

**Council on Aging Minutes of January 21, 2021 - Revised
Online Remote Board Meeting**

This meeting will be aired live on Comcast 8 and Verizon 40, and will be available on demand the following morning. When two meetings are being held simultaneously, the second meeting will be live on Channel 9 or Verizon 39. Also, meeting agendas are posted on wellesleyma.gov at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, and protocol for participating in Citizen's Speak is at the bottom of that agenda.

Members Present: Marlene Allen, Chair; Penny Lawrence, Vice Chair; Susan Rosefsky, Secretary; Lori Ferrante; Bob Ferrell; Gerry Hume; Tom Kealy; Tony Parker; Dianne Sullivan; Kathleen Vogel

Absent: None

Also Present: Heather Munroe, Director of Senior Services; Gregory Wilson, Assistant Director of Senior Services; Amy Rose, Senior Activities Coordinator

Meeting Documents:

Agenda
Minutes of November 19, 2020
Minutes of December 3, 2020
Minutes of December 17, 2020
Director's Report
Programs and Activities Powerpoint (available on COA Home page 1/22/21)

1. Call to Order:

Ms. Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. There was a Roll Call for attendance.

2. Citizen Speak: None

3. Meeting Minutes:

Minutes of November 19, 2020 were reviewed with the requested revisions.

A motion was made by Bob Ferrell and seconded by Kathleen Vogel to accept the November minutes. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

Minutes of December 3, 2020 special meeting were reviewed.

A motion was made by Bob Ferrell and seconded by Kathleen Vogel to accept the minutes of December 3, 2020 meeting. In a Roll call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

Minutes of December 17, 2020 regular meeting were reviewed. There was a discussion about including the length of time Board members spent for the Citizen Speak response. The minutes will be revised and presented to Board members at the February meeting.

4. Summary of Activities/Programming

Ms. Munroe and Ms. Rose presented a Programs and Activity Report on the process for program selection and evaluation, history of the class enrollment, registration, and resolution attempts for under-enrollment classes by either a time change, reduced fee, or a consolidation of classes in any given week.

The process with evaluating under-enrolled classes led to the cancellation of the second class of Mixed Yoga for the November/December cycle and the offering of one mixed yoga class in the January/February cycle. It was stressed that no one was left on a waiting list, and patron registration indicated that only one class in the January/February cycle was warranted.

The presentation included recommendations for Mixed Yoga for March/April and introduced general policy questions that should be considered for the future. Board members asked questions of Ms. Munroe and Ms. Rose.

Mr. Kealy spoke regarding his concern for a “breaking even policy” and the cancellation of a single class in November/December. COA Staff explained that the rule was applied to other classes in the same situation and those classes too were either moved to a different day and time or not offered in the January/February session.

Ms. Allen made a statement outlining the process for patrons attending the Public Speak opportunity on this specific agenda item. There would be a maximum fifteen-minute discussion, with a maximum of three minutes per person.

Barbara Werner, 26 Howe St. Inquired if there could be consideration for listing two classes next term and see what the enrollment will be.

Betsy Wise, 56 Denton Rd. Would like consideration of allowing excellent teacher to continue through COVID period.

Gloria Zalosh, 20 Rockland St. Reflected back to a few years ago where an instructor’s classes were discontinued without participation input. Expressed that if instructor’s class is no longer held, COA will lose 20 plus participants.

Claire Benfatto, Natick (MA). Seconds what had already been said.

Elaine Elliot, 27 Forest St. Spoke about the long-term participation of this instructor. Would like second class reinstated.

Judy O'Connor, 11 Oak St. Requested to reinstate the second class.

Judy Sassano, 50 Grove St. Requested for the second class to continue, not able to take it because does not have zoom on her tablet.

Regina Kealy, 46 Lehigh Rd. Really loves Judy’s class and her close observation of her students.

Rupa Shah, 24 Martin Rd. Came to senior center to take Judy's classes. Her classes help improve health as seniors. Concerned about swapping out a proven program for unproven projects.

All expressed their love of this class, the excellence of this instructor, and their desire for a second class to be reinstated in the March/April term.

Each member of the Board then spoke on this topic,

Marlene Allen. Understand importance to patrons, the role of the staff and of the COA. Here for the seniors and we should offer a second class for March/April with reasonable and understandable guidelines, balancing support for the seniors and following sound fiscal management. Offering the class, we can evaluate if we have demand, and if enrollment speaks to continue, then we should continue the class. Would ask staff to determine how much of a financial risk is appropriate.

Lori Ferrante. Confused about concept that taken away something that there was demand for, no one was blocked from participating. If people feel there is a demand, people are passionate about instructor and programming, find a way to offer again and see what happens with the enrollment. The "break-even" sounds reasonable, not understanding financial tolerance for a program, but cannot offer something consistently at a loss.

Robert Ferrell. Agrees with Marlene's policy. Three parts: (1) pre-existing policy; (2) restoring good will; and (3) how does any policy now set determine future planning and dictate any change in policy.

Gerry Hume. When two classes were merged into one, all were able to make the change but one. The concern and level of concern is out of all proportion to actual issue needing to deal with, concern of one individual. Would support financial risk over next period to support, under good faith, for next two months and see what the numbers show.

