

Wellesley Council on Aging
Board Meeting
October 18, 2018

Location: John and Dwin Schuler Multipurpose Room, Tolles Parsons Center

In Attendance: Kathleen Vogel, Lisa Heyison, Dianne Sullivan, Diane Campbell, Penelope Lawrence, Anne Marie Gross, Frank Pinto, Barbara Offenhartz, Thomas Kealy
Board of Selectmen (BOS): Beth Sullivan Woods
Executive Director of Government Services: Blythe Robinson
Advisory Committee: Bob Furlong
Staff: Gayle Thieme, Linda Clifford

Call to Order: Kathleen Vogel called the meeting to order at 4:02pm and noted the meeting is being audio recorded.

Citizens Speak: None.

Approval of September 20, 2018 meeting minutes: Anne Marie Gross called for a motion to approve the September 20 meeting minutes and Diane Campbell seconded. The Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes.

Director of Senior Services Report – Gayle Thieme

Gayle welcomed Bob Furlong, Advisory Committee liaison to the COA.

Gayle referenced the report on volunteer statistics that was previously distributed. Diane Campbell recognized volunteer Nicholas Meara for donating his Hannah Rudolph Scholarship Award to the COA. Anne Marie Gross noted one of the participants at the recent “Dine with the Director” event complimented all of the younger volunteers at TPC.

Gayle referred to her written remarks previously distributed. Penny Lawrence suggested holding off on purchasing any additional newspaper or magazine subscriptions until the café/lounge working group has had a chance to explore the possibilities. Barbara Offenhartz said it may be possible to get donated subscriptions of certain publications. Anne Marie suggested utilizing online subscriptions as well that can be accessed on the COA’s iPads.

Gayle provided an update on the FY 18 EOE Annual Report. Gayle reported that the total number of unduplicated elders served has increased by 40% over FY 17. Male participation has increased by 52% and female participation has increased by 35%. Minority participation has increased by 80%. The total number of volunteer hours has increased by 57%. Fitness participation is up 53% and Social/Recreational event occurrences have increased 70%. Gayle said she added 15-20% to these numbers to account for people who are not checking in via the touchscreens. Staff are taking steps to encourage all visitors to check in using the touchscreens at the reception desk, stressing the importance of obtaining accurate participation data.

Gayle referenced the draft version of the diner satisfaction survey previously distributed. Anne Marie recommended the lunch program working group review the draft survey, refine as needed and bring it back to the full Board. Anne Marie asked for any comments to be sent to Gayle who will forward to the members of the lunch working group. Dianne Sullivan asked if the survey would be mailed to current participants. Anne Marie said the working group and Gayle will determine the best means of distributing the survey.

Beth Sullivan Woods issued a reminder on intra-Board email communication. Suggestions and comments should be sent to Gayle on a one-to-one basis only. Gayle can then forward to the members of a working group. The group then discussed working group operations within the context of the Open Meeting Laws.

Gayle reported the results of the Doodle poll for the additional November Board meeting specific to reviewing the FY 20 Operating Budget request. This meeting will take place Friday 11/9 at 11:30am. Tom Kealy clarified that the Board would not be voting on the budget at this meeting; the vote will take place at the regularly scheduled 11/15 meeting.

Chair's report – Kathleen Vogel

Kathleen asked Lisa Heyison about the status of the Strategic Plan Working Group. Anne Marie Gross suggested the group have an organizational meeting first and develop their work plan. Kathleen noted this body of work forms the basis of the offsite meeting of the full Board concerning strategic plan priorities for the rest of this year. Diane Campbell said that she sees this as a “reset” of the current strategic plan. Lisa said January is a probable timeline for the offsite meeting to provide enough time of the working group to convene. Beth Sullivan Woods said there are two challenges. First is the longer-term process and vision. There is also a need for “near term” alignment on goals and priorities for next nine months or so while work on the bigger picture takes place. Kathleen said that the New Era Fund asked the Board to articulate its goals and strategic plan in order to have strategic alignment as they undergo their next phase of fundraising. Tom Kealy noted the need to have short-term priorities in place as budget planning for FY 20 is currently happening.

Kathleen provided an update on the status of Board vacancies. Kathleen said she and Beth are in the process of setting up interviews with applicants and applicant information will be shared with the Board. Frank Pinto suggested that when evaluating the candidates, to place weight on previous experience on other Town Boards. Lisa Heyison noted that some people who have not previously served on a Board have other desired skills. Beth Sullivan Woods said when the policy was developed the goal of the BOS was to reach out broadly to the community to encourage participation. The needs of a Board can drive its composition and a mix of experiences can be helpful. Diane Campbell said that it would be useful for applicants to have an understanding of what it means to be a Board member and what the expectations are for the position.

