

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Gregory Wilson, Interim Director

Prepared for: September 15, 2022

ADMINISTRATION/CUSTOMER SERVICE

Enrollment

During August, the COA acquired 11 patrons. Ten are Wellesley residents and one is a non-resident. Two are in the 60-69 age group, six are in the 70-79 age group, and three are in the 80+age group. Additionally, ten of the new patrons are female, and one is male.

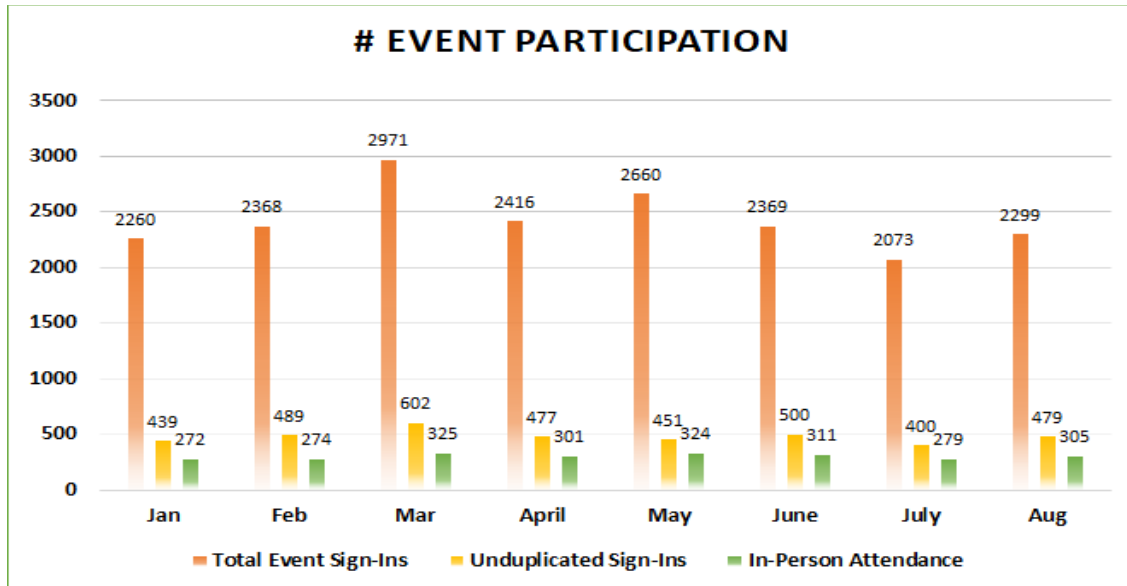
Sign-Ins/Attendance

We had 2,299 Total Event Sign-Ins with 479 active patrons for the entire month of August. Of the sign-ins:

- 392 were Wellesley residents and 87 were non-residents;
- 362 were female and 117 were male; and
- 1024 were in-person “swipes” entered by 305 different patrons.

Programming Stats

- Community Education – 18
- Cultural Events – 148
- Fitness Center usage – 215 appointments
- Fitness Instruction – 644 (duplicated)
- Health Education – 38
- IT Tech Assistance appointments - 20
- Legal Assistance – 2
- Recreation/Socialization – 250
- SHINE appointments – 7



FINANCES

FY23 – Gifts

FY23 Gifts- Monetary

Amount	From	Purpose
\$2500.00	Friends of the Wellesley COA	Fall Foliage Trip Sept 2022
\$197.77	Friends of the Wellesley COA	Coffee Subsidy August 2022
\$255.00	Friends of the Wellesley COA	Lunch Subsidy August 2022
\$467.00	Friends of the Wellesley COA	Lunch Simons Fund August 2022

Board and Staff Get Together Funding- Gift Account

The staff had a great time meeting with members of the Board on Monday, August 29, and really appreciated the opportunity to get to know each of the Board members. The cost for the refreshments from Roche Brothers totaled \$60.58. The COA is asking the Board to approve \$60.58 from the general gift account to pay for the refreshments.

Boston Pops Funding Update

Last month the Board graciously approved the COA to use up to \$2,000 from the FY21 EOE account so that the cost of the day trip for the Boston Pops show could be \$89 per person. The travel company the COA works with just informed us of an additional discount we will receive, which means that we can instead charge \$79 per person. After discussing this with the Program and Activities Team, we decided to charge the lower price, as it will be more appealing and will help foster the holiday spirit!

PERSONNEL

The COA is in the process of conducting employee reviews for hourly employees. Reviews will be completed during the months of September and October.

POLICY

Age & Participation Policy – (Attachment 3: Age and Participation Policy Update Draft Sept. 2022)

Last month the COA Board approved edits to the Age & Participation Policy that helped clarify the definition of a resident. There was also discussion about additional edits, however, the COA is asking the Board to approve this current version so that it can be published in the next newsletter. The Board can then make further improvements for future implementation.

BUILDING UPDATES

The COA Board Chair and Interim Director met with representatives from FMD, Town Hall, and the Health Department on Wednesday, September 7th for a kickoff meeting for the kitchen study. After hearing the process overview, the COA was tasked with providing Dick Elliott, who is overseeing the study, with a one-page list detailing the COA's programming goals relating to the kitchen. This list should be organized by priority and ideally cover when the COA hopes to start each program. The list should also cover immediate needs as well as anticipated long-term needs (five years out or farther). Once this list has been provided to Mr. Elliott, the study can commence, and FMD will provide the COA with possible options to move forward with. This list needs to be presented at the next kitchen meeting, which will take place on Friday, October 7th. We aim to obtain input from the staff, Board, and the public.

PROGRAMMING

Highlights

We started the month with an online presentation about Costumes in Film which was attended by 24 seniors. The following day we held our first Al Fresco Dinner and Music for 15 seniors on the patio. The next day we held our final Block Printing Workshop for the summer which was attended by 10 seniors, creating more positive feedback for a successful pilot program. On August 5th we held an in-person Shoulder Pain Program attended by 21 seniors with requests for the presenter to continue to return and offer more beneficial presentations. We held our second Al Fresco Dinner for 15 more residents on another beautiful evening outdoors. Our biggest hit of the month was an online program called Cutting the Cable for an hour and a half! This was attended by 54 seniors and what an incredible afternoon, so well attended! We continue to find more seniors pleased with

the balance of in-person and online programs and look forward to the fall and a more robust offering!

