

**Council on Aging Minutes of March 17, 2022  
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 [wellesley.ma.gov](http://wellesley.ma.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; Tony Parker, Vice Chair; Susan Rosefsky, Secretary; Tory DeFazio; Lori Ferrante (Joined at 5:06pm) ; Bob Ferrell; Dianne Sullivan; Kathy Trumbull; and Tina Wang

**Absent:** Kathleen Vogel

**Also Present:** Heather Munroe, Director of Senior Services; Gregory Wilson, Assistant Director of Senior Services; and Corrinne Monahan, Advisory Liaison (joined at 4:05pm)

**Meeting Documents:**

Agenda  
Minutes of October 14, 2021  
Minutes of January 20, 2022  
Director's Report including:  
Budget Update (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> quarter)

**I. Call to Order:**

Ms. Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:01pm. There was a Roll Call for attendance.

**II. Citizen Speak:** None

**III. Meeting Minutes:**

Minutes of the October 14, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

**A motion was made by Tony Parker and seconded by Tina Wang to accept the minutes of the October 14, 2021 meeting as amended with the above mentioned edits. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0 (Ms. Ferrante was not present at this time to vote).**

Minutes of the January 20, 2022 meeting were reviewed.

**A motion was made by Tina Wang and seconded by Tony Parker to accept the minutes of the January 20, 2022 meeting as amended with the above mentioned edits. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0 (Ms. Ferrante was not present at this time to vote).**

**IV. Director's Report:**

Highlights of the report included:

- Finances;
- Programming; and
- Personnel updates

## **A. Finances**

### 1. Gift Acceptance (vote)

- A donation of \$189 was made by the Friends of the Wellesley Council on Aging (FWCOA) for February 2022 subsidized lunches.
- A donation of \$500 was made by the Simons Fund for February 2022 free lunches.
- A donation of \$44.37 was made by the FWCOA for February 2022 Subsidized coffee.
- A donation of \$168.00 was made by various patrons for the coffee fund.
- Headphones were donated by Tess Griffin.
- Two BSO tickets were donated by Alexa O'Toole in honor of Pierre Laurent.
- Two tickets to the Boston Ballet were donated by Camille Coffey.

Ms. Munroe said when we receive nonmonetary gifts like the tickets from this month, we tell Kate and she finds people who could benefit from receiving the gift.

Ms. Wang asked about how the COA obtains coffee donations, and Ms. Munroe explained that there is a drop box in the café where people can leave donations. Once we have a large enough amount, it is deposited to Town Hall regularly.

**A motion was made by Susan Rosefsky and seconded by Tina Wang to accept all above mentioned monetary and nonmonetary gifts given to the COA. In a Roll Call Vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0 (Ms. Ferrante was not present at this time to vote).**

### 2. FY22 Budget Update (2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> quarter)

Ms. Munroe presented the current FY22 budget update reflecting the second and third quarters of the fiscal year. This includes Operating, Bus, Payroll, and Cabinet locks.

The bus expenses were higher than predicted due to repairs but there was room for that in the budget, and we are still on track.

When we had budgeted for FY22 and FY23 we did not anticipate using Sherri Hanks to help us with the newsletter for as long as we have had her helping us, which is about \$750 per cycle. We know that line item will continue to be over budget but we are underspending in other areas to account for this.

Payroll is right on target tracking at about 67%, where it should be.

### Capital

Little has been spent on capital. Locks were installed on cabinet doors.

### Programming

About 56% of our budget has been expended. The actual amount might be a bit higher than that due to a excel entry error, which will be corrected at the next report.

### EOEA

About \$13,000 remains.

### Gift Accounts

Whatever expenses we have are offset by the Friends.

We are trying to reach someone at the Townsman to see what's going on with them, and are also waiting on the SWellesley Report to get in their paper.

Ms. Sullivan asked if Ms. Munroe will list plans to spend the rest of the money on for this FY22. There are funds remaining from FY21 and will also be some from FY22. The goal is to present next month a request for what Ms. Munroe wants to use the rest of the finds on. We have ten years to use EOEA funds from each year. At the next meeting, Ms. Munroe and members of the Board will discuss areas in which these remaining funds might be used.

Ms. Rosefsky asked a question about expenses for hybrid programs. Ms. Rose and Ms. Munroe will visit the Rec Department next week to see what technology they have installed to operate their hybrid programs. Also, Ms. Rose has a fitness instructor who is interested in doing a hybrid model so we will see how it works out in June. We have the funding in our capital for this fiscal year to account for these expenses. We also have AV technology from a year or two ago that we can use as well.

Ms. Wang noted that 56% of the programming budget is used to date, but the fiscal year ends in June. How will the remaining funds be used or will there be some extra? Ms. Munroe explained that 56% is an underestimate and the funds will be spent before the end of the fiscal year. Ms. Munroe plans to use the funds to get more people back in the building, more excited before they leave for the summer. It was clarified that any unused tax impact funding will be returned to the Town and not rolled over into next year.

An accounting of the Campana Fund will be available soon through the Town Hall.

