on "closed captioning" for ZOOM meetings for individuals with hearing loss. Tom Lewis suggested the tutorial should be before the start of a meeting. Marina as the "host" can walk users through the process. Helen also suggested a future "Coffee with the Chief" take place at the Police Station.

Arlene asked about summer events and use of parking lot and the Phillips School gym. Anne-Marie will address these concerns when reopening of the Senior Center is discussed. Anne-

Marie, Marina and Esther thanked Carol for her report.

Nominating Committee Report

Esther Keaney reported that Anne-Marie sent out job descriptions from the By-Laws of both the Chair and Vice-Chair positions to all Board members. Esther conversed with Pat Gold, Chairperson, who feels she is not well enough to continue as Chair at this time but who would like to come back to meetings in the future. Esther has been in contact with all Board members, and all have refused the positions at this time. The Vice-Chair is operating on a rotating schedule one month at a time. We will need a Vice Chair for the July meeting. Araxie has agreed to Vice Chair the July meeting, and Arlene will do the September meeting. Anne-Marie thanked all.

Discussion: Senior Center Re-Opening Process

Anne-Marie reported that the Town Manager released his weekly Covid update June 11th. Consistent with Governor Baker's ending of the State of Emergency, Town Hall will be opening to the public on Monday, June 21st. Summer hours will be in effect, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 8:30-5:00, Tuesday evening until 7:00 and Friday closing at 2:00. In alignment with Town Hall, the Senior Center will open its doors to the public on June 21st. The June programs have already been scheduled and will remain as stated on the calendar. Everything will remain on ZOOM with the exception of today's Flowers with Ernie and our Grab & Go in celebration of Pride Month. Marina and Anne-Marie are finalizing the July calendar. Anne-Marie addressed Arlene's question on status of space at the Senior Center. The preschool is running a summer program 9:00-12:30 Monday through Thursday which would allow us use of the gym on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. Parking is still an issue in the morning. We will continue to offer ZOOM exercise classes as we don't have use of the gym space in the mornings. Our recommendation is to offer in-person space to groups that have not been able to meet via ZOOM, such as whist, bridge, rummikub, canasta, cribbage, chess, knitting and visiting. We will continue the same schedule for July and August. Carol asked if ESOL would start soon. Anne-Marie will look at the possibility of starting in the future. Carol also had a concern that the tented area on the side of Phillips School has been locked. It was Arlene's understanding that it is considered a pathway and community space and should not be locked. Anne-Marie will reach out to the School Department. Thursday, July 8th will be the 1st day in-person events will take place. We are asking that all in-person participants pre-register by phone, scan your My Senior Center card upon arrival and masks are recommended. Hand sanitizer will be available. The kitchen will remain closed, visitors can bring their own refreshments. We will be opening windows for ventilation, and we have air purifiers throughout

the building. Carpooling is recommended.

We will not be asking about vaccination status and groups will be limited according to space. Tom Lewis commented that these are exciting times and asked about chair volleyball and use of the gym. Anne-Marie reported it will be in the July newsletter. Helen Dempsey reported that the Book Group will be meeting at the library moving forward. Tom Lewis asked about space for volunteers getting the newsletter ready for mailing. Margie reported that is typically done in the morning and senior center parking spaces are available at this time.

Director's Report

Anne-Marie made most of the Director's Report during the report about the Senior Center Re-Opening Process. Additional comments included that plexiglass has been installed at the reception area, a gate has been re-installed to that area. Automatic door openers have been installed at the restrooms. We have removed the sofas and purchased new individual club-style chairs for the lobby. Additional plexiglass partitions are in place if meeting with the Case Worker, SHINE counselor, or other staff members. A portion of the kitchen will be enclosed creating a new office space for Margie, so she can move out of the Activity Room. The kitchen access will be now from the Activity Room. At this time will not have coffee service. The staff is excited and looking forward to inviting people back into the Senior Center.

Board Concerns

Arlene asked if there was a space in the newsletter asking for volunteers. Margie reported that she is limiting the number of volunteers during COVID. In the future we may open it up to more volunteers. Arlene also wanted to let the advisory group that she would love to volunteer to do another craft program in the Fall. Arlene has continued with the Food Pantry project.

Tom Lewis asked if there were any unmet transportation needs. Anne-Marie reported the bus ridership has increased to 10 per trip, and that we did receive the Marshall Home Fund taxi grant and the Springwell alternative transportation program is still operating.

Tom stated that on June 23rd Kathy Cunningham will receive a Commonwealth of Massachusetts Heroine Award. Anne-Marie let the group know that it is a Facebook event and will get more details from Kathy. Tom also asked if the volunteer recognition program is still alive. The event was cancelled due to COVID last year and Anne-Marie is open to ideas regarding thanking volunteers. Tom asked about recognition for Mary Keenan for her years of

service. Flowers were sent to Mary from the Board and Staff on her retirement in appreciation. Tom feels Juneteenth should be acknowledged. Anne-Marie reported the Town has closed the Administration Building as well as the Senior Center in honor of that day. Anne-Marie agreed it does need to be acknowledged and thanked Tom. Arlene reported that there is a picnic at Saltonstall Park this Saturday. Araxie suggested inviting a guest speaker.

Adjourn

Esther Keaney made a motion to adjourn. Carol Airasian seconded. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:56 PM

Respectfully submitted.

Rae Grassia, Principal Account Clerk