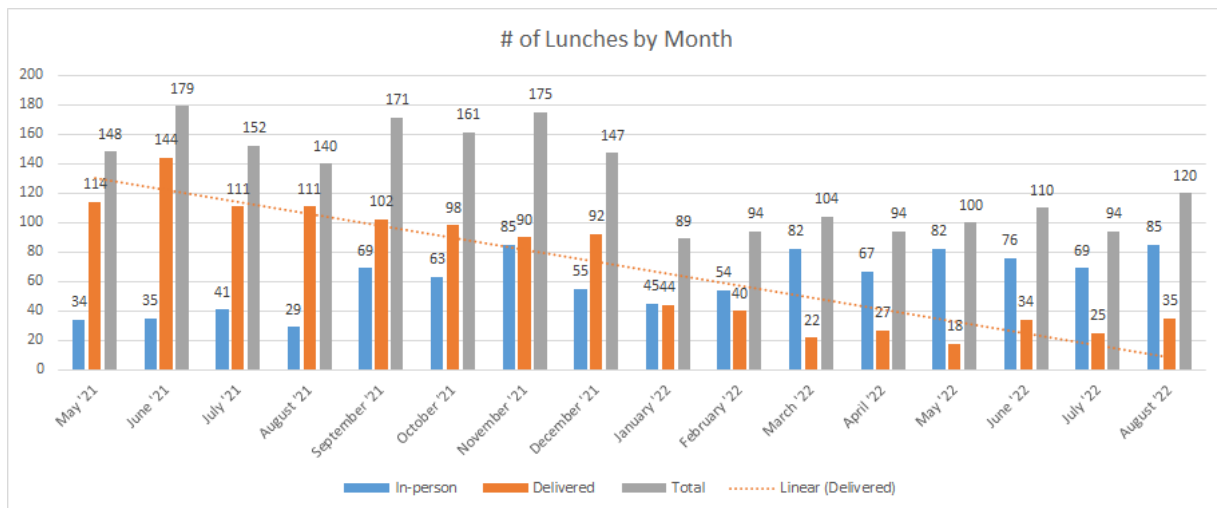
Fitness Center Updates- (Attachment 1: Fitness Center Survey Results)

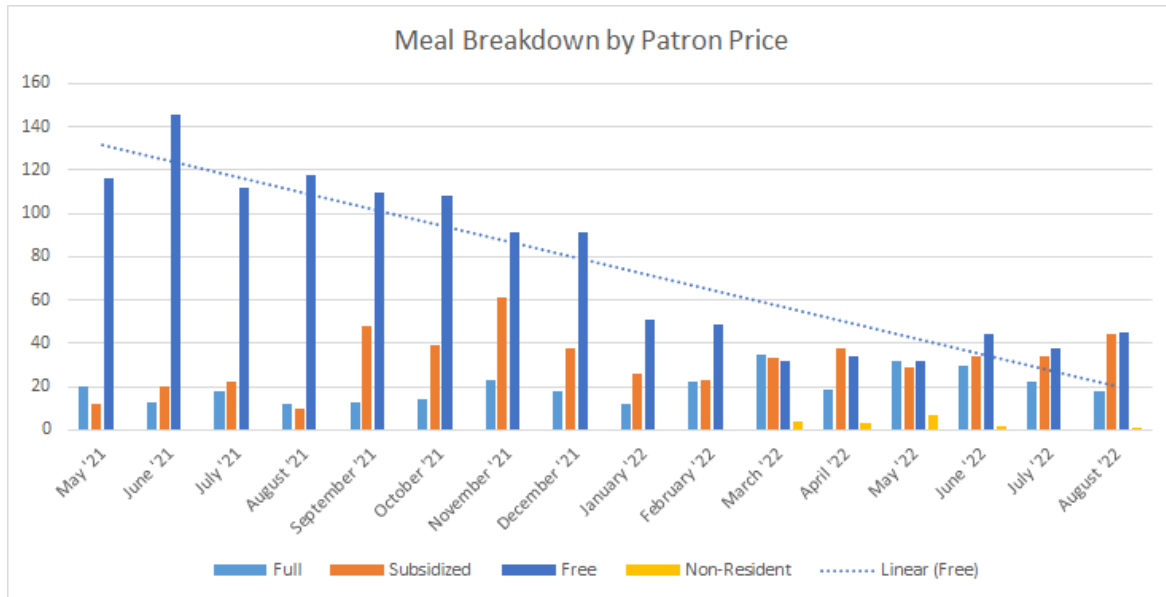
The COA launched a survey last month to everyone registered to use the fitness center after hearing that the current process is not working for a significant number of people. After looking at the results and discussing logistics with staff, the COA has decided to make the fitness center drop-in only starting Monday, October 3rd. The survey provided mixed results, but it was clear that most respondents preferred drop-in every day of the week. We have been happy to organize household only appointments due to the pandemic, however, with increasingly available vaccines and boosters as well as higher demand to use the fitness center, we feel this is the best path moving forward. The results are attached.

Additionally, the COA has received clarification on its obligation to provide initial training for the equipment. According to Town Counsel, “... the law does not impose any training or education requirements and what you are offering sounds sufficient to me as a practical matter.” We did receive a recommendation to have fitness center participants sign a waiver before using the equipment, and we have now built that into our process.

Lunch Program

In August, the number of onsite lunches increased from the previous month to 85 meals. Deliveries also increased from 25 meals to 35 meals in August, and the Health and Social Services Administrator continues to monitor the delivery eligible list. The total number of lunches increased to 120 meals. Additionally, we saw a decrease in the number of full priced lunches, but an increase in the number of subsidized and free lunches. There was one order placed for non-residents.





SOCIAL WORK/OUTREACH

Financial Assistance

The COA did not receive many requests for financial support, however, one request for assistance towards dental work was approved and is a common financial burden for seniors.

Healthy Aging Programming

The Social Connections group continues to meet on a weekly basis. Then group has welcomed participants who have not previously utilized to the Tolles Parsons Center. In addition, the collaboration with Wellesley Police Departments monthly “Coffee with a Cop” offers the public an opportunity to ask questions and have a casual interaction with the Police. Seniors appear to feel comfortable discussing concerns with Officers Dennehy and Rosenberg, the two elder affairs officers assigned. The Men in Retirement group continues to bring positive benefits to those who have attended. Specifically, men who are preparing to retire and slowing down to part time work have also enjoyed the discussions about making a healthy transition into retirement.