### 3. FY22 Pilot Program Review

Ms. Munroe will be getting those numbers together.

### **B. Programming- Frequency of Fitness Classes per Newsletter Cycle**

Ms. Munroe clarified that she is working on the number of fitness classes in a cycle, working on a survey that will help us for July and August. She will touch base with Beth Sullivan Woods on phrasing of the survey, and the pilot program review will be part of next month's agenda. Ms. Sullivan asked for clarification that the survey is meant for participants, and a separate survey can be made for instructors. Both will be administered at the same time.

**V. Vaccine/Mask Policy- Review and consideration of termination date of existing policy (possible Vote):**

Ms. Allen explained there are a few options on how to proceed with the vaccine and mask policies. We could have an automatic rescinding condition; if the governor rescinds the policy, we rescind it the day after. We could also change the policy now, rescind it, or do nothing. Ms. Allen spoke with the Board of Health, and there has been talk that the governor would rescind April 1, but have not heard anything else. Ms. Allen opened up the floor for further discussion.

Ms. Wang is comfortable with the first option of the automatic rescinding condition makes sense given the public health emergency. If the governor does not deem it necessary, we can follow that example and feel comfortable.

Ms. Sullivan stated that at the 2/17 Board of Health meeting, Dr. Justin Rucci, a physician spoke in favor of keeping mask mandates. Dr. Regina Laroque talked about this being a transition period with more breakouts. Other countries are already experiencing surges, and it is expected we will see similar patterns. Ms. Sullivan is concerned because this is only area where we have a large percentage of people coming in over 60. It has been proven that masks are effective. She prefers to keep masks to be more prudent. She spoke to folks onsite on Monday, heard thanks from people about vaccination and mask mandates and that it makes them feel more comfortable coming to the building.

Ms. Rosefsky agrees with Tina with the health emergency. When that's taken off she agrees with the automatic rescinding conditions, but she does not agree with changing the policy. It was worked on by the Board, and what happens to that policy if rescinded? Does it just become obsolete or would it be reinstated if needed? Ms. Allen stated the Board could always bring it back easily. Ms. Rosefsky is not in favor of changing the policy. She is torn about masks. She thinks Ms. Sullivan's point about keeping the masks makes sense, but part of her understands how masks can be inhibiting in fitness room. She wonders if these people specifically do not want masks and if the rest of the patrons also do not want them. Ms. Allen notes that even if masks are not required, people would always be allowed to wear masks if that makes certain people more comfortable.

Mr. Parker stated that the policy referenced that due to the state of emergency existing, masks and vaccinations were necessary. If that language is still in the policy, we lift the policy if state of emergency is lifted.

Ms. Wang noted that if someone is not feeling well or is sick, they really should not come into the center. This goes for staff, too.

Ms. Allen is pleased we have this in place. We are seeing some outbreaks elsewhere but not here. I trust the governor would have the most information. Our previous policy was based on that, so she is happy to continue following his recommendations.

Dr. Farrell stated that if we rescind it, which he deems permissible, we have to understand that we could reactivate it at any time if warranted. We should encourage people to wear a mask, and if people have symptoms, they should not come in.

Ms. Sullivan said that with covid, you don't always have symptoms, and you're contagious before you have symptoms. People will still be put at risk even if we make those points clear about symptomatic individuals. Epidemiologists are saying we will have another surge. The population of

the TPC is more vulnerable than the general population, and the idea is to make TPC as safe as possible so that seniors would come. If we take the masks off, are the patrons going to come in person in May and June?

Ms. Allen said that we don't know what the new normal will be. The rates we are seeing now may be the rates we see for the next few years. At some point we'll have to assume risk maybe equivalent to the flu; we are just unsure of what the risk level is now. Should we take action and rescind the policy? If we go with option 1, we should move this today. Ms. Wang asks if we should agree to meet after emergency is lifted? Ms. Allen said, we don't have to do anything now and we can discuss it at another meeting. Mr. Parker reminded people to keep in mind about posting 48 hours in advance. One of the differences today is when we created the policy, it took months, but at this point, we've been through all of that and so we could institute it quickly, in 48 hours.

Ms. Trumbull suggested that consistency is best for the participants, so we should stay the course. Unless this solely rests on position of governor as a legal requirement, she would be reluctant to rescind it until we see somewhat of a better normality. It is not in our best interest to go back and forth.

Ms. Sullivan asked for clarification that it is one policy, not two, which was confirmed. Ms. Allen said it is one policy, so if the policy goes away, we also won't check vaccinations anymore. Ms. Sullivan suggested we are walking on fragile ice. If we are not checking to see if people are vaccinated, then we are not keeping people as safe as possible, as we have said in the past. Scientifically, vaccines are highly recommended, and there is talk about having 65 year old's having another shot. This virus is more transmittable than the other variants and all the numbers are going up.

Dr. Ferrell suggested we should put off a vote to rescind it for now, that there is enough speculation and not enough certainty. We as the Board have a difference of opinion now. There's not enough certainty yet. Let us come back to this at some point in the future.

