

Wellesley Council on Aging Board Meeting
November 24, 2014

Attending: Voting Members: John Schuler, Sandy Budson, Mary Dummer, Susan Kagan Lange, Diane Lapon, Miguel Lessing, Sister Alice McCourt, William Murphy, Sheila Nugent, Shirley Quinn, Joellen Toussaint
Associate Members: Mary Bowers, Diane Campbell, Linda Cohen, Lisa Heyison, Judith Keefe, Jerry Kelley, Joanne Kilsdonk, Penelope Lawrence, Dianne Sullivan, Frederick Wright, Gayle Thieme, Director of Senior Services
Absent: Jean Boyle, Jack Cross
Guests: Tom Kealy, Barbara Peacock-Coady, Scott Szczebak

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in Henderson Hall of the Wellesley Community Center.

Announcement John Schuler, Chair, announced that at its meeting on December 1, 2014, the Planning Board will consider resubmission of the PSI for the Tolles Parsons Center.

Introduction to the Board of Scott Szczebak, new Director of Human Resources, Town of Wellesley, and Barbara Peacock-Coady, newly appointed liaison from the Human Resources Board to the Council on Aging. Mr. Szczebak spoke of his work with the new Senior Center in Chicopee, a 7-year project but a great accomplishment. Gayle Thieme spoke with appreciation of her work with Mr. Szczebak and his department on staffing.

The minutes of the October 20 meeting were approved as amended. Amendments have been filed with