

**Council on Aging Minutes of September 16, 2021  
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](http://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; Tony Parker, Vice Chair; Susan Rosefsky (Joined at 4:05pm), Secretary; Tory DeFazio; Lori Ferrante; Dianne Sullivan; Kathy Trumbull; Kathleen Vogel; and Tina Wang

**Please note that Ms. Rosefsky was muted during the meeting due to technical difficulty; votes for this Member were not counted at this meeting.**

**Absent:** Bob Ferrell

**Also Present:** Heather Munroe, Director of Senior Services; Gregory Wilson, Assistant Director of Senior Services; Kate Burnham, Health and Social Services Administrator; and Corinne Monahan, Advisory Board Liaison

**Meeting Documents:**

Agenda  
Minutes of August 19, 2021  
Director's Report including:  
Mask and Attendance Survey  
FY21 EOEI Report  
Newsletter Policy Edits

**I. Call to Order:**

Ms. Allen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:04pm. There was a Roll Call for attendance.

**II. Citizen Speak: None**

**III. Meeting Minutes:**

Minutes of the August 19, 2021 meeting were reviewed.

**A motion was made by Tony Parker and seconded by Kathleen Vogel to accept the minutes of the August 19, 2021 meeting. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

**IV. COA Social Worker Update**

Ms. Burnham presented the Board with an overview and update on her role as the Health and Social Services Administrator. Much of her work includes:

- Information and referral services as well as direction to resources;
- Advising on complex topics such as aging in place, housing, and long-term planning;

- Maintaining relationships with other Town departments to better serve senior residents that may be at-risk;
- Overseeing the Senior Work Off Program; and
- Meeting with elders via phone or in-person to address their concerns.

During discussion, Ms. Allen asked about the process for residents to qualify for a subsidized or free lunch. It was clarified that anyone can pay the full rate of ten dollars or the subsidized rate of five dollars, and that if anyone opts for a free lunch, there is a non-intrusive application process.

Mr. Parker recalled an incident where a senior was found wandering on Route 9 and asked how those types of situations arise. Ms. Burnham informed the Board that memory loss and dementia is a big culprit in these cases, highlighting that she works closely with public safety employees in these situations to set up systems to help seniors and families cope and adapt.

Ms. Vogel asked Ms. Burnham about her understanding of the seniors that expected the shutdown from the pandemic to be short and if those seniors have felt more isolation than anticipated. Ms. Burnham indicated that while it is difficult to answer, she explained that one of her most isolated and worried seniors has started to participate in in-person programming, indicating a shift towards normalcy.

## **V. Director's Report:**

Highlights of the report included:

- Finances;
- Programming;
- Policies;
- Wednesday Lunch Review;
- COVID Updates; and
- October Events

### **A. Finances**

#### **I. FY21**

##### *1. FY21 EOEI Annual Report (Vote)*

Ms. Munroe presented the updated FY21 EOEI Annual Report for Board approval.

During discussion, it was clarified that while the State has not provided guidance on the report yet, the version presented to the Board is in its final format unless otherwise directed. It was also identified that the second column on the second page of the report should read, "Municipal Funding FY2021."

**A motion was made by Kathleen Vogel and seconded by Lori Ferrante to accept the FY21 EOEI Annual Report with the above mentioned edit. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

##### *2. FY21 Annual Town Report*

Directions for the FY21 EOEI Report have still not been released, and the report is in draft form. Once guidance is provided from the Executive Director and the Town, a final version will be ready.

Ms. Munroe will make another attempt to receive guideline clarification, and Stephanie Hawkinson was identified as a potential resource.

## II. FY22

### 1. *Gift Acceptance (Vote)*

A donation of \$119.12 was made by the Friends of the Wellesley Council on Aging (FWCOA) for August 2021 subsidized lunches.

A donation of \$364.89 was made by the FWCOA for July-August 2021 subsidized coffee supplies.

A donation of \$70 was made by the Simons Fund for August 2021 free lunches.

A donation of \$30,000 was made by the Campana Fund as the fifth and final installment.

A donation of \$9,698.42 was made by the New Era Fund as a grant for fitness center equipment.

During discussion, Ms. Vogel provided a historic overview of the Campana Fund, which is intended for programming and building modification needs. Ms. Munroe clarified that the current amount the COA has in this Fund is \$350,000 and that the COA has not used any of those funds yet. It was also clarified that large scale donations are maintained with the Town Treasury and the Campana Fund is in an interest-bearing account. It was further clarified that, in general, interest gained from these types of accounts contribute to the general fund.

