

*Accepted
3/9/2024*

THE WINCHESTER COUNCIL ON AGING

Date: February 20, 2024
Minutes of the Meeting

WINCHESTER TOWN CLERK
RCUD APR 18 2024 AM8:28

MEETING OPENED AT: 9:35AM

PRESENT: Judy Mizhir, President, Miranda Jennings, Director, Rita Amenta, Diane Alexander, Jean Joyal, Brenda Kosakowski, Anne Coderre, Olivia Tarlton

ZOOM PARTICIPATION: Gail Casavant, Nancy Romanowski

EXCUSED: Phil White, AnnMary Smith, Lynn Murray

A question was raised regarding outreach. Ms. Jennings responded that @5 hrs. each week are being devoted to outreach on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10-12:30. In addition we offer SHINE once a week offering Medicare/health insurance advice. Food stamp advisement and heating assistance, etc. is being offered to seniors by Shana Cunningham.

A grant has been given by EOEA (Executive Office of Elder Affairs) whom we are a member of for outreach to seniors regarding housing, etc. We hold monthly meetings as well as collaborating with Groton, Westminster, and other senior centers in the area which belong to EOEA.

Minutes from 1/23/24 were accepted.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: MySeniorCenter.com monitoring platform has just been instituted here and activated. Key fobs are available for anyone using the Senior Center for any reason. The process for checking in was explained. Still in the process of getting it up and running. It will also track transportation and medical rides. We are excited to implement this.

*A formula grant can pay for this and another grant has been applied for to finance this addition.

*I have been reaching out to other Senior Centers in EOEA and I am learning a lot.

*Ms. Mizhir expressed a desire to attend EOEA meetings.

*In setting some goals for myself I have been looking at how the Senior Center building is being used. It looks like 80% of our services are happening outside the building and 20% inside. I would love to see that balance out more. In talking with Groton they have @100 people using their center per day; we have about 20.

*We are expanding our transportation and adding shopping trips on Saturday and want to increase the YMCA shuttle. Our building use is mainly for lunch, pickleball and bingo. Those will continue and we will be bringing in yoga and line dancing in March, and, based on survey results will try to bring in the things most often requested.

*The exercise equipment has been brought downstairs, old broken and unused equipment (about six pieces) has been discarded, and all wellness programs will be on the main floor where it is cooler and we can be present should there be any falls or mishaps.

*The billiards and game room has been moved to upstairs to allow for larger activities to be held in the community room.

*A Valentine's activity was well received once it was tried and promoted by a few to change rooms.

*For entertainment: Bob Jordan will be coming in and Dennis Cormier will come at the end of the month. Both are favorite entertainers.

*We are promoting once a month movies at the library and other bingo activities and will provide transportation to them.

- *Crafting and crocheting (9AM Tuesdays) are coming in as well as ukulele lessons on Thursday 14th or perhaps the 21st.
- *A skillshare program is something that I incorporated at the library and is wonderful for learning sewing, financial education, writers group, etc. We could use some of our funding to support this.
- *We would love to do more trips such as to Groton Hill, which does 4 free concerts/yr for seniors. We could use our vans or MART bus which is for elder transportation use and MART reimburses the driver, gas, etc. Tom is the MART bus driver currently.
- *I have been in contact with Social Services with regard to volunteer opportunities for kitchen help, delivering food, cleaning and sorting closets.
- *A vaccine clinic will be held for Covid vaccinations.
- *I want to talk about partnerships like with GALA. They have expressed interest to come in to do art classes, shows, etc. They are looking for a permanent space in Winchendon. Also Parks and Recreation would like to come in to do projects like Easter eggs, etc.
- *Suggestion was made to invite Elliot from the Health Center to speak.
- *SHINE will be coming in and we provide them with office space.
- *A book club was suggested.
- *Attorney Kosakowski was suggested to come to speak again. He was a popular speaker once before. Once a month speakers was suggested as a possibility.
- *The garden club was suggested esp. in the Summertime. Jack Murphy also may be invited to come back to give a class on gardens.
- *A couple of the guys have suggested a desire for pool competitions.
- *An after school program has been initiated here on Wednesdays from 3-4:30. Some of the elderly have joined in to support this group.
- *Discussion of the survey which was initiated to see what was wanted and how many people utilize the Senior Center.

Director's report motion of acceptance was made and seconded. Approval was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

- *Policies and procedures met recently. The purpose is to give direction to the COA. The policies are flexible although we do try to follow them as closely as possible. We follow the Massachusetts general laws and article 5 requirements for the COA operation.
- *The planning committee reviews services. Gail Casavant is managing that. We would like to take a look at what we are doing to make it more progressive. We would also include the director, Ms. Jennings. We can work on it this Summer. The program committee supports the director in identifying, implementing and assessing recreational, social, and health programs at the Senior Center. Phil White is chairman of that. We want to become more active to assist with programs working with the director. Ms. Casavant stated that at the meeting last fall it was decided not to make changes until the new director was on board and we would get her input.
- *The nominating committee will be meeting to update the introductory packet in April. Ms. Jennings brought up that Mary-Helen Black is interested in joining our committee.
- *The cake auction will be planned in the future.
- *The third floor contains the historical documents of the Murdock Senior Center building.
- *The presidential primaries voting will take place on Tuesday, March 5th. We will have a bake sale to benefit the Senior Center. The survey will be available that day also.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 10:40AM.

Respectively submitted:

Diane M. Alexander
Secretary