

Robert Pueschel, Chairperson  
Marilyn Ishler, Vice Chairperson  
Liane Pueschel, Secretary

LESLIE HENNESSEY, Director

**SOUTH HADLEY COUNCIL ON AGING**  
Board of Director's Meeting—February 13, 2023

Minutes

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:30pm by Chairperson Robert Pueschel

Roll Call: Carol Constant, Rachel Tierney, Jim Bosman, Dick Matteson, Robert Pueschel, Liane Pueschel

Absent: Marilyn Ishler, Susan LaBonte

Guests: Susan Perry, Kim Prough, Janet Stawasz

Present: Leslie Hennessey, Director

Open Forum:

- Question raised as to the status of the wayfaring sign on the corner of Dayton for the COA
  - The Director will discuss with the new interim head of the DPW

Approval of January 2023 minutes: Minutes were reviewed with two corrections: 1/ correct spelling of Susan LaBonte's name to reflect a capital 'B'. 2/ include the COA and 'The Friends' as participating along with the PD and FD in the distribution of the '400 Stuff-a-Stocking' initiative. Motion to approve the Minutes, as amended, by Carol Constant and seconded by Rachel Tierney. All were in favor.

New Business

**A. MPIC member Susan Perry**

- Susan meets periodically with the Board to receive updates on the COA's progress in meeting goals of the Master Plan which she reports quarterly to the Town.
- The COA is very satisfied with the progress they have made. The Center is very busy, and there has been an increase in new members.
- The exercise programs are very popular.
- Statistics were shared for the month of January for the following years:  
Pre-covid daily census 2019= 467    New members=16  
daily Census 2022= 349    New members=26  
daily census 2023= 727    New members=41
- Susan stated she is very impressed with the Dementia Friendly group and noted COA staff to be exceptional and very welcoming.
- She questioned if help was needed in funding for additional programs or with other issues. Discussion followed.

**B. Policy approval by the Board of Directors****I. Standards of Participation**

- A more comprehensive policy is being developed to address specific issues that have occurred or might occur in the Senior Center which could potentially be unsafe or disruptive to the members.
- The Director is working with the Town Attorney in clarifying the previous policy and developing new verbiage.
- The Formula Grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs can only be used to supplement programs for seniors 60 and older.
- Will explore the possibility of allowing seniors 55-59 to use the Senior Center for any non-funded program.
- Once the updated policy is complete, it will be brought to the Board for a vote.

**II. Visitors under 18 years of age**

- Due to requirements by funders and for the comfort and safety of all, guidelines were developed to address concerns regarding children in the Senior Center.
- Guidelines were reviewed by the Board and discussion followed.
- Motion to accept the guidelines, as written, by Dick Matteson and seconded by Jim Bosman. All were in favor.

**C. Public Hearing on ADU bylaws**

- The Town has requested a letter of support for ADU's from the COA Board of Directors.
- A public hearing will take place on Feb. 27<sup>th</sup> to highlight the importance of ADU's in South Hadley.
- A letter of support was drafted by Director Hennessey and shared with the BOD.
- During discussion, Jim Bosman raised a question as to whether any initiatives have been put into place by the Town to address senior housing and affordable housing for families. It was agreed that this information should be requested through a separate letter from the Board to the Housing Production Plan.
- Motion to approve letter of support from the BOD for ADU's by Rachel Tierney and seconded by Dick Matteson. All were in favor.

**D. Alzheimer's Walk**

- The 'Walk to end Alzheimer's' will take place at Holyoke Community College in October.
- The COA will be forming a team and will seek sponsors.
- The possibility of team T-shirts was discussed.

**E. Recording Board of Directors Meetings**

- Recordings of COA meetings are not required by the Town.
- Discussion of pros and cons
- The Board unanimously agreed to not pursue the recording of the meetings.

Old Business**a. EMHOT (Elder Mental Health Outreach Teams)**

- Bethany Tabb, LCSW and Karen Buscemi, NP are at the Senior Center on Tuesdays from 3-5pm for mental health referrals.
- Referrals have been slow, but some have been received from the Police Department
- Karen presented an informational program regarding EMHOT, but only one person attended. The program is new, so maybe with time there will be more interest.

**b. Age and Dementia Friendly/Dementia Friendly Updates—Carol Constant**

- Age and Dementia Friendly Forum on April 4<sup>th</sup> to raise public awareness of the work being done to make South Hadley Age and Dementia Friendly. It will be moderated by Lisa Wong.
- The aim is to promote active and passive engagement by the public, build taxpayer support for accessibility improvements, and accountability of town department heads, departments, and committees to the work of the Master Plan and the Age and Dementia Friendly initiatives.
- There will be several presenters
- Open to the public
- The goal is to have rotating programs throughout the year.
- ‘The Friends’ volunteered to donate money to purchase raffle baskets for the forum

**c. Friends of the South Hadley Seniors—Kim Prough**

- The Friends continue to work on the 2023 program calendar with the Director.
- Nothing new to report at this time.

Director’s Report**A. Operations Senior Center****I. Statistics**

- January---667 individual events  
29 rode the minibus  
66 made use of the Assistance Programs  
49 volunteers

II. Budget 2024

- Extra advertising funding for media, brochures, postage, etc.
- Received an increase for electricity and fuel
- Basically, level funding

III. Monthly Board Opportunities: Coffee & Conversations, Lunches, Tues. evening programs, Brown Bag volunteer, Newsletter Collating volunteer.

Next meeting (in person) April 10, 2023 at 4:30pm

Motion to adjourn by Dick Matteson and seconded by Rachel Tierney

Meeting adjourned at 6pm

Respectfully submitted,

Liane Pueschel, Secretary