

Wellesley Council on Aging Board Meeting  
September 15, 2014

Attending: Voting Members: John Schuler, Sandra Budson, Miguel Lessing, Shirley Quinn, Mary Dummer, Susan Kagan Lange, Sister Alice McCourt, William Murphy, Sheila Nugent, Joellen Toussaint

Associate Members: Mary Bowers, Jean Boyle, Diane Campbell, Lisa Heyison, Judith Keefe, Gerald Kelley, Joanne Kilsdonk, Penelope Lawrence, Dianne Sullivan, Frederick Wright, Gayle Thieme, Director of Senior Services

Absent: Diane Lapon, Linda Cohen, John Cross

Guests: Rick Waldman, Miguel A.Melendez, Frank Sullivan (on-call), Bus Drivers; Peter Godfrey, Friends of the COA.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Henderson Hall of the Wellesley Community Center. No Citizen accepted the invitation to speak.

Minutes of June 16, 2014 meeting. With a motion from Bill Murphy and seconded by Sheila Nugent the minutes were approved with the following corrections: "The number of Voting Members will be increased from 11 to 13 pending Town Meeting approval, and Dianne Sullivan should be listed as an Associate Member.

Introduction of COA bus staff Gayle Thieme introduced the new bus drivers, Rick Waldman and Miguel Menendez and the on-call bus driver, Frank Sullivan. Miguel Menendez urged the board to ride the bus, particularly on Wednesday, the grocery shopping day, to observe the operation of the bus. Rick said being a driver was a pleasure and working with Gayle made the job easy.

Friends of the COA. Peter Godfrey gave an update on the program Reinvest in You, to be held at the Wellesley High School, October 25, 2014, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., presented by the COA and the Friends of the COA. Sponsors to date are: AARP, North Hill, Wellesley Bank, Wellesley Hills Junior Women's Club, and Cabot. This event is not a money raiser but is a free resource and information fair led by experts on successful aging and preparing for the next chapter of life. The aim is to attract people of all ages and to introduce the Council on Aging to younger people from 55 to 65 years of age.

Meeting Dates for COA Board meeting 2014/2015. The following proposed meeting dates were accepted:

September 15, 2014 - October 20, 2014 - November 17, 2014 - January 26, 2014 - February 23, 2015 - March 23, 2015 - April 27, 2015 - May 18, 2015 - June 15, 2015. No meeting in December.

Meetings start at 7:00 p.m. If a member has to miss two meetings, we were asked to please notify the office.

Questions/Comments about staff reports issued in advance of board meetings . There was concern about the time devoted by the staff to report preparation. It was suggested that the reports deal only with exceptions to routine duties; or items that in Gayle's judgment should be brought to the board's attention. Some members found the detailed reports an asset and suggested that they could be quarterly or bimonthly or staggered. The Chair said these comments would be taken under advisement.

Tolles-Parsons Center Updates As a follow up to the statement by Terri Tsagaris about the Senior Center, Fred Wright as COA representative to the Town Permanent Building Committee, reported on the present status of the Senior Center. He started with the history of the Planning Board vote not to approve the Town's application. The points raised by the Planning Board have now been satisfied, and it is anticipated that they will approve the next submission.

A new architect has been hired. Compromises will be made but it is hoped that the collaborative model will achieve the overall goal.

A major point raised by the Board had to do with the lack of a basement in the current plans. Fred's response was that the COA programs would fit in the new building and space as planned was satisfactory; the architects are also convinced that the space is adequate and the Board of Selectmen has accepted no basement. A basement would require added expense (stairwells, bathrooms). Gayle added that storage space may be a challenge

It is not recommended that we send letters to the Planning Board supporting the current plans. The Planning Board knows that the town wants a senior center.

One member of the Board regretted that the Board was not part of the decision-making process or discussion.

#### Reports from Committees

As COA representative to the 900 Worcester St. Committee, Miguel Lessing distributed a report on the current status of the work of the committee. The possible acquisition of the North 40 from Wellesley College by the Town of Wellesley could mean a dramatic change to the plans for 900 Worcester St.

Miguel Lessing passed out a list of current Board committees and their activities urging members, particularly the new members, to consider which committees they would like to join.

Policies and Procedures Committee (Mary Dummer): Mary stated that the work of this committee is to produce guidelines and policies for COA interactions with the public.

Publicity Committee (Judy Keefe): This committee is working with the Friends of the COA on plans for Reinvest in You. They also represented the COA at the Town's first Diversity Summit on Sept. 13. They invite anyone with any interest in working on public relations for the COA to join the PR committee.

Demographics Committee (Penny Lawrence): This committee met and reviewed statistics from 2012 on the senior population of Wellesley. They plan to have focus groups to provide information of what this population wants or needs from the COA. The committee would like

to have a mission statement to serve as a guide to exactly whom we want to attract to the COA.

Susan Kagan Lange answered as chair of the Long Range Strategic Planning Committee that that committee's report would be out soon and with it a comprehensive mission statement. For the moment she said the COA seeks to connect with those residents of 60 years of age or older, and the younger adults who help them, with the ultimate goal of empowering the older group to reach their goals.

Finance Committee (Miguel Lessing): This committee has not yet met this year but when it does it will take up: a new Treasurer's Report, budget, facilitate procurement, policies and procedures, the Almira Simons Trust Fund, the transportation budget and learning about Town systems.

Transportation Committee (Dianne Sullivan): This committee sees the need for two policies as guidance: a Drug and Alcohol Policy for the bus drivers, and a Policy for use of the bus by non-COA organizations (a request has been made by the Wellesley Club to rent the bus to transport their members to Boston raising questions of who can use the bus, insurance, precedence and billing).

A motion was made by Bill Murphy to allow a one-time rental of the bus by the Wellesley Club. Seconded by Susan Kagan Lange. Passed unanimously. Proposed policies on these two items should be brought to the board by the Transportation Committee as agenda items for the next board meeting.

#### The Board Fund

Sandy Budson explained that the board fund was discretionary and anonymous to be used only for board members or board-related events. Members can each put money in an envelope and submit it anonymously.

#### Other Business and Announcements

1. The party for Kait Haas will be held October 2 at 1 PM.
2. The Wellesley Spelling Bee will be held November 2. There is a call for participants.
3. Five staff members will attend the MCOA annual conference in October.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bill Murphy and seconded by Susan Kagan Lange. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Shirley Quinn, Secretary