

SOUTH HADLEY COUNCIL ON AGING
Hybrid Board of Directors Meeting—September 20, 2021
Minutes

Call to order: In the absence of a Chairperson, the meeting was called to order at 4:40pm by Director Leslie Hennessey.

Roll call: Carol Constant, Marsha Chapell, Marilyn Ishler, Pamela Peck, Robert Pueschel, Liane Pueschel

Absent: Rachel Tierney

Guests: Janet Stawasz

Open Forum:

- Leslie Hennessey, Carol Constant, and Ann Andreas will be meeting with members of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission on Monday, 9/27 regarding the Age and Dementia Action Plan for South Hadley included in the Town's Master Plan.
- Carol Constant will provide an overview to Dementia Awareness on Thursday, 9/23 at 10am. It will be recorded for future viewing on the South Hadley cable Channel (SHCTV).
- On Tuesday evening, 9/28, Karen Buscemi will present a program 'Start the Conversation' for caregivers caring for loved ones with dementia.
- A concern was raised regarding phone calls from Medicare..... is it a scam? If a caller requests any type of personal information, it is not a legitimate call and you should hang up.
- Question raised as to whether there is a tax on the food served in the Woodlawn Café. A 7% tax (State tax and Meal tax) is included in the cost of the product purchased.
- Observed that there are cracks in the sidewalk. Scheduled to have top coat and sealer applied.

Approval of June Minutes: Motion made by Carol Constant to approve the Minutes and seconded by Robert Pueschel. All were in favor.

New Business:

- a. A welcome was extended to the newest members of the Board: Rachel Tierney, Marilyn Ishler, and Pamela Peck.
- b. Age and Dementia Friendly Action Plan—A draft of the Plan was shared with the Board members. The Town is seeking Age and Dementia Friendly designation. The COA Plan is included in the Town's Master Plan along with other entities in the town. The criteria for designation are to have a plan that shows intent. The Plan needs approval by the Selectboard as well as by the State.
- c. Evening use of the COA: A copy of the Council on Aging Meeting Room Policy and Rules was presented to the Board for review. Discussion followed. Motion to approve by Carol Constant and seconded by Marilyn Ishler. All were in favor.

Old Business:

- a. New Senior Center Project—Now in the final phase. Working on punch list. Some delays in equipment due to a backlog related to COVID. (Supply and demand, staffing, drivers, etc.)

Adult fitness equipment is in the process of being installed outside on the 'loop'. There will be 2 stations.

The new EV (Electric Vehicle) station is in.

The COA campus addresses many age groups with its Senior Center, baseball field, playground, exercise equipment = Age Friendly

- b. Friends of the South Hadley Seniors Updates—Janet Stawasz
- The recent Mum Sale was very successful
 - On 10/13, the Friends will be hosting a sandwich, beverage, and ice cream cone event at McCray's Farm. The Friends will subsidize part of the cost.
 - The Friends will provide 'Grab and Go' meals again this year for Thanksgiving and Christmas.
 - Certain groups (quilting, crafting, bridge, etc.) are requesting funds for supplies. Discussion followed. It was determined that a form will be filled out indicating the item and the cost. The Friends will then present the form to the Director of the COA for approval. The Friends are also open to requests for funds for 'Start-up' activities. Storage for items needs to be a consideration moving forward.
 - It was decided not to go forward with Handbag Bingo in October due to on-going COVID concerns.
 - South Hadley Senior Connections is off to a slow start. There are enough volunteers, but not enough seniors responding to that service (only 2 at present). Respondents can call the COA to be put in contact with Karen Buscemi or Greta Tucker. They will try to match the senior to a volunteer who has similar interests.

Director's Report:

A. Operations: Senior Center

I. Programs, services, events

- New Volunteer/Activities Coordinator—Kathy Florence
- Looking at adding a language class, older adults learning program
- Some virtual/ hybrid classes are still being offered, but most seniors prefer to be in the building.
- The dining room is open for lunches as the COA is a nutrition site. Seniors sit 2 at a table, and are well spaced. Capacity 35 at this time. Have not had to turn anyone away.
- The Memory Café will open in October. Concept explained.

II. COVID Concerns

- Some restrictions remain in place. Masks are to be worn at all times when in the building.
- The next Board meeting will be virtual due to the uptick of COVID cases in town.

III. Volunteer Opportunities

- Board members are encouraged to volunteer. Many opportunities available (Welcome Desk, help with evening programs, dining room, Welcome Ambassadors, etc.) Contact Kathy Florence if interested.

Next Meeting: October 18, 2021

Motion to adjourn by Marilyn Ishler and seconded by Liane Pueschel.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50pm

Respectfully submitted,
Liane Pueschel
Secretary