

NEWBURYPORT COUNCIL ON AGING  
DECEMBER 16, 2021

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 Theresa Rooney called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Theresa Rooney	Elaine Paglia	Rosemary Decie	Richar Eaton
John Green	Annie Maurer	Yvonne McQuilkin	Cynthia Muir
Erin Sheehy			

MEMBERS ABSENT

Charles Carroll - excused

STAFF PRESENT

Paula Burke: Director, Newburyport Council on Aging

Mary Kelly: Activities Director

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 November 21, 2021.

ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mary Kelly

- In January Dr. Wayne Pasanen, who has worked as an emergency room physician and in addiction/detox, will be available at the center on the fourth Wednesday of the month to answer questions about medications. He will also be available to present topics. It was suggested that liability issues be checked.
- Fridays will be game days and chess and bridge groups are starting up again.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Paula Burke

- The COA's strengths were presented including: delivery of a wide array of services; offering of a wide range of programming during the pandemic by flexing to hybrid and virtual formats; collaboration with other COAs, city departments, and NGOs to serve shared clients; providing competent and compassionate care by team, maximization of potential of volunteers.
- Opportunities and ideas were also presented including the upcoming changes at the MVRTA and the opportunity to participate in upgrading public transportation and the discussion around building a multi-purpose area that accommodates two pickleball courts.
- Looking one year into the future, the important things to accomplish include: keeping the Center open between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. during the COVID crisis; add an Outreach Coordinator to maximize the department's ability to meet needs of clients; built multi-purpose area previously mentioned.
- Programs at the COA will be suspended for two weeks at Christmas.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FOR COAs: Elain Paglia

- There is a free online program from B.U. offering a certificate in Behavioral Health that will enrich understanding of major mental health conditions and substance use concerns in older adults.
- The link will be sent out in case Board members are interested in taking it.

NOMINATING SUBCOMMITTEE: Elaine Paglia

- It was felt that the search for a new Board member should hold off until the new mayor is in place.
- Due to Charlie's ongoing health issues, it was decided to make him emeritus Board member in appreciation for his long and devoted service and to ask that there be some recognition from the city for his service to the COA.

It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: To name Charles Carroll as a Board member emeritus in appreciation of his long and devoted service and to ask the city to join us in recognizing him.

BOARD BUSINESS: Terry Rooney

- We should follow-up with Councilor Kahn about the the by-law changes.
- It is time to set goals for the upcoming year.
  1. Look at data available to see how aligned we are in meeting core programs (transportation,wellness etc,)
  2. What changes should we keep from the COVID lockdown?
  3. All program info including on Zoom is tracked.
  4. There is a new mechanism for virtual program distribution that automatically sends links.
- Demographic projections predict a doubling of the percentage of seniors in Newburyport between 2010 to 2035. Gentrification and the increasing income gap are posing issues for middle income people.
- As the percentage of seniors increases, the data can make a cogent argument for increased senior funding.
- Food insecurity remains a problem for many seniors and others. What role can the COA play in closing the gap between available resources and seniors who use them. For example SNAP benefits are underutilized by those who qualify. The brown bag lunch program has been dropped, and the COA is supporting the Newbury Food Pantry and Our Neighbor's Table.
- Subcommittees of the Board are needed to look at the issues under discussion.
- Elaine reported the NAID has donated \$75,000 to the Friends of the COA.

It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 a.m.

The next meeting of the Newburyport Council on Aging will be on January 20, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

Annie Maurer, Secretary