

COA Board Meeting Minutes



Date

January 14th, 2026



Time

4:00pm



Location

Virtual Zoom - WCA-TV Broadcast



Roll Call Attendees

11 Person

- | | | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arlene Smith
Board Member Alison Clapp
Board Member | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helen Dempsey
Chairperson Dan Unsworth
Board Member David Blake
Case Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russ Arico
Board Member Jamie O'Connor
Board Member Lydia McCoy
Director of Senior Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ryan Nicholson
Board Member Gina Brennan
Board Member Sheri Melenciano
Program Coordinator |
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Agenda	Topic	Presenter
<p>Motion to Approve Minutes & Bylaw Changes</p>	<p>Review of prior Meeting Minutes from December 10, 2025 - Approved</p> <p>Helen reviewed the following Bylaw changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings will take place virtually at 4:00 PM 5 members must be 60 age or older majority vote of members present will be required <p>Review of Bylaw changes January 14, 2026 - Approved</p>	<p>Helen Dempsey</p>
<p>COA 2026 Board & Department Alignment Report and Goals</p>	<p>COA Board & Department Alignment Report 2026</p> <p>The report is intended reorient Council on Aging Board Members particularly new member on their roles, responsibilities, and how the Board strategically supports seniors of Watertown and works with the department of Senior Services. It clarified partnership roles between the seniors department, senior advocacy, while highlighting key 2026 department goals.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">COA Core Goals</p> <p><u>Board Responsibilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advise on senior needs, neighborhood needs and landscape Advocate for older adults at the local, regional, and state level Service as community ambassadors and trusted connectors Support programs and events as volunteers Contribute outreach and communications support <p><u>Examples of Board Support:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer-led book clubs, discussion groups, and creative activities. Support for signature events (Health Fair, Veterans Day, and additional celebrations) Senior advocacy, civic engagement, and public safety awareness Newsletter and digital content contributions Professional expertise shared to strengthen partnerships <p><u>Board Goals:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service as ambassadors and peer connectors to expand outreach and access Support advocacy and policy initiatives impacting older adults Assist with outreach and signature events when coordinated by staff Contribute lived experience, articles, or voices to communications efforts Identify partnership opportunities and emerging senior needs 	<p>Lydia McCoy</p>

Agenda	Topic	Presenter
COA 2026 Board & Department Alignment Report and Goals	<p>Department 2026 Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing outreach to isolated, newly retired, and underserved seniors Providing sustainable programming Advanced dementia friendly and caregiver support initiatives Expanding technology literacy Improving communication on digital platforms Strengthening collaborations with City Departments and community organizations 	Lydia McCoy Dan Unsworth Russ Arico Jamie O'Connor
Challenges, Comments, & Concerns	<p>Comments & Concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Russ stated that once we acquire the gym we can create a space for just social time. The space right now is too small and limits the amount of outreach we can accomplish. Russ stated that the phone services should have a menu choice for event registration Lydia stated that we are in the works of creating alternative scheduling to fit all programs as comfortable as possible with the AARP Tax season. Helen stated the limited space is on the top of their priority to address with the City Manager's and there is a meeting scheduled to discuss and create a plan. Arlene state that it is important to work collectively with different organizations in the City to create additional space for seniors to gather, expressed interest in this years programing including outreach again with WHA, utilizing AI, living well, budgeting classes. Lydia stated we have reached out to do additional outreach at the WHA, but at this time they are focused on their internal process. Lydia suggested getting additional transportation to give more seniors access to getting to our regular events. Gina stated having the high schoolers join more senior related programs in collaboration, possibly game night etc. Gina is willing to facilitate Game nights at the Senior Center. Arlene agrees it is important to have the younger generation and older generation merge. Alison stated that she would like to have a buddy system to have another senior take another senior to get to know our programs to feel more comfortable in a new space where they might not know anyone. 	Lydia McCoy Russ Arico Helen Dempsey Arlene Smith Gina Brennan Alison Clapp
Motion to Adjourn Meeting	<p>Motion to adjourn the meeting, all in favor the board approves. Meeting adjourned at 4:59 PM.</p>	Helen Dempsey
Minutes	COA Board Meeting Minutes respectfully created and submitted by Sheri C. Melenciano, Program Coordinator of Senior Services	Sheri Melenciano