Themes

Common themes discussed with Health & Social Services Administrator include questions about navigating housing, downsizing, entering Assisted Living, or the costs of long-term nursing home placement. Additional themes include helping families by assessing the need for in home care options versus placement, planning for aging in place, and home modification and fall prevention. Concerns are ongoing for frail residents who are without support due to the Springwell home care program being unable to retain care providers who will travel to Wellesley. In addition to the vulnerability of those without in home care, seniors with untreated mental health issues are at risk and there is a shortage of clinicians in the area. Many seniors express complicated levels of family support and the emotional

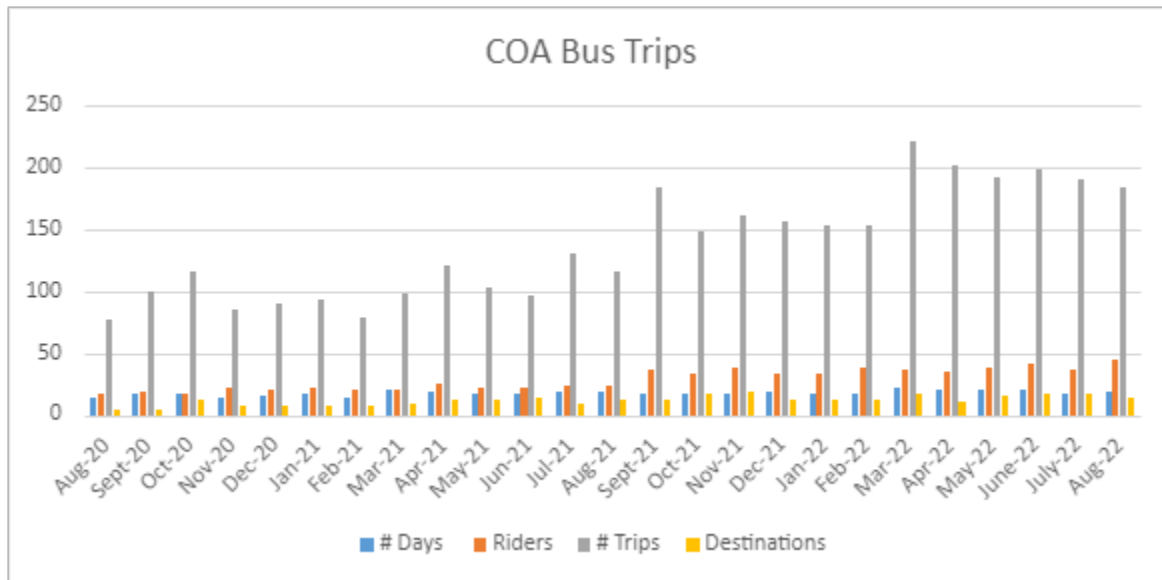
toll of adult children. Providing education about Medicare benefits of temporary VNA and other in home care options are also frequent examples of conversations.

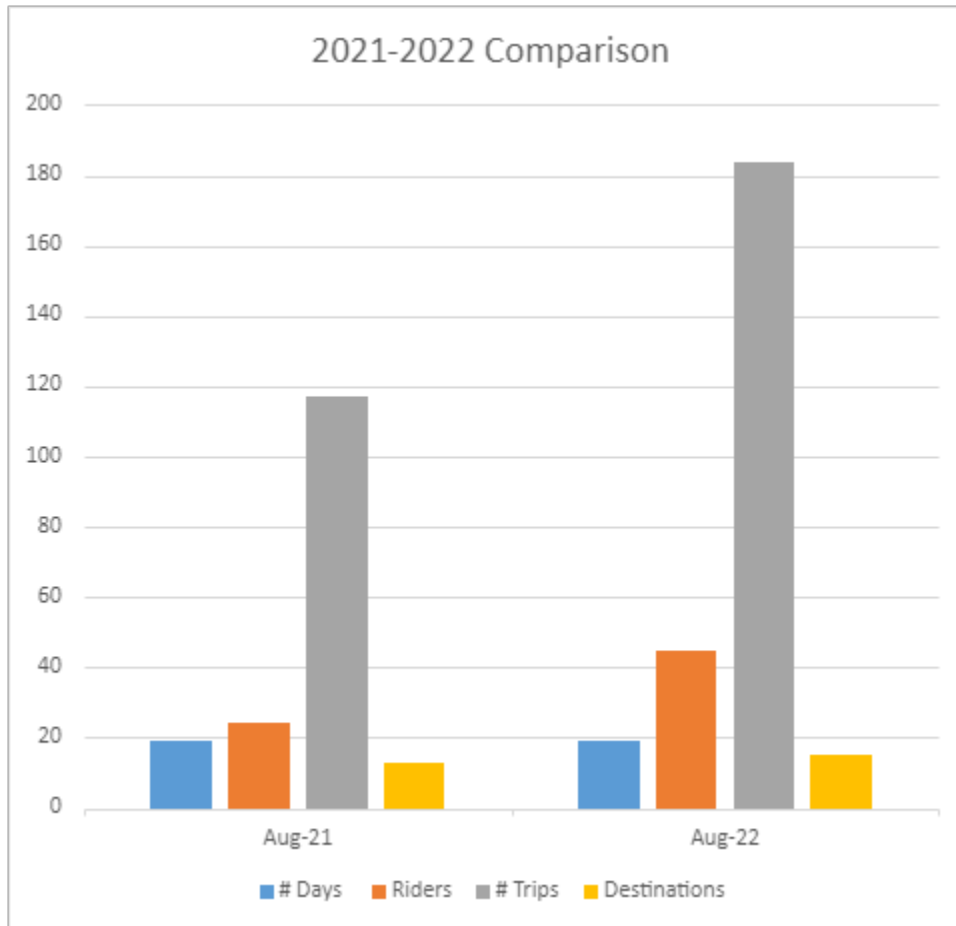
TRANSPORTATION

(Attachment 2: Transportation Survey Results)

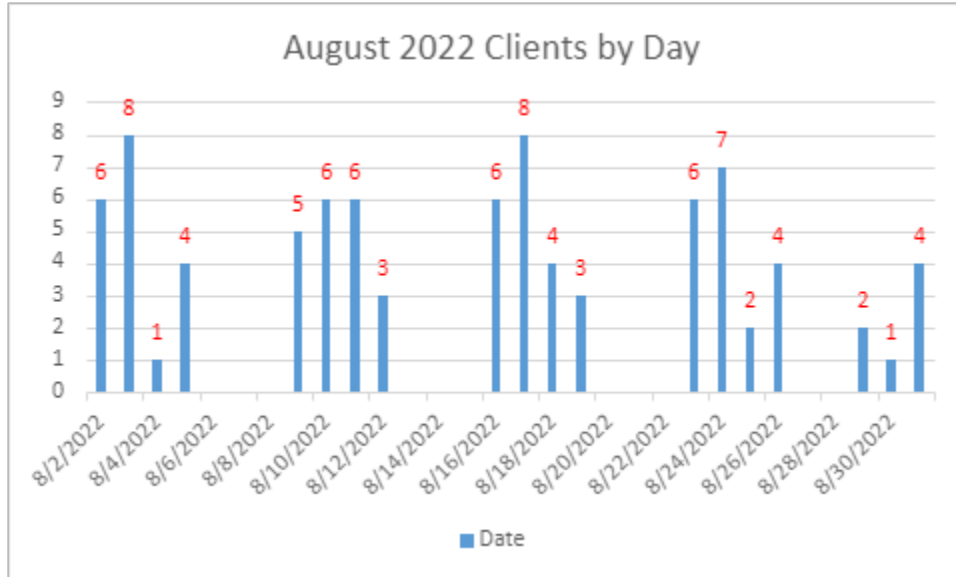
The COA collected input from bus riders, and we saw 30 responses come through. The most popular shopping destinations requested outside of Wellesley included Stop and Shop in Natick, Market Basket in Waltham, and Trader Joe’s in Needham. We are excited to announce that starting in November, we will start blocking off time for one trip a month. The least popular days have been Mondays and Thursdays, so we will offer those shopping trips on a Monday or Thursday. We will see if we can increase the number of shopping trips based on attendance and demand.

