

NEWBURYPORT COUNCIL ON AGING  
February 16, 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:

Rosemary Decie     Richard Eaton     John Green     Annie Maurer     Paul Bushey  
Yvonne McQuilkin     Alice Sheridan     Marcie Neville     Elaine Paglia

MEMBERS ABSENT

Cynthia Muir (absent)

STAFF PRESENT

Paula Burke: Director, Newburyport Council on Aging

GUESTS

Sean Reardon: Mayor, City of Newburyport

Dori Sawyer: NEET administrator (Northern Essex Elder Transportation)

The chair welcomed the two new members of the Board and informed the Board that Cynthia would be leaving the Board as she is moving to Maine. She introduced our guests, Mayor Sean Reardon and Dori Sawyer.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Sean Reardon

- The Mayor said that things are going well and that several projects across the city are coming up including the Youth Services Building, the bulkhead, and work on Bartlett Mall.
- Sidewalk and street work is ongoing by area including adding cobblestones in the three roads area. He noted that work keeping up the streets and sidewalks had fallen behind.
- The chief of the DPW has left and the search for a new one is ongoing.
- In discussion with the Board, the issue of unsafe crosswalks came up and the Board Transportation subcommittee expressed continued interest in meeting with members of the city government who work on transportation issues and issues of pedestrian safety.
- The Mayor reminded Board members that they can go to the city website and sign up for alerts from the city regarding city works projects such as flushing the pipes.

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 January 19, 2023.

NEET (Northern Essex Elder Transport): Dori Sawyer

- We were reminded that 1 in 5 people over the age of 65 don't drive and told that NEET is another service to help the elderly get to medical appointments and, at times, other important appointments.
- NEET drivers are all volunteers, many of whom are retired, and are reimbursed for gas and provided with supplemental insurance. As a result of COVID, the volunteer pool is less than half what it was before the pandemic.
- NEET works with the COA and MEVA to make sure rides are provided for those with wheelchairs.
- Funding comes through federal and state grants, among other sources, so NEET must be in compliance with federal and state regulations. NEET is also hoping to get some AARP funding and the COA will send out a letter in support of that.
- NEET wants to heighten awareness of its services and its need for more volunteers.

#### BOARD BUSINESS

- The Food Insecurity subcommittee will put together information about resources in the city and make up a flier. Paul expressed interest in being part of this subcommittee. There have been some changes around SSI food regulations which will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The bylaws governing the Board have changed including a switch to a 3 year, as opposed to 5 year, term. Board members were encouraged to look at the new bylaws to see how the Board is affected and to send Elaine any questions or comments.
- John brought up the issue of the difficulty in renewing a temporary handicapped placard. He offered to be a liaison between the Board and the Disabilities Commission.

Having concluded the Board's business, it was moved, seconded, and VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 10:15 am.

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

Annie Maurer, Secretary