**A motion was made by Kathleen Vogel and seconded by Tony Parker to accept all above-mentioned monetary gifts given to the COA. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0.**

### 2. *Pilot Update and Report July to Present*

Ms. Munroe presented the following PILOT program updates to the Board:

- **SAIL-** Offered as a free session in July and August on Zoom, the class cost \$300 total and had between 27-30 people per class. After transitioning to a paid program in September and October at \$4 per class, the COA has gained a net profit of \$404 so far.
- **Chair Yoga-** Offered as a free session in September and October, the class cost is \$300 and has between 22-30 people per class already. The class limit was later raised to 35 people.
- **Line Dancing-** Offered as a free session in September and October in-person, the class cost is \$300 and has between 18-19 people enrolled per class already.
- **Art Fun for Everyone-** Offered as a free session in September and October in-person, the cost of each class is \$100. So far, there has been low attendance at four people enrolled per class. The COA will monitor this session to determine if the October classes should run.

During discussion, it was clarified that Pilot classes are offered free of charge to patrons, and leftover funds have been allocated to fund these programs. If programs are successful, the original costs are covered from the revenue of future sessions.

## **B. Programming**

### I. Attendance Preliminary Update- First Two Weeks in September

To date, there have been 279 participants for September programming. Throughout the

month of July, there were 419 participants. So far this month, there have been two in-person exercise classes. Cardio Sculpt had eight people in attendance while Line Dancing had 17 attendees. The in-person Acrylic class has eight people signed up, as well as the Learn to Play Mah Jongg class.

## II. Planned changes for November/December

Ms. Munroe informed the Board that the COA plans to replicate much of the current programming in November and December. Additionally, the COA plans to propose to the FWCOA adding Thursday lunches, and the COA will rely on data to try various in-person classes. The TPC will see about three or four in-person exercise classes, the same in-person groups, as well as an online and an in-person lecture. Additionally, the Fire Department is working out details for Thanksgiving dinner.

During discussion, it was clarified that no changes have happened in the newsletter process, and if anyone has not received their newsletter it is likely due to an error with the postal service. Additionally, Ms. Vogel asked for a six-month window of newsletter cycles to demonstrate where breaks in fitness classes occur in each cycle. Ms. Munroe clarified that, while she cannot produce a projection that far in advance, exercise classes have six drop-in classes per eight-week cycle, and the patrons and instructors have not provided any negative feedback on the model. Additionally, thus far there has never been more than a one-week gap in programming between all fitness classes, and seniors may supplement another class if a particular one is not running that week. Mr. Parker advised that the Board is reaching into Management territory, and Ms. Allen asked if Ms. Munroe could obtain more feedback from the seniors on this process.

## **C. Policies**

### I. Update Program Info & Policies Inside Page Newsletter

Ms. Munroe proposed updates to the policies that appear on the inside Newsletter cover page to accommodate the virtual and drop-in components of our programming. Ms. Munroe advised that the Policy Working Group should oversee preliminary edits for future approval, and the revised versions can be reflected in the January/February newsletter.

During discussion, it was clarified that feedback should go directly to Ms. Munroe to compile and forward to the working group, which will be Ms. Sullivan, Ms. Vogel, and Ms. Rosefsky.

## **D. Other**

### I. Lunch Review for Wednesdays

Mr. Wilson informed the board about the lunch program in August and part of September. In August, the COA served 29 lunches and 41.5% were full price, 34.5% were subsidized, and 24% were at no cost. While the number of lunches ordered in September thus far is at 57 meals, this is due to the Hot Meals Program merging with Lunch. Additionally, a small handful of seniors have opted to eat in the café on Wednesdays, but the majority of orders are for delivery. Some seniors that opted to eat in the café decided to take their lunches home. Mr. Wilson also informed the Board that, after surveying the seniors who opted to eat lunch in the café on Wednesdays, the comfort level and desire to eat in the café varied. Additionally, there was not a trend of more seniors opting for delivery instead of coming into the TPC for their lunch.

During discussion, it was clarified that since the Hot Meal Program merged with Lunch, the COA now requires meal requests, rather than automatic delivery. COA staff also followed up with all

previous Hot Meal participants if they did not submit their order forms. Additionally, it was clarified that the original Hot Meal participants were initially identified through the Health Department and Ms. Burnham. Furthermore, it was decided that a further breakdown of Lunch numbers by day will be presented in future Director's Reports.

Ms. Allen advocated for increasing socialization around Wednesday lunches. The COA will adjust the verbiage to encourage seniors to eat in the café. Additionally, it was suggested the COA revisit a lunch policy that speaks to taking food home. During further discussion, Ms. Munroe clarified that the above mentioned policy is not in her possession, and she advocated for a policy that clarifies applicability of previous policies.