In August, the number of trips decreased from 190 to 184 units, and the number of operational days increased to 19 days. The number of riders increased from 37 to 45 people, and the number of unique destinations slightly decreased to 15 locations. I have also included the number of riders (or clients) we had each day in August. The busiest days were August 3rd and August 17th.





<u>Destination</u>	<u>Address</u>
New England Eye Center	1 Washington St
Roche Brothers	184 Linden St
NWH Dr	2000 Washington St, Newton
NWH	2014 Washington St, Newton
Food Pantry	207 Washington St
Medical Building	230 Worcester St
Post Office	231 Forest St
CVS	25 Washington St
Fraser Medical Building	332 Washington St
Beth Israel Deaconess Healthcare	372 Washington St
Newton Wellesley Spine Center	378 Washington St
Whole Foods	442 Washington St
Tolles Parsons Center	500 Washington St
Library	530 Washington St
Dr. Offices	65 Walnut St



VOLUNTEER

The Wellesley student Green Shirts ended their summer internships on August 26th. It was a nice to have this intergenerational experience on-site as well as the opportunity to give the recurring Front Door Greeter and Lunch volunteers some time off during the summer months. The fall schedule is coming together nicely with returning volunteers as well as some new volunteers. It is especially nice to have the commitment from the Front Door Greeters to fill the 3.5 hour shifts. This position has proven to be an excellent way to have a warm and welcoming entry to the TPC and helps ensure a smooth operation of the TPC through their assistance to staff. On September 1st we had four volunteers from Definitive Healthcare of Framingham assist with our BBQ and Musical Program. Since 2018, Definitive Healthcare has partnered with us to provide volunteers for Special Events as part of their corporate 'Definitive Cares' community outreach program.

ANNUAL TOWN REPORT- FY2022

(Attachment 4: COA FY22 Annual Town Report DRAFT 9-8-22)

The FY22 Annual Town Report is attached and ready for edits or approval. We received guidance from the Executive Director's Office on content and formatting, and we have incorporated their helpful feedback. If further edits are needed, we can incorporate them before the October meeting, receive approval then, and submit this report before the end of October.

Summer 2022 Fitness Center Survey

59

Responses

05:24

Average time to complete

Closed

Status

1. Please select your age range.

● 60 to 69	14
● 70 to 79	30
● 80 to 89	14
● 90+	1

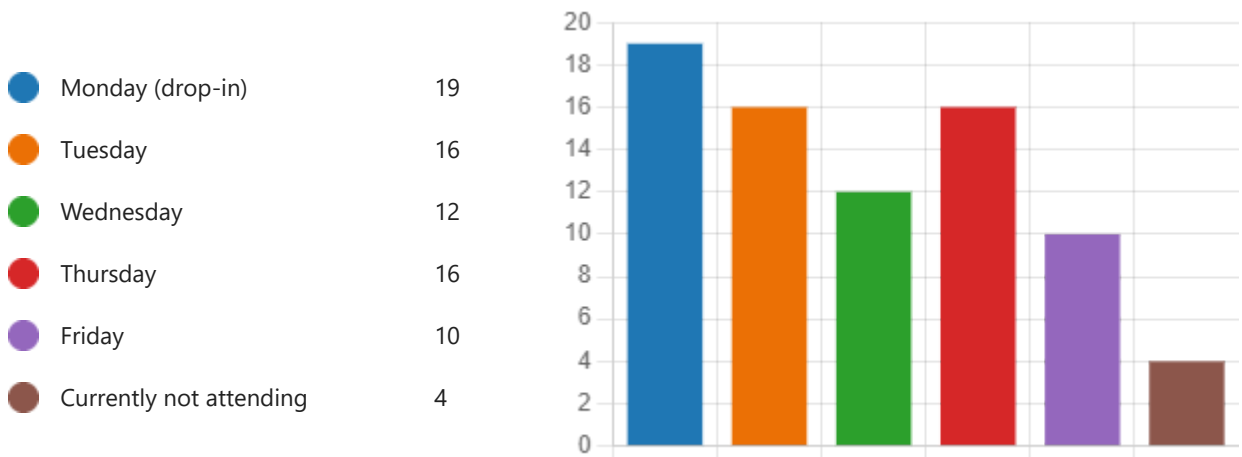


2. Please select your gender.

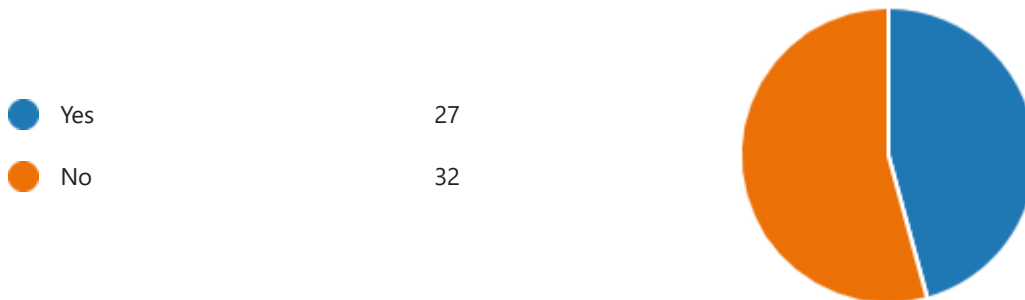
● Man	25
● Woman	33
● Prefer not to respond	1
● Other	0



