

**Billerica Council on Aging
25 Concord Road, Billerica MA
Board Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2023, 5:30 pm

Present: Jean Patel Bushnell, Richard Carroll, Phil Doiron, Mary Jones, Gerald Johnson, Marguerite Massey, Bill Neeb, John Pellegrino, Mary Riley, and Mike Riley.

Absent: Kim Conway, Barbara Flaherty

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chair Mary Riley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for the sick and departed.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the March 8, 2023 meeting.
M/Phil Doiron S/Richard Carroll. Motion passed.

COA Director Jean Bushnell reported on the Following Activities and events.

We have seen some successful connections events –

- Soup a Bowl, Feb 9th – 70 attendees, (Bingo Day)
- Friday Breakfast – March 3rd - 48 attendees
- Trips – all sold out for March:
 - Tuesday March 7th Encore Casino
 - Tuesday March 14th Causeway Restaurant Gloucester
 - Tuesday March 21st Wayside Inn Sudbury
 - Tuesday March 28th Seaport Grille Gloucester

But several cancellations have occurred due to very low number of signups.

- Some cancelations: Rehab presentation, Senior living presentation, Denise Doucette, Sound of music, Crafts with Rachel, SHINE event for Veterans (3/10th) that we had worked on with AgeSpan, Robotics with the High School, Blaire House, St Patrick's Days Dancers and History Lecture on sources of happiness.
- We must re-envision some programs
 - Also offer fresh topics for all groups. Exploring providing programs that promote LGBTQ inclusion, awareness, and acceptance.

The Friends Organization

- BTB: almost sold out, a few tickets left.
- Funding at \$455 for Feb. Several requests in the pipeline.

EOEA

Executive Office of Elder Affairs report submitted. Christian Panasuk has quickly learned how to effectively pull data in a format that enables the Director to produce an impact report efficiently. Funding supports staffing, events and other.

New Center Planning

- Meeting with Architects Abacus and LeftField Project Manager, Eileena Long by Director and staff in 2 sessions reinforced our knowledge and experiences in human services programming and planning and the desire for a new building that
 - o Would help seniors live healthier, longer lives
 - o Helps us remain relevant to a diverse group of people
 - o Reflects the fact that we are not simply rebuilding a center but must consider purpose, role, structure and long-term sustainability.
 - o Is designed to empower participants to learn, to improve their health, to make friends, and to engage with others.
 - o Reflects the fact that we are serving at least 2 segments
 - o Is not only built well, but also branded to appeal
 - Douglas Adult Social Center/ Jenks Center (Winchester), The Groton Center, The Robb Center (Andover).
- The facts are clear - between 2010 and 2035 the school age population (19 years and under) will see a 15% decrease in size while seniors (60 years and over) will experience an 85 % increase – University of MA, Donahue Institute.
 - o OTHER STATS SHARED

Operations/Staffing

- Director needs assistance with alignment among positions across town – as an example, Community Services Coordinator/BOH, Heath and Community Coordinator and Social Worker at the COA. Should be one scale despite different departments.
- Successful Tax Work Off Program 2023-2024 rollout with revised forms and guidelines this week. David Lamore, Associate is beginning to work with various town departments on job carving to help these function leaders gain opportunities for capacity support.

Collaborations and WINS

The application from the Town Council on Aging in collaboration with EMS for participation in a Stroke Public Awareness Collaboration Project was chosen for funding of \$6,700. Jeanne Teehan, Social worker is leading this project.

2 large consumer general educational sessions for about 75 attendees each

- Meal event, presented by a Healthcare Partner such as Lahey Health where our EMS team has a strong relationship, extensive Q + A session.
- New printed materials (Posters, Flyers, Brochures)
- Hosting info tables at suitable settings at least 2x per week
- Giveaway carrying a simple message e community awareness project

Projects in Process

- AARP Tax: completed 4/15th: best estimate of completes - 360
- March 24: We will be hosting a Learning Visit from Singapore's most respected Medical Center. Continuing care coordinators from Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH), will engage in an information exchange on transitions of care.
- Celebrating our 2022 Volunteers Event: "June 6th, 5.30 to 7.30 PM.

Board Support

- Exceptional on many levels – Seeking ideas of areas, you wish to work in.

Other

- Support from the Town's Facilities Dept has been exceptional. Work on reconstructing the area that was Outreach.

COA Design

Meeting with Abacus - Mike Riley shared his observations on the architectural firm planning the design of new facility. They have experience in building five area town COA's. Their approach is to look at activities and build the center around them. Important to design center and activities to attract younger seniors.

Discussion ensued regarding the design of a fitness center attractive to both male and female patrons, and younger and older seniors.

Current Center Usage as a factor in new center decision. John Pellegrino inquired as to the availability to obtain statistics on building usage before and after the new centers opened.

Next meeting, April 12, 2023, at 5:30 pm

Motion to Adjourn made by Bill Neeb S/Phil Doiron

M/Passed Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted



William Neeb, Recording Secretary