## II. COVID Update

Ms. Munroe informed the Board that the mask mandate has been followed, although a few patrons have needed some extra reminders. Based on a recent survey, results suggest that, while the mask mandate is a deterrent to a small amount of seniors, the majority of seniors were supportive or had no opinion of the mandate.

During discussion, it was clarified that the survey closed on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. Additionally, it was clarified that while the COA reads through all open responses, performing a formal analysis would require too much staff time. Ms. Ferrante offered support for the inclusion of all of the comments in the report.

## III. October

### 1. *Wonderful Wellesley Weekend (Parade & Open House)*

Both events will be promoted in the Townsman, with the Town, and in the Newsblast.

### 2. *Welcome Wednesday Evening at the COA*

The TPC will be open from 5:00-7:00pm on Wednesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> to promote programs and gain new participants. A fitness instructor will be onsite leading a brief exercise class. Additionally, there will be a wellness clinic, the COA Social Worker will facilitate a group session, and others will be present. The COA will advertise on the Newsblast, through the Town, and through the Townsman.

It was also noted that the Pen Pal Program has started up again with enthusiastic response, and Ms. Allen offered positive feedback about the program.

## **VI. Reports/Updates**

### **A. Retreat Update**

Ms. Allen informed the Board that the retreat dates are October 7th and October 14th from 4:15-6:30pm. It will be decided at a later time if the retreat will be remote or in-person. By September 30<sup>th</sup>, Board members will send in two or three goal ideas for the upcoming year. Topics for the retreat include operating structure, expectations of the Board, the COA mission statement, goals, roadmaps, and the strategic plan.

### **B. Finance Working Group**

Ms. Allen informed the Board that the budgets need to be prepared for the following fiscal year. The working group assisting Ms. Munroe will include Ms. Allen, Ms. Vogel, and Ms. Wang.

### **C. Other Updates**

Ms. Allen and Mr. Parker spoke about the parade on Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Aside from Mr. Parker, Ms. Ferrante and Ms. Trumbull will also attend. Mr. Parker will build a list of attendees and provide a vehicle with decorations. Ms. Vogel suggested asking if any patrons want to also march.

Ms. Allen informed the Board that Mr. Parker, Ms. Trumbull, Ms. Wang, Ms. Allen, and Ms. Rosefsky will staff the Open House on October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Ms. Allen updated the Board on the recent meeting she attended with the Board of Health and Select Board. A mask mandate for Town buildings effective September 1<sup>st</sup> resulted from that meeting.

Ms. Allen thanked Mr. Parker, Ms. Rosefsky, and Ms. Trumbull for staffing the Community Session on September 14<sup>th</sup> and reminded the Board that the next session is on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Parker informed the Board that three people came to speak. Topics raised included equipment in the fitness room, a Halloween animal event, a vaccination mandate, flexibility with the amount of people watching movies, Saturday classes, celebrating all holidays, flower arrangement, and kitchen use. Ms. Trumbull also said another request was made about Bridge, an investment group, and implementing a charge to use the fitness center. Positive feedback was provided about the drop-in fitness classes.

Ms. Vogel informed the Board that there was initially a fee to use the fitness center when it opened. That practice was found to be in direct conflict with the intent of the gift from the Almira Simons Fund, which was meant to provide a space for folks with limited income to utilize the fitness center.

### **VI. Old Business/New Business:**

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

Mr. DeFazio informed the Board that he attended an Open Meeting Law and Public Records informational session. Much of the discussion centered on the Open Meeting Law, and the discussion will continue on October 7<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Allen informed the Board that currently there are no updates on the Open Meeting Law complaint filed earlier this year.

Ms. Monahan inquired about her attending the upcoming COA Board retreat. She determined that her attendance was not necessary.

Ms. Wang asked for clarification on how the Community Sessions operate, and Ms. Allen clarified that while any Board member can attend, no more than 5 board members can be present.

### **VII. Next meeting dates/time**

Open House at the COA- October 2<sup>nd</sup> 1:00-3:00pm.  
COA Board Retreat Thursday, October 7, 2021 at 4:15pm.  
COA Board Retreat Thursday, October 14, 2021 at 4:15pm.  
COA Board Meeting Thursday, October 21, 2021 at 4:00pm.

**VIII. Adjourn**

**A motion was made by Kathleen Vogel and seconded by Tony Parker to adjourn the meeting. In a Roll Call vote by Members Present named above, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:54pm.**

**Approved at the October 21, 2021 meeting.**