3. Which days do you currently use the fitness center? (select all that apply)

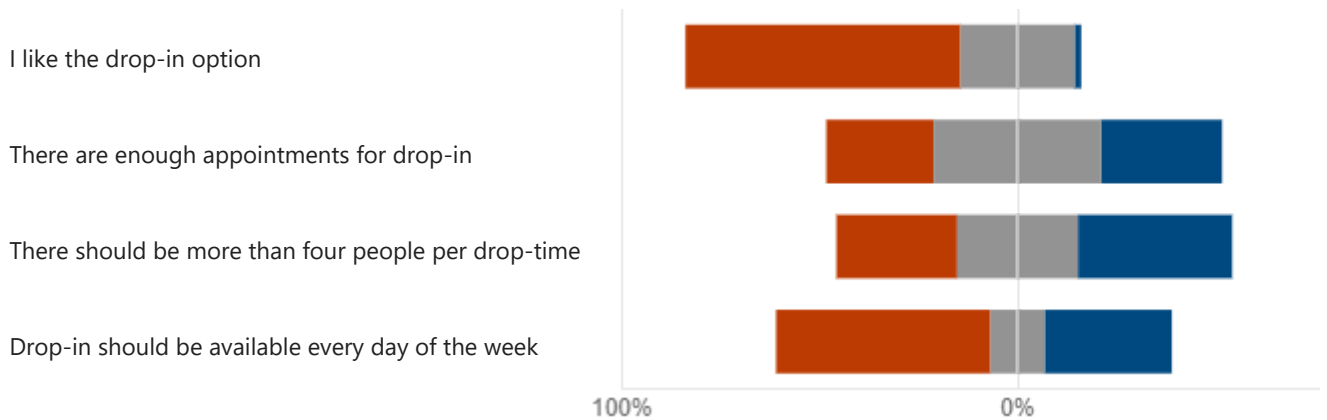


4. Since January, have you used the drop-in options for the fitness center on Mondays?



5. Please respond to each statement about the drop-in option on Mondays.

■ Agree
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Disagree



6. Which type of fitness center appointment do you currently have?

● Household ONLY	33
● Group Appointment (up to 4 pe...	18
● Neither	8



7. Do you prefer the drop-in model or scheduled appointments?

● Drop-in	11
● Scheduled appointments	12
● Either is fine	9



8. If the COA stopped arranging appointments and used the drop-in model for every day (Monday-Friday), how likely would you continue using the Fitness Center?

● Likely	27
● Neither likely or unlikely	4
● Unlikely	1



9. If the COA increased each designated timeslot to accommodate 5 participants per session, how likely would you continue using the Fitness Center?



10. What other thoughts, comments, or concerns would you like to share with us?

40
Responses

Latest Responses

"On my appt Tuesday at 1:00 I have only seen 1 other person i..."
"Increase number of people in gym"

What other thoughts, comments, or concerns would you like to share with us?

Drop in M-F is better

Drop mask requirement

I am strongly in favor of drop-in format M-F - currently I'm limited to working out 1/week - drop-in format would allow me the option of working out more days - thank you

It seems very unfair that people who signed up for slots have been able to keep them for an unlimited time. These are scarce resources for all of the town's seniors and as such there should be a more equitable rotation over time. Everyone needs access to this facility and it shouldn't be limited strictly to those people who grabbed a spot awhile ago. It also seems very unfair that just because people are related they get the whole facility to themselves. I'm delighted to see some re-visiting is being done and hope the upshot will include opening up this resource for more of the town's seniors.

Fitness center open without appointments. Participants need to be vaxed. Masks optional like other town buildings.

I'm still very cautious about being in contact with others. Exercising with a mask on is difficult, so I much prefer preserving the household only option.

I would just like to see the fitness room more!

Time to start thinking about opening the fitness center up more. Maybe not to more than 4 people at a time but to have more drop in times as people don't renew current appts.

I have regularly dropped in Mondays at 9:00 am. There was only one time the past few months when there were four people there!

The fitness center has not been used to its full extent. When it first opened it operated more efficiently. Thanks.

My spouse has a compromised immune system, and being with other non-household people puts him at serious risk. We greatly enjoy and are grateful for designated times with just our household. Many thanks

I have a compromised immune system. The current system works to keep me safe. My wife and I use the fitness center once a week on Wednesday afternoon at 3 pm.

I would like more frequent drop in times, or, two or three scheduled times.

The acute phase of Covid has passed. The fitness ctr should be open without appointments. It has always been fun to exercise and talk to others in the room. Covid has been a good excuse for several businesses to curtail any additional work. Mon to Fri 9:00 to 3:45 sounds good.

Would it be possible to increase the numbers of participants per session to 5 or even 6 for both scheduled and drop-in appointments and have more drop in time, either more days per week or some times during the week, say one morning and one afternoon per week, in addition to Monday.

Are weekend hours a possibility, especially in summer when cool spaces would be helpful— and especially for the older adults?

Would much prefer dropping in on more days than just Mondays. A regular scheduled time and day does not work for my habits. Do you have guidelines about exercisers working on adjacent equipment?

I feel safer from Covid keeping everything the way it is.

Q9 five participants may be too many drop-ins (especially in Nov - May) because some folks use only one or two machines, so there could five members competing for one or two machines. I only use the recumbent bike of which there are two available So five might work in the summer and three or four max drop-in Nov

We have a household only weekly reservation. If there is a wait list for such appointments or desire for more walk-in days I would support increasing household only slots to a two household (up to four people) slot, and share our reservation with another household. (I hope this makes sense! If not, feel free to call or email me.)

We like the option of having one household per slot. We do not feel comfortable taking our masks off among other people, and have had friends that despite vaccination and boosters have gotten very sick from Covid. We want to avoid that.

I like the assurance that when I come to exercise that I see ill be able to. Pre-pandemic, I sometimes had to wait an hour for the next opening.

None

If fitness center isn't being used, drop.by people should be able to use it.

Would like to accommodate more people but like the private time because of Covid.

It would be great if people with set times could let you know if not planing to come on a given day and then you could post that time as available drop in.

I am immuno-compromised and cannot use the facility if there are people there who might have covid. Other participants Being vaccinated is not sufficient proof that covid is not there.

It is hard having to shift the appointment time! I would like to keep mine as is as when it was changed last time I had to make many changes to my schedule. At this time, I feel the pandemic is not over and I want to work alone, or with another person of the same sex max. I thought of using the drop-in option to come with a friend, but I am reluctant to be in the same room with many people breathing heavily.

The complex monster of a machine in the corner was an exceedingly unwise purchase for many reasons. Way, way too complex, particularly for this age group; and it's constantly broken and out of service.

the use of the fitness area fluctuates on whatever day I am there, time and/or season. The hardest part is being turned away when I have made the effort to be there. If you raise the use to 5 people per hour, does that mean you are less likely to turn people away? Also, 45 minutes is not sufficient time to get a good work out, using the equipment and doing individual exercises afterwards.

I like that I have a reserved exercise time every Thursday morning. I like that I can also drop in on Monday if I am so motivated.

I don't think I would be a fan of all drop-in..... although, it would allow me to exercise more days per week.

At the risk of creating a headache for exercise management (sorry Andria) I would like to suggest that participants be assigned a designated time, and for any time someone doesn't show up, that would be a drop-in available time.

It is now past time to open up the fitness center more. Two full days tied up by couples/family workouts are an accommodation that is no longer necessary or appropriate. There are virtually ZERO morning sign ups on the remaining open days. Afternoons seem better but only two days are no available for others to use. I appreciate that we are a senior center but the world has moved on from COVID and we can't let the still worried VERY SMALL minority drive underuse for the rest of the town. I could understand a single day for proven high risk individuals but even that may be inconsistent with the unmet demand from perceived healthy seniors.

Having a designated appt at least one day a week helps me to make it to the appt. That being said, it would be nice to have drop in hours every day but not drop in hours only every day. Perhaps certain timeslots each day could be designated as drop in slots - either that or if a regular appt person isn't there for their regular timeslot, a drop in could use it.

