

NEWBURYPORT COUNCIL ON AGING
JANUARY 19, 2023

The Board of Directors of the Newburyport Council on Aging met on this date at the Newburyport Senior/Community Center, 331 High Street, Newburyport, MA 01950.

Board Chair Elaine Paglia called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Elaine Paglia	Rosemary Decie	Richard Eaton	John Green
Annie Maurer	Yvonne Mcquilkin	Marcie Neville	Erin Sheehy

MEMBERS ABSENT

Cynthia Muir (excused)

STAFF PRESENT

Paula Burke; Director, Newburyport Council on Aging

GUESTS

Sean Reardon: Mayor, Newburyport, MA

Noah Berger, Amy Jenkins, Niorka Mendez: MEVA representatives

Mary Kelly: Activities Director, Newburyport Council on Aging

MERRIMACK VALLEY TRANSIT presentation:

- Erin Sheehy, of the COA Transportation Subcommittee, introduced representatives from Merrimack Valley Transit.
- Noah Berger said that MEVA is working to increase its visibility and involvement in the community. As part of this, vans have been made more clearly identifiable as part of the MEVA fleet and buses made more attractive.
- Work is being done to make services consistent across towns and to standardize the name used for the vans (Mini-MEVA).
- MEVA currently has a flag down system rather than bus stops but that will be changing. Signs designating bus stops are coming and bus shelters with solar panels to provide lighting are planned to be built in feasible places. There was some discussion about possibly finding local businesses to sponsor bus shelters to help defray costs.
- Routes are being looked at and updated to make service more direct and to better cover needed areas. New routes will roll out in April, and new bus stop signs will begin to be rolled out at that time, though more slowly.
- MEVA continues to look for increased state financial support to help strengthen public transportation in the Merrimack Valley.
- Ways that COA can help include: help share information about changes, bus routes, etc. among our senior population; printed maps are in the works and we can make them available to seniors who are not technologically adept; the next newsletter will devote a page to highlighting the upcoming changes; make sure to communicate to state and city

representatives about how important public transportation is to seniors and others; Board offered to look into grants for seniors that might overlap with needs of MEVA.

- The COA Transportation Subcommittee asked to be in communication with people in the Mayor's office who are working on this issue. MEVA representatives said they would also continue to be in contact with the COA Transportation Subcommittee around these issues.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

- Erin will continue as the liaison for the Friends of the Library, but will not attend every meeting. Paula, who does attend meetings, will keep the Board updated.
- The money for the digital sign has not been voted on yet. It needs to be approved by the Friends Board before it can go before the City Council.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Sen. Tarr's team will be at the COA on the 3rd Wednesday of the month after the Village meeting to meet with members of the community.
- The two candidates approved by the Board are tentatively scheduled to start attending meetings next month.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Having reviewed the Secretary's minutes of the previous meeting, it was moved, seconded, and VOTED: To accept the Secretary's report of the Board of Directors meeting of December 21, 2023.

Having completed the Board's business, it was moved, seconded, and VOTED: To adjourn at 10:20.

The next meeting of the Board of Directors of the Newburyport Council on Aging will be at 9:00 am on February 16, 2023.

Annie Maurer, Secretary