

STOCKBRIDGE Council on Aging BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES Wednesday, September 13, 2023 10:00A.M.

1. Members Present: Christina McCarthy, Chairperson; Andrea Lindsay, Ron Muir, Diane Sheridan **Absent:** Nancy O'Brien **Others Present:** Donald Robitaille, David Chicoine, Laura Dubester by Zoom.

The Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

The Chairwoman announced that Roxanne McCaffrey has resigned from the position of Director of COA. Also announces that Jack Gremler most unfortunately has resigned. We thank him for all his hard work getting the Senior Center up and running. However, all is not lost as he will continue to provide musical entertainment for COA events.

2. Minutes: Approval of the Minutes from meeting on July 12, 2023. Minutes reviewed. Diane Sheridan motioned for approval of corrected minutes. Ron Muir 2nd. All in favor 4-0

3. Director's Report: Presented by Chris McCarthy

a. Foot Care Nurse. Roxanne had gathered a lot of information on this service. The nurse required a minimum of 4 hours and was looking to hold services the 3rd Friday of the month. This would also entail a COA member or volunteer to book and collect payments. To be pursued further once a Director has been hired.

b. Monthly Shopping Trip. Andrea reports that there are 4 Heaton Court residents interested in the shopping trip. One has checked in to see if it has been organized yet. Chris M. to call on the transportation aspect and report at next meeting.

c. Water Color Workshop. Lexi Weiner is the name of the instructor. Roxanne had initial contact but there has not been any follow up. Chris states that there is no number. Andrea reports that she has a number or contact information and will forward to Chris.

d. Isle of Shoals Trip Status. Went very well.

e. Farmers Market Coupons. Andrea is asked how it went at Heaton Court. All went well and no complaints were received from anyone. It appears that those that requested them, did receive them.

f. New Veterans Agent Tom Beasley. Roxanne's notes indicate a brief conversation was had with the new agent. Interest in having him come as a speaker for the luncheons.

g. A Matter of Balance. Unfortunately, nobody other than RM and an individual from Elder Services had been trained. Roxanne did look for someone else to be trained

but was unable to find anyone. Chris M. thought about doing the training, but hesitates and suggests tabling for New Director. All agreed.

h. Ukelele Program Class. This group is using the space at no charge for a Monday night group gathering. The space they were using and the teacher are now unavailable. The community is welcome to join them on Monday nights. They will be part of the musical entertainment for the September luncheon.

i. Cancelled Blood Pressure Clinic. This has been cancelled both at Town Hall and Heaton Court due to lack of participation.

4. New Business

a. September Speaker Series. September 20th is the next event. Pat Flinn will kick off with her "A Visual Tour of Laurel Hill Park" presentation. Pizza will be served for lunch. Make your own Sundays for dessert and then the Ukele players for entertainment. Ms. Flinn will begin at 11AM, lunch at 12 and 1 will be the entertainment.

b. October and November Speaker Series for Discussion. October there will be no Chris, does the Board want to have a speaker this month? Diane Sheridan felt we would be able to put the event together. All agreed. Veterans Agent as a potential speaker, maybe Jack as well to speak about his life in NY. Andrea asked if November would be the Alices Restaurant event that was performed last year with Jack. It was agreed that November would be scheduled for Alices Restaurant. Discussion on what was done for refreshments last year. Soup for lunch and pumpkin and apple pie was thought to be the menu.

c. Possible Radio City Music Hall Bus Trip. Discussion on whether this trip should be planned for this year. Chris reports that it is a \$650 non refundable deposit. The trip would be on November 27th and after a brief discussion it was decided that either a Spring trip or The Radio City Trip for next November would make more sense.

d. Where Do We Go from Here. Andrea asks if the Board will wait for a New Director before starting any new programs. Chris reports that Bingo has restarted and there is a good crowd and she has thoughts on introducing a Coffee and Games time for Thursdays.

5. Old Business

a. Expansion of Activities. Chris offers more details on Thursday games. Checkers, Back Gammon and Scrabble. Puzzle table. Some of the games have been ordered. Laura Dubester, attending by Zoom asks if card tables are available and suggests that there are two sisters in Town willing to teach bridge.

- b. **Communication Assessment.** Will need help with creating flyers and updating the web site. Presently, Patrick White has been helping. Laura D. suggests to use Stockbridge Updates to look for volunteers and for board game donations.

Open Forum

Chris McCarthy gives Laura Dubester the Zoom floor.

Laura introduces herself and reports on the conversation she had previously with Chris M. because she cares about the Town and she is a Senior. She has been asking everyone around town on their feelings and suggests a “rebranding” and not labeling for only seniors. If the offerings attract younger participants, even better. Has often felt that it should be labeled a Community Center so it does attract intergenerational participants. Laura continues with there is no place for family or children’s activities. Chris states that a conversation with Michael Canales was had regarding this suggestion and a change to the individuals served does effect funding. Laura refers to the Municipal Preparedness Survey and will send it to Chris. This survey has a lot of information on the wants and needs of the senior citizens of Stockbridge. Also, suggestions or ideas for activities; Grief support groups, Caregivers, Alzheimer and Dementia support groups. Meditation and Mindfulness programs, Singles or Couples events.

Chris McCarthy thanks Laura and appreciates all the very good suggestions to make the Senior Center a welcoming place to be. She then turns the floor over to Don Robitaille.

Don Robitaille introduces himself. He gladly lives at Heaton Court, and has attended the meeting because he is concerned about the Chair Yoga class that the COA has been sponsoring on Mondays at HC and Wednesdays at Town Hall. (Note; for the month of August the class was held both days at Town Hall due to work that was being done in the HC Community Room). He was told, by someone not in the room, that not enough people were attending, only 3, and that is why the decision was made to suspend the class. Don states that 6 to 7 people have been consistently attending, and he does not understand why the COA wants to end the class. Chris lets Don know that this has been a topic of discussion and that when a class or program does not have enough participants, there may be better use of the funds elsewhere. Don is adamant about the benefits and importance of this class to himself and other attendees. He is disappointed that they were not present for the meeting. Andrea acknowledges that those attending the class really love it and reinforces with Don that it might be time to regroup, rethink and present a different class, whether it be days or times etc. Don makes the following point, “What difference does it make if the teacher teaches 1,3 or 10? They are still teaching.” Chris offers that Antoinette, the instructor, is able to use the space for free and the participants can pay her directly. A few suggestions are made around charging a lesser fee for the class, or receiving partial funding with participants making up the difference. Don wants to know where he can look for funding himself to keep this going. Laura D. suggests the Cultural Council. Andrea offers help in this area and will refer

Don to Amanda K @ HC, for help with the Cultural Council Grant. He then submits a letter to Chris at the end of the meeting.

6. Next Meeting; Next meeting will be Wednesday October 11th at 10:00 am.

Adjournment; A motion was made to adjourn @ 11:08 AM by A. Lindsay and it was seconded by D. Sheridan. All in favor 4 - 0

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Lindsay