Am pretty much happy with the current operational configuration.

I like the scheduled appointment because it makes me keep a schedule for fitness. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the fitness center because sometimes I procrastinate or don't exercise at all which is not good. I also enjoy talking to people while I am exercising.

* Drop-in should be available on days (Tue-Fri) when there are appointments because there may be open slots since people don't show up.

* Clarification for Q#7: Do you prefer the drop-in model or scheduled appointments? Present appointments for Tue-Fri and Mon for drop in is fine. The way the question is structured make it sounds like an "either or" scenario.

* Need another elliptical machine since it is very popular.

My husband and myself would rather have scheduled time and drop in time.

I would like to have the option to have scheduled time and drop in time.

Increase number of people in gym

On my appt Tuesday at 1:00 I have only seen 1 other person in the gym one time.

If you keep appt's maybe you default to drop in if that person does not show up for the appt. maybe say "if you are not here by X the appt goes to drop in".

If people do not show up X amount of times they lose that slot.

I cannot say for sure but the gym seems underutilized.

COA Bus Questionnaire

30
Responses

07:36
Average time to complete

Closed
Status

1. Before we begin, can you please tell us if you are a:

● Wellesley Resident	28
● Non-Wellesley Resident	2



2. Please select your age range.

● Under 60	0
● 60 to 69	2
● 70 to 79	13
● 80 to 89	9
● 90+	4



3. Please select your gender.

<input type="radio"/> Woman	20
<input type="radio"/> Man	7
<input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say	1
<input type="radio"/> Other	0



4. In **the past year**, have you used the COA bus?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	15
<input type="radio"/> No	12
<input type="radio"/> Not sure	0



5. In **the past five years**, have you used the Wellesley COA bus?

<input type="radio"/> Yes	8
<input type="radio"/> No	7
<input type="radio"/> Not sure	0



6. How often did you use the bus?

● More than once a week	0
● Once a week	0
● Once or twice per month	5
● Less than once per month	4



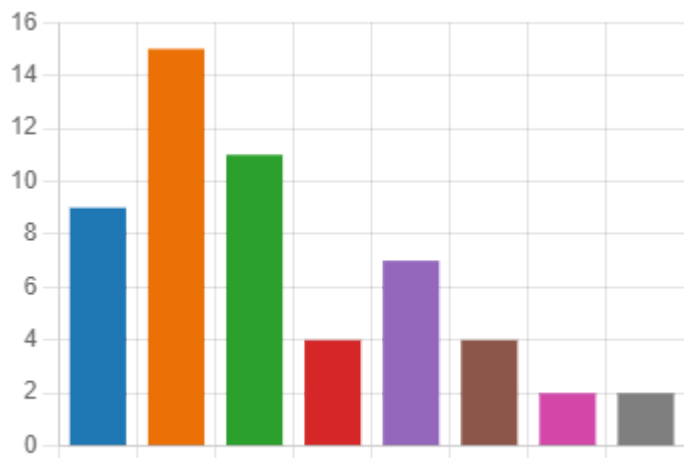
7. How often do you currently take the Wellesley COA bus?

● More than once a week	1
● Once a week	1
● Once or twice a month	10
● Less than once per month	9








8. Why do/did you use the Wellesley COA bus (choose all that apply)

● It is free	9
● It is convenient	15
● The drivers make my trip easier	11
● I like to travel with drivers I know	4
● I no longer drive	7
● I don't like driving	4
● I need to use the chair lift	2
● Other	2



9. What have you used the bus for? (Check all that apply)

	Groceries/Food Pantry	14
	Medical Appointments	15
	Trips to the Wellesley Senior Ce...	8
	Other Destinations in Wellesley	5
	Other	6



10. Are you aware that you can go to any destination in Wellesley?

	Yes	24
	No	4

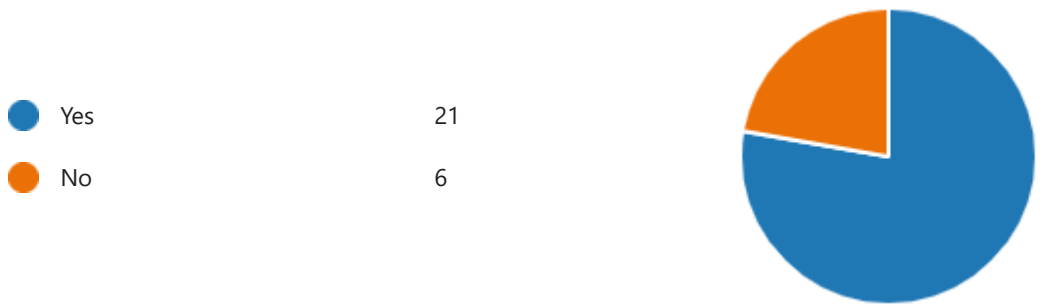


11. Are you aware that you can book the COA Bus to bring you to and from the Tolles Parsons Center for programs/activities?

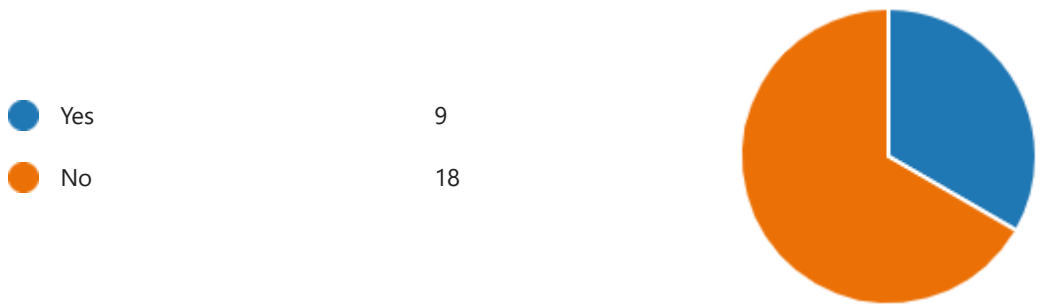
	Yes	25
	No	3



12. Are you aware that you can also take the COA bus to the Woodland T station in Newton?

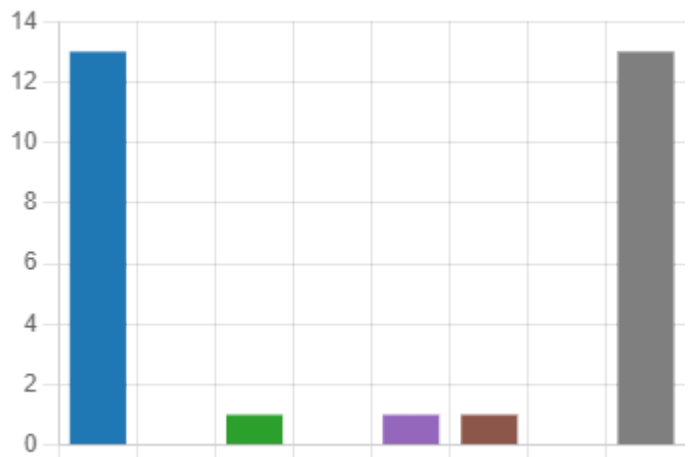


13. Have you used the COA Bus to go to medical appointments outside of Wellesley?



14. Which of the following medical locations have you taken our COA Bus to? (please select all that apply)

- Newton-Wellesley Hospital - Ne... 13
- Newton-Wellesley Psychiatry - ... 0
- MetroWest Medical Center - Na... 1
- Mass General Brigham Urgent C... 0
- Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital - ... 1
- Doctor's offices Chestnut Street ... 1
- Beth Israel Deaconess Health Ca... 0
- None of the above 13