1st Quarter Operating budget summary – Linda Clifford

Linda referred to the summary previously distributed and commented on some of the individual line items including Telephone, Programs and Activities, Dues and Software Licenses. Kathleen Vogel asked if any surplus obtained from the new program pricing model will be used as seed money for new program initiatives. Linda said any surplus is used to cover the cost of fees incurred from accepting credit card payments. Gayle noted the new pricing model is less than a year old and it is being used to monitor the success of programs, including those that are new. Penny Lawrence asked about the Training and Development line item, which is nearly fully expended. Gayle said that expense covers nine of the 13 sessions with the Executive Coach. Originally, the engagement was going to be split more evenly between FY 18 and FY 19 but due to a variety of reasons, only four of the 13 sessions took place in FY 18. Dianne Sullivan asked about the difference between the Equipment Maintenance line item (hardware related to the participant tracking software, e.g. touchscreens) and the Equipment Maintenance/Repair/Supplies line item (maintenance, repair and supply costs related to building equipment, e.g. coffee brewer, dishwasher). Dianne asked if the fitness equipment maintenance is covered under this line item. Linda said any maintenance on that equipment would first be paid out of the annual membership revenue revolving account.

There was general group discussion on what the short-term goals concerning the FY 20 Operating Budget request should be. Gayle noted an “ad hoc” budget working group has met once to discuss ideas and goals and will meet again within the next couple of weeks. In the meantime, Gayle and Linda are working on drafting the budget with the 2.5% guideline in mind.

Linda reviewed the Q1 Personal Services update and explained the 50/60 Series Merit Pay Plan increase process. Tom Kealy asked about the Clerical category concerning the potential upcoming reclassification of the Program and Office Assistant position. Blythe Robinson explained Annual Town Meeting votes on an appropriation for a sum of money that the HR department can transfer to other departments to help cover the cost of a salary increase due to a mid-year reclassification.

Capital Budget FY 20-24 – Gayle Thieme & Linda Clifford

Linda reviewed the FY 20-24 Capital Budget request. Changes to FY 20 capital are removal of the “Musical Ensemble Hardware and Software line item” project and the addition of the “A/V components/additions/modification” project specific to outfitting the American Legion Post 72 Room with an A/V set-up similar to that in the Schuler Multipurpose Room.

The group discussed the “Supplemental vehicle for the transportation program” project. Given the timing of FY 20 operating budget planning and the overall assessment of the COA transportation program that is underway this year, there was consensus to move this project to FY 21.

Linda reviewed the requested projects for FY 21-24. The group discussed the potential for capital projects related to upgrading to a commercial kitchen and upgrading the participant tracking hardware and software in future years. Diane Campbell noted that furniture and fixtures upgrades/replacement should be included as a future year project. The group decided to add a \$10,000 project for this purpose in FY 23.

Diane Campbell put forth a motion to accept the FY 20-24 Capital Budget request as amended and Tom Kealy seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Gayle said she would issue the revised budget as this week’s weekly report tomorrow.

Working Groups update – Lisa Heyison, Kathleen Vogel, Gayle Thieme

Gayle reviewed the document previously distributed. Updates:

Policies and Procedures – last meeting was on 9/21. The current focus of this group is developing a room use policy. Next meeting will be late October/November.

Newsletter – the group will next meet in early November to review the data collected from other COAs and develop recommendations.

Art for TPC – the first meeting is scheduled for 10/23.

Lobby/Lounge – a blurb in the November/December newsletter asks TPC users to express interest in providing input to the group by 11/9.

Transportation – the next meeting is scheduled for 10/22. The focus of this meeting will be determining areas of focus for transportation reports shared with the full board and preparing for a listening session requested by the Sustainable Energy Committee in early November.

Lunch Models and Funding Sources – Gayle will schedule the first meeting to review the draft diner survey.

Strategic Plan Review Committee – a Doodle poll will go out to schedule the first meeting to take place within the next few weeks.

Board Roles and Responsibilities – this group is on hold while the Strategic Plan Review Committee gets underway.

FY 19-20 Reporting Schedule – Gayle Thieme & Kathleen Vogel

Gayle referenced the revised schedule previously distributed. The group decided a Board vote to accept the schedule is not required. Kathleen noted this schedule is a work product that provides guidance and planning for reporting throughout the year.

New Business: Diane Campbell said the Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF) inquired with her about sponsorship for the COA Spelling Bee team approached her. Typically, the team consists of COA participants, whereas some other Town committees and Boards participate as teams. Diane noted that she has proposed that the Board sponsor the COA team both last year and this year and has received some push back. Diane just received an email informing that Waterstone will sponsor the COA team this year. Diane expressed a desire for the Board to sponsor the COA team in future years as a show of support of this community event. Kathleen said she does not feel comfortable insisting that Board members provide financial support to WEF. Frank Pinto suggested having it be a suggested donation from Board members with no obligation to contribute.

Meeting adjourned: Kathleen Vogel adjourned the meeting at 6:12pm.

Documents and/or Exhibits referenced at this meeting (previously distributed by Gayle Thieme unless otherwise noted):

- Director of Senior Services Report
- Volunteer Statistics Report
- Draft Diner Satisfaction Survey
- FY 19 Q1 Operating Budget and Personal Services update
- FY 20-24 COA Capital Budget request
- Revised Working Groups document
- Revised FY 19 Proposed Reporting schedule

Minutes prepared by Linda Clifford