Tom Kealy. People wanted to go into second class and couldn't get it, jumped into Judy's private class at a higher rate, around eight people. Second class needs to be at 11 am and on Tuesday, instructor is full time and busy. In terms of financing, students do not want COA to lose money on the program, and will make up the deficit if charge more for the class. Onslaught of interest, and we will fill up both classes for March/April. Many people are not participating, 5-7 people, because of zoom.

Penny Lawrence. Recall's Tom stating that instructor was willing to teach a third class on a different day/time. (Tom Kealy) Explained that instructor only wants to teach classes back to back so as not to lose money, and students want times they have always had. All participants interest is fabulous. Another issue, the procurement clause. Making more than \$10k a year for Town, we have to go out to bid, still an issue, could be resolved by shortening up the class. Would like to suggest we offer another class, whatever slot we have available. Enormous respect for our staff, they are very good at what they do. Need to respect their input in these matters.

Tony Parker. Change is something we have and will live with. Things are going to change, and should let things fade away as they do. Not a good idea to have more contributions for a specific program, leads to opening the door. Individuals want to make contributions to a

fund somewhere, that is perfectly reasonable. Marlene's solution, and what Heather and Amy offered were good and give us some time.

Susan Rosefsky. Program should be offered two classes in the next cycle. Knowing how important and how any one program will be used at any one time, include looking at waitlists. Because of zoom, there are patrons not signing up due to the offering, and could skew how program is looked at when back in person. Look to get a good grip on potential popularity of the program when in person. Agree with Tony that things are going to change.

Dianne Sullivan. Agrees that should have trial period for March/April and offer two classes if works with staff's schedule, if not then we wouldn't do it. Staff developed a schedule to be more organized, and this one instructor has a lot of demands, day and time, and may accommodate some people. Long discussions in the past about the fee schedules where some seniors couldn't afford to have \$12/15 class. Not interested in increasing the fee to accommodate the teacher. In March/April, can offer two classes and consider how the staff is going to be able to accommodate the timing. Staff did a great job with the information and we need to think about how this will affect all of the seniors, not just those who can afford one that is more expensive.

Kathleen Vogel. This is a very popular instructor who has lost some attendees because we have all zoom programs. If this is such a popular teacher and the class is so popular, the staff has offered a few other times to teach that have been rejected by the teacher. Agree that we should respond. Hope that numbers there that state the seniors are going to take the classes, really show up. Support Marlene's position. Does not think should be underwriting undergenerating class, getting sticky with residents and non-residents.

The unanimous opinion was to add a second Mixed Yoga class for the March/April cycle, as well as further study by the staff and a working group to propose a policy to guide the staff, instructors, and patrons about the parameters involved, including the importance of registration numbers in determining course availability in the future.

A motion was made by Tony Parker and seconded by Bob Ferrell to accept the Programs and Activities Report, including the recommendations, given by the Director and the Senior Activities Coordinator. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

5. Six month Performance Review for the Director:

Three options were outlined. The "Goals" section is eliminated in all three options since this is just a 6-month review for a new employee.

1. Each Board member completes the regular HR Department form. HR would tabulate and present the summary at our public meeting.
2. The Board appoints a 3-member group for evaluation, with results provided at our public meeting.
3. The Board designates the Chair to evaluate the performance with the Director, with results shared directly with the director, not in public session.

The Board decision was to use the first option, with full participation.

A motion was made by Tony Parker and seconded by Penny Lawrence to conduct a performance review for Director Heather Munroe by all Board members. A Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

6. Director's Report:

Highlights of the report included the update of the Covid-19 guidelines, which were adjusted in December 2020; staff is in compliance. There is no change in the snow policy. The staff is interviewing for the Departmental Assistant position. Social work outreach updates were highlighted.

Gifts:

- \$100.00 with no specified use by Sadjida Khudari
- \$100.00 with no specified use by Susan Cetlin
- American flag by Polly Conlon , which her grandfather owned, to replace the tattered one in current use (Veterans' Services is ordering a backup flag.)
- Two puzzles donated to the puzzology program, one by Jane and Tom Peterson, and one by Eileen Kestenbaum.

A motion was made by Tony Parker and seconded by Bob Ferrell to accept these monetary and non-monetary gifts given to the COA. In a Roll Call vote of Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 10-0.

7. Chair's Report/Updates:

Working groups are active. Community Relations, Social Services and Transitions , and Development working groups have had meetings. With no specific recommendations to report and in the interests of time, working groups will report at a future meeting.

8. Old Business/New Business:

Matters not anticipated by the Chair at the time of posting.

Ms. Allen announced that Vice Chair, Penny Lawrence, is retiring from the Board prior to our next meeting, and this is her last Board meeting. She and her husband are moving from Wellesley. After wishing her well, it was decided to address the officer vacancy. Tony Parker was nominated to fill the position on Vice Chair through the end of the current term (June 30, 2021).

A motion was made by Susan Rosefsky and seconded by Kathleen Vogel to nominate Tony Parker to fill the position of Vice Chair through the end of the current term (June 30, 2021). In a Roll Call vote of Members Present named above, the motion was passed unanimously, 10-0.

9. Next meeting dates/time: Thursday, Feb. 18, 2021 at 4 pm – (Corrected date)

10. Adjourn:

A motion was made by Kathleen Vogel and seconded by Gerry Hume to adjourn the meeting. In a Roll Call vote of Members Present named above, the motion was passed unanimously, 9-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 6.32pm. (Bob Ferrell left the meeting at 6:29 pm.)

Approved at the February 25, 2021 meeting.
Revised version approved at April 15, 2021
meeting.