15. Are there any medical locations in Natick, Needham, Newton, or Weston that you think the COA bus should cover?

24
Responses

Latest Responses

16. Have you taken the COA Bus to go to a grocery store and/or the food pantry?

- Yes 13
- No 14

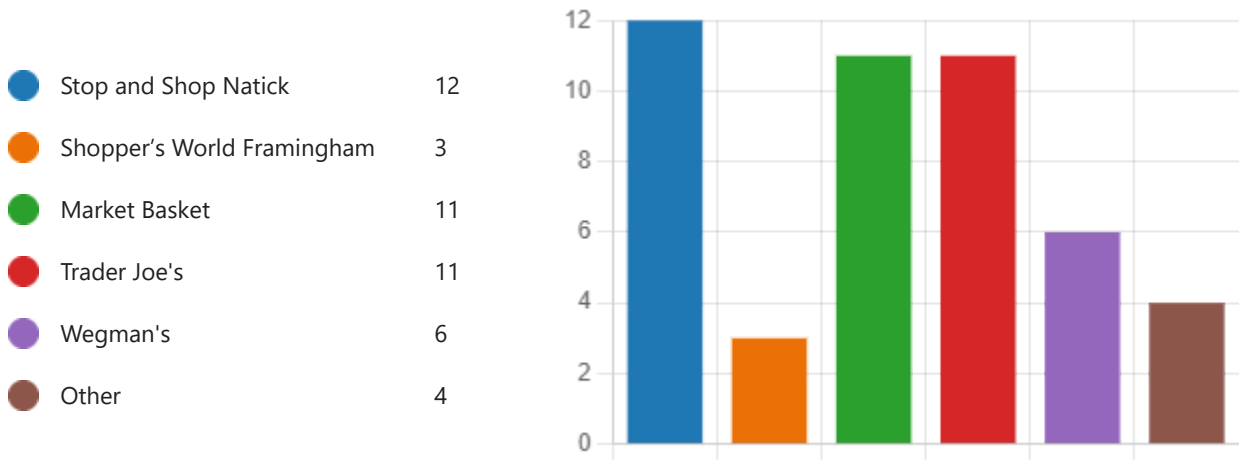


17. Which shopping areas do you use the COA Bus for (choose all that apply)?

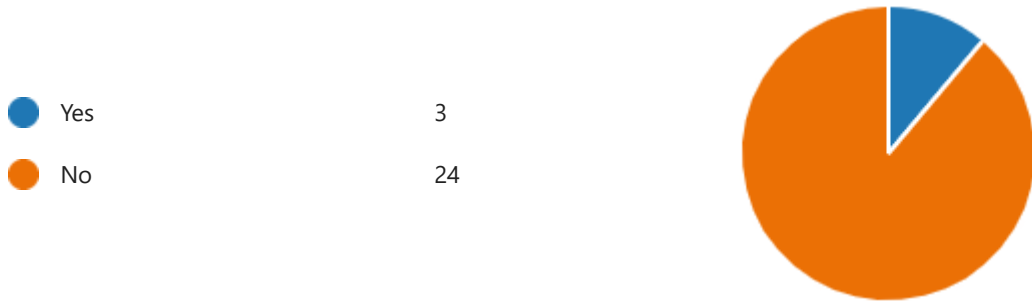
- Linden Plaza Roche Brothers / C... 7
- Linden Plaza Bank of America 0
- Whole Foods 5
- Food pantry 6
- Other 0



18. Are there any grocery stores/food markets outside of the Town of Wellesley that you would like to see the COA Bus cover? (Please select all that apply)

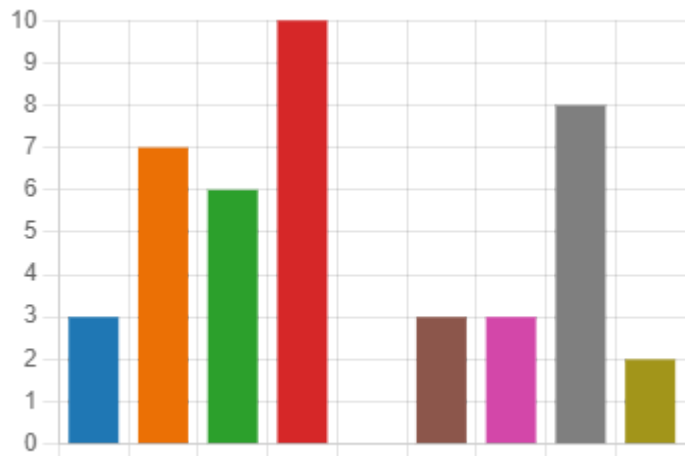


19. Has the pandemic deterred you from taking the Wellesley COA bus?



20. Do you use any of the following alternative transportation options (please check all that apply)?

● The Ride	3
● Catch Connect	7
● The T	6
● Commuter Rail	10
● Hospital Shuttle	0
● Uber/Lyft/etc	3
● Taxi	3
● No, I do not any alternative tran...	8
● Other	2



21. Are there any suggestions you might have to improve our transportation services?

24
Responses

Latest Responses

22. If you would like us to contact you with more information on our bus services, please leave your name and phone number for us to reach you.

11
Responses

Latest Responses

Are there any suggestions you might have to improve our transportation services?

No

No.

It's difficult to use the COA bus because it is tied up every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and part of Friday with food trips.

You should include trips to the mall and shoppers world. You should include more hospitals in other locations such as Mass General, Brigham, Faulkner. WE DESPERATELY need these trips and would be willing to pay a reasonable price

Pls add Eye Surgical Center in Waltham on Main St for cataract surgery. Thx

Bring back Walmart trips

I and my wife are members of the YMCA at 863 Great plain ave. Needham. We would appreciate if we would be able to YMCA.

I just begin to ride on COA bus in May 22. I though the system is very good! if I have suggestions would speaking out.

No

The two-day advance reservation makes it difficult to use the bus for some purposes, eg, if you're not feeling well and you need to go to the doctor on the same day.

Haven't used, so couldn't say. I'm sure you're doing a good job. Perhaps run earlier and later?

No

I have no idea

We used to have monthly trips to the Natick Mall or Target...and I really miss them. It's so much fun to get out and see something else once in a while.

widen your drive rangeif if necessary for a person

None

Mo

You offer a wonderful service to Wellesley residents and the drivers are very helpful and always on time. I think if you charged a fee for services outside of Wellesley it could help the town with its expenses. I had an unpleasant experience with catch connect; they never showed up to pick me up at NWH and I had to take UBER.

Is there a possibility of starting up the volunteer program for drivers who would be willing to take seniors to destinations outside of Wellesley not only for medical appointments or shopping?

What is the possibility of having transport service on week-ends or in the evening.

No

Perhaps a concise, easy to read ,small booklet or paper categorizing the options--

In town

Hospitals

Shopping-----etc

Include all pertinent info in each category

no

no

Update to Age Policy in the Newsletter

Current Policy

Age Policy

Priority is given to Wellesley residents age 60 and over. If space permits, non-Wellesley residents age 60 and over are welcome to participate. Individuals under age 60 are invited to participate if space permits. If a certain program is restricted to Wellesley residents only, it will be noted in the description. Please note that all of our programs require pre-registration.

New Proposed Policy DRAFT

Age & Participation Policy

Priority is given to Wellesley residents age 60 and over. If space permits, non-Wellesley residents age 60 and over are welcome to participate. If a certain program is restricted to Wellesley residents only, it will be noted in the description. A Wellesley resident is defined as someone who primarily lives in Wellesley. Proof of residency can be any of the following: a state-issued photo ID, a utility bill, a lease, rent receipt, a voter ID, or any other printed identification that contains the resident's name and address. Please note that all of our programs require pre-registration unless otherwise noted. **DRAFT**

COUNCIL ON AGING

The Wellesley Council on Aging (COA) has provided Wellesley's senior residents with programs, resources, and support in response to diverse interests and needs for 50 years. The number of older adults in the country, state, and Wellesley continues to increase. According to the 2022 Town Census, about 6,844 of Wellesley's 25,183 residents are over the age of 60, which is 27% of the Town's population.

Personnel

During the past year, the COA has seen some change to the staff. After experiencing continued turnover in two part time Departmental Assistant positions, the COA was able to combine those roles into one fulltime position. Since implementing that change, the position has been filled. Additionally, the COA has been searching for a new fulltime COA Director.

Outreach & Support Services

The Council on Aging's full time Health & Social Services Administrator (Social Worker) provides Wellesley residents with information and access to resources on healthy aging. Residents and their family members benefit from direct outreach and support when issues arise and on an as needed basis over time. The Social Worker provides consultations to residents or adult children under age 60 who are expressing concerns about elderly loved ones. Consultations are available by appointment and offered on an as needed basis.

Common Themes in the Social Worker role include:

- Discussions about changing mental or physical needs
- Options for downsizing and exploration of senior housing locations
- Acting as a liaison to connect residents to various benefits, local financial resources, accessing medical support, or obtaining in-home care

Weekly, in-person social groups have been beneficial to those looking for meaningful, face-to-face interactions. The Social Worker also continued to make connections to services for residents who are suffering from isolation, loneliness, or changes in completing activities of daily living.

Working in collaboration with other Town departments and local agencies ensures that Wellesley seniors have necessary advocacy and services to help improve or maintain a safe quality of life. When required, the social worker will act as a mandated reporter for the Commonwealth to report high-level

risk or concerns related to seniors living in the community setting. Wellesley is fortunate to have a low incidence of these protective services reports. Multiple departments work collaboratively with a goal to solve problems and address concerns before emergencies occur.

Property Tax Relief is offered via the Senior Work-Off program, encouraging volunteer work done by income qualifying seniors in exchange for tax relief.

Senior Work-Off Program included:

- Six active households
- A work-off rate of \$13.50/hour (minimum wage) for a maximum benefit of \$1,500 off individual annual property taxes
- 531 hours of work, or a \$7,175 credit towards real estate taxes for the last fiscal year
- Placement with the COA, Library, Town Hall, and RDF

Programs & Activities

After the Council on Aging reopened its doors July 2021, we began offering in-person activities on a drop-in basis in accordance with guidelines from the Health Department. Since re-opening, we continued to offer a wide assortment of programs and activities focused on education, fitness, recreation, and social opportunities. Each week, seniors had access to 18 online, in-person, or hybrid exercise classes as well as a wide variety of lectures and presentations.

We saw attendance increase for:

- In-person & online classes
- Virtual tours
- Photography trips
- Online discussion groups
- Craft & art workshops
- Book groups
- Music classes
- Lecture series

More seniors became comfortable using technology to participate and many appreciated the flexibility of our hybrid offerings. In our continued partnering with Wellesley Media, select presentations were filmed for public television and broadcast (four times a week) for homebound seniors. We began collaborating with area COAs to maximize zoom programming and continued our Regis College MSOT (Masters in Occupational Therapy) Program, adding more graduate students leading and co-leading groups for us online and in-person. The Wellesley COA continues to produce an 18-page bimonthly newsletter and weekly email blast that details the many activities available and services offered.

Transportation

At the COA, our bus continues to operate every Monday to Friday starting at 8:45AM with the last pickup at 3:30PM.

This past year, our bus:

- Operated over 220 days
- Provided over 2,000 trip units
- Transported more than 400 riders

The COA continues to keep a great working relationship with the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) to handle dispatching while maintaining excellent care and customer service with our riders. Our Volunteer Driver Program (VDP) has still been on hold, but the COA has been able to continue utilizing additional resources through MWRTA to help Wellesley seniors that require rides outside the scope of our normal transportation operations. Those programs include MWRTA's CatchConnect program as well as their Hospital Shuttle Program. Additionally, the COA was able to lease a brand new bus from MWRTA with additional safety features, including a back-up camera! With the arrival of the new bus, the COA brought back monthly trips to shopping centers such as Stop and Shop in Natick, Market Basket in Waltham, Trader Joe's Needham, and more!

Volunteerism

During the past year, over 80 volunteers contributed approximately 3,580 hours across a number of COA programs, both on-site and remotely. We received volunteer assistance with opportunities including but not limited to:

Volunteer greeters	Meal delivery
Lunch volunteers	Program instruction
Tech support	Musical performances
AARP tax assistance	Language translation
SHINE appointments	The Phone Pal Program

We would also like to highlight our Community Service Bears sewing group who made over 200 bears that were donated to 7 different nonprofits and agencies. Additionally, volunteer Board Members and The Friends of the Wellesley COA volunteers are a vital resource in the pursuit of our mission to enrich the lives of Wellesley's older adults and foster well-being and community.

Council on Aging Board Members

Marlene Allen, Chair

Tony Parker, Vice Chair

Susan Rosefsky, Secretary

Tory DeFazio

Lori Ferrante

Bob Ferrell

Dianne Sullivan

Kathy Trumbull

Kathleen Vogel

Tina Wang