

Wellesley Council on Aging
Board Meeting
May 10, 2018

Location: Wellesley Bank Arts & Crafts Room, Tolles Parsons Center

In Attendance: Diane Campbell, Kathleen Vogel, Thomas Kealy, Jacqueline Mahoney, Dianne Sullivan, Lisa Heyison, Frank Pinto, Anne Marie Gross

Board of Selectmen (BOS): Ellen Gibbs, Thomas Ulfelder

Executive Director of General Government Services: Blythe Robinson

Advisory Committee: Lina Musayev

Staff: Gayle Thieme, Linda Clifford

Absent: Barbara Offenhartz, Penelope Lawrence, Miguel Lessing, William Murphy, Sheila Nugent

Call to Order: Diane Campbell called the meeting to order at 1:02pm.

Citizens Speak: None.

Discussion of COA Board and individual member roles and responsibilities & Board reorganization:

Diane Campbell reminded the group of the norms used to guide Board meetings: assume positive intentions, ground statements in evidence, ensure all voices are heard, keep comments brief, relevant & on topic, and remain focused on the topic.

Ellen Gibbs said the BOS find it timely to join this meeting to discuss how they and the Town can help the COA Board concerning its role and responsibilities, as well as to address more imminent decisions about appointments, terms and officers. Tom Ulfelder said he, Ellen and Blythe met to discuss what resources they can provide to the Board. Moving to TPC has been a positive for COA. The BOS wants to respect and encourage the sense of volunteerism held by the COA Board. The BOS and Selectman's Office will provide the COA Board an independent facilitator over next year. The facilitator will work with the Board to review its mission, individual member roles and relationships with staff. The BOS want enough time to address all issues and for the Board to have ownership of the process.

Regarding member appointments for next year, five members have terms expiring June 30, and four of those members have expressed interest in reappointment. The BOS propose holding over those four members for one year. Jackie Mahoney is leaving the Board, thus the BOS will appoint a new member to a one-year term to fill her seat. A year from now, there will be eight members up for reappointment (the four members held over for one year, the person appointed to a one-year term this year, and three members whose terms expire 6/30/19). At that time, the BOS will take steps to stagger terms so that no more than four members are up for reappointment in future years.

COA staff will report to Blythe Robinson and Sheryl Strother for FY 2019 while Board works with facilitator. The Board will still vote on the COA FY 2020 Budget.

Tom Kealy asked about the budget development process with COA staff reporting to Blythe. Tom Ulfelder said the Board would have its role in terms of vision, and the process will not be that different from other Boards and departments working with the Selectmen's Office and Finance Department. The focus of the Board will be better served by working with the facilitator to gain a clear understanding of its role.

Lisa Heyison asked if the working groups would stop their work completely, considering they are making progress and building momentum. Ellen Gibbs said the Board will work on identifying priorities with the

facilitator. Tom Ulfelder added the facilitator will help identify the positive and work to keep it going. Anne Marie Gross said she attended a recent FWCOA meeting, and FWCOA wants to know more about the Board's strategy for next few years as this will help them develop their next phase of fundraising. The Board needs to re-evaluate its strategic plan now that the COA is in TPC. Anne Marie said she is in support of having the facilitator work with the Board on this. Dianne Sullivan said the Board has looked at the strategic plan every year and developed three goals from it. Anne Marie said since moving, the COA's circumstances and environment has changed but the Board has not thoroughly evaluated the strategic plan and now is the time to do it.

Tom Kealy asked if meetings would look the same (with staff present and presenting information to the Board) with the facilitator present. Blythe said not necessarily. There may be times when the Board will want to meet with the facilitator without staff present and she will work with Gayle concerning the information staff provide to the Board. She added she does not see a reduction in information the Board receives.

Frank Pinto said he believes that overall, this plan will be positive for Board going forward. Diane Campbell said she sees the support of a facilitator as a real opportunity. Moving to TPC has brought a new level of operations and the Board's capacity needs to be built up, along with an articulation of its role.

Lisa Heyison asked about the upcoming elections of Board officers for next year. Tom Ulfelder said he posed questions to Town Counsel Tom Harrington. All that is required for the coming year is a Chair to help facilitate meetings, but the Board can choose what it would like to do. There was general group discussion on the plans for next year's proposed slate for Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Linda Clifford read aloud the motion the Board passed on 4/26. Diane Campbell asked now that the Board composition for next year is clearer, does it change who is considered for offices. Tom Kealy added now the nominating group is considering 10 people whereas previously they were considering only six people. Anne Marie Gross suggested going back to everyone to inquire about his or her interest now that the roles are changing. Ellen Gibbs added when voting on a slate, officer roles and responsibilities should be clear so that nominees know what they are getting into. The group agreed to discuss moving forward with the vote at the next meeting on 5/21.

Kathleen Vogel asked what the BOS are looking for in a facilitator. Anne Marie Gross said the role and responsibilities of the Board is something this Board has had difficulty establishing. She hopes a facilitator will help the Board understand how it will function going forward. Tom Kealy said he hopes the facilitator can help bring together everyone's perspectives. Every other time the Board has had a facilitator lead Board retreats, it has been a positive experience. Gayle Thieme asked who is being considered as a facilitator. Tom Ulfelder said the BOS wants the Board to have control over the process, so someone who is completely independent from the BOS is essential, and they would be looking for someone with a proven record of accomplishment. Ellen Gibbs added this is not the first time a need like this has come up. Kathleen Vogel asked if the Board would continue to work with the facilitator for the entire year if the Board accomplishes what it needs to in less time. Ellen Gibbs said there is no "prescription" for working with facilitator and Blythe added that kind of decision would be made at that time.

Gayle Thieme will collect questions from Board members and will pass along to Ellen Gibbs and Tom Ulfelder.

New Business: None.

Meeting adjourned: Diane Campbell adjourned the meeting at 2:21pm.

Next Meeting(s): May 21, 2018 at 4:00pm

Minutes prepared by Linda Clifford