

NEWBURYPORT COUNCIL ON AGING

April 4, 2022

The Board of Directors of the Newburyport Council on Aging met on this date at the Newburyport Senior/Community Center, 332 High Street, Newburyport, MA

President Terry Rooney called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Members Present:

Terry Rooney	Rosemary Decie	John Green	Annie Maurer
Yvonne McQuilkin	Elain Paglia	Erin Sheehey	

Members Absent:

Cynthia Muir
Richie Eaton

Staff Present:

Paula Burke: Director, Newburyport Council on Aging
Mary Kelly: Activities Coordinator

Guest:

Greg Jengress

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Having reviewed the Secretary's minutes for the previous meeting, it was moved, seconded, and

Voted: To accept the Secretary's report of the Board of Directors meeting of March 17, 2022.

ACTIVITIES REPORT: Mary Kelly

- The student art show and comment cards were mentioned by Superintendent Gallagher at the Joint Budget and School Committee meeting and the seniors were thanked for hosting the exhibit and providing positive feedback.
- The patio tent is going up again.
- Paula Fritz is stepping in to take over for Paul Coleman, who has passed away, as the Lions Club eye care assistant.
- Intergenerational gardening boxes are being planted, with school boxes clustered together.
- Aurora Soma will be offering a guided meditation class on the 3rd Tuesday of the month starting May 23. The diabetic foot clinic will also happen that day.
- "Coffee with a Cop" will happen on the fourth Monday of the month at 9 a.m. which will offer seniors a chance to share coffee from Battle Grounds with local police in order to get to know them and ask questions. Mary would like to come up with a better name for this program.

- There will be a car show on June 16th in the parking lot along with music from the 40's and 50's offered by John Ross.
- Erin and Rosemary offered to help Mary plan a float for Yankee Homecoming.
- Sara Kelso, the director of the Newburyport Public Library, will come to discuss low vision equipment available at the library with the low vision group.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- The Director commended Mary Kelly for her hard work providing a wide variety of programming for the center.
- In a meeting with Mayor Reardon and consultants brought in to help municipalities outreach needs and the impact of cost of living increases on people's ability to stay in town were discussed. Intergenerational events were also discussed. The Director reports to the mayor weekly.
- More people than expected, nearly 300, took advantage of the AARP tax program, including 10 high school students.
- There has been a small surge in the number of seniors taking advantage of the program to work off taxes. There will be an informational session on the senior and veteran programs to work off a portion of property taxes on May 19th.
- Work is still being done to bring the multi-purpose terrace to fruition. The CPC application has been withdrawn and finding alternate funding is being worked on with the mayor. Title 3 grant money (\$3,000) will be used immediately.
- The city budget has not been released yet.
- Hours and pay for the outreach position have not yet been determined.

BOARD BUSINESS: SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Nominating: Only two people have sent in resumes to fill the open slots on the Board. One position will be filled now, the other in September. Marcie Neville, who is a proposed new Board member, will visit the May Board meeting so members can get to know her and ask questions. The city has many board positions open at this time and fewer than needed people who want to serve.
- Transportation: Erin has reached out to the MVRTA. The COA would like to have a person on the Mayor's Transportation Task Force and should contact Andrew Levine. The Transportation Grant should be investigated, it's money from the state to communities for transportation needs. The city grant writer can help with the grant.
- Data: Considering how best to use available stats on seniors in our city with infographics adjusted to audience.
- Each subcommittee needs to develop a sheet sharing information, goals, etc. as a framework to guide future efforts. A goal or objective should be set to work on over the summer.

BOARD BUSINESS: BENEFITS OUTREACH

- There has been an increase in seniors accessing SNAP benefits since covid. Massachusetts food prices are 18% higher than in other states. Terry is in conversation with ONT to see if we can partner up to help seniors access available services. Mary

talked to local media to see about doing a show explaining how it is funded (federally) and what's available. Can we also work with local churches to get the word out?

- Outreach coordinator could help with this issue and others that arise.
- Erin's son is a communications major and would like to volunteer five hours a week to help with infographics and other communications needs. He has also reached out to the Friends of the NCOA as well,

Having concluded the Board's business, it was moved, seconded, and

Voted: To adjourn at 10:25 a.m.

The next meeting of Newburyport Council on Aging Board of Directors will be on May 19, 2022 9-10:15 a.m.

Annie Maurer, Secretary