Ms. Munroe said that some in fitness classes, especially yoga participants said it was hard to work with masks. One patron suggested there be an alternative option if they don't have a vaccination, such as rapid testing or some other variation. It vaccine requirement keeps them from being able to participate in services that they want and need and they may not always fall under the specific health exemption but would be willing to participate in some other protocol.

Ms. Allen said that what she is hearing from everyone is that the decision today is to do nothing. If it seems appropriate to rescind it, we will meet again and do what we feel is right.

Mr. Parker said that when the governor rescinds the public health emergency, he intends to request a meeting of the Board and will move to rescind our requirement.

## **VI. COA Goals:**

Ms. Allen presented the goals again.

### **Goal 1: Mission Statement** – a Subcommittee

The subcommittee of Ms. Sullivan, Ms. Vogel, Ms. Trumbull, and Ms. Rosefsky are continuing their work to draft a new mission statement. Members of this subcommittee can join one of the following two working groups once the draft mission statement is completed.

**Goal 2: Expansion – to broaden and expand the scope of the COA – a Working Group**

- a. Through collaboration with other Boards and organizations
- b. Through expansion of COA programming hours and functions
- c. Through continued efforts to improve and better utilize the kitchen

This includes more collaboration, such as with the Rec Department in using their Demonstration Kitchen, with the library to program outside our normal hours and in a bigger venue. We need to find a funding mechanism to expand some of our programming hours to pay for addition custodian hours and field trips.

This Working Group will be comprised of Ms. Allen, Mr. DeFazio, Ms. Sullivan, Ms. Trumbull, and one more member to be determined.

**Goal 3: Communication / Outreach – to inform and educate about the COA – a Working Group**

- a. develop resource for media, phone, television, person-to-person outreach
- b. Prioritize identifying and communicating with non-tech and/or isolated residents
- c. Provide amenities, welcoming environment, special notices or communication

We need to be creative about how we reach people - how people receive information, what's effective and what is not, and how that can be pulled into our administrative system so that it is easily workable. We need to decide how we help people who are not very tech savvy, do not have tech or feel uncomfortable using it, or folks that live alone. How do we reach these people and offer them more services? We need to create a more welcoming community with more enthusiasm, deliver our notices and communications more effectively, and provide a place where people really want to come and socialize more.

This Working Group will be comprised of Mr. Parker, Mr. Ferrell, Ms. Rosefsky, and two more members to be determined.

Ms. Vogel, Ms. Ferrante, and Ms. Wang will determine which groups to join to fill each of the working groups, called by staff, to five Board members per working group.

**VII. Wellesley Wonderful Weekend:**

**A. Open House- May 21, 2022**

Mr. DeFazio announced that the Wellesley Wonderful Weekend is planned for May 21-22 and hoped the COA would again participate. After discussion, it was decided to hold the TPC open from 12-3, with refreshments and information available as hand-outs. This is an enjoyable event for the Board. Mr. Parker added that spouses and friends can be invited, too.

**B. Parade- May 22, 2022**

The parade will be on Sunday, 1-3pm. Mr. Parker suggested some of the walking group might want to walk the route and carry the banner. We could expand our group with the Friends or spouses.

Mr. DeFazio stated that at the present time, there are about 30 to 35 units signed up. Ms. Allen said the parade is a real publicity opportunity, but the one request is that we appear earlier in the parade rather than at the end. Mr. DeFazio suggested we state that in our on-line application. There was discussion about possible hand-outs (no candy) and the possibility of a booth during the Party in the Park later that day. Mr. DeFazio added that the Rain date is about 10 days after original date.

**VIII. Reports/Updates:**

The June Board Meeting date changed- instead of the 16<sup>th</sup> of June it will be the 23<sup>th</sup>. Our next Outreach Meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup> will be on the patio.

**IX. Old Business/New Business:**

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

Mr. DeFazio inquired about the kitchen study from FMD and hopes they are including the Board in their consultation. Ms. Allen explained that the money has to be appropriated in Town Meeting for the next fiscal year, starting in July. Our Board does not have a lot of control over this study, and a memo was written stating that our Board and the Board of Health should be included in the loop. The expectation is that the study will take place this summer.

Ms. Sullivan asked if any instructors or volunteers were not vaccinated, and what is their current status. Ms. Munroe indicated one volunteer withdrew who did not agree with the policy, and a couple of others were not eligible. Staff covered the front door for a time. Ms. Munroe said the volunteer coordinator's job is always to find more volunteers, so she is working on it.

Ms. Allen asked how our numbers are changing after the requirement went into effect. Heather indicated that the numbers are increasing for the first time in a while. She believes people are feeling more comfortable venturing out of home, not necessarily due to the policy. Mr. Wilson stated he has fielded a mix of reactions. It was clarified that there is both positive and negative feedback.

**X. Next meeting dates/time**

COA Board Meeting Thursday, April 21, 2022 at 4pm

**XI. Adjourn**

**A motion was made by Tony Parker and seconded by Kathy Trumbull to adjourn the meeting. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 9-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:21pm.**

**Approved at the June 23, 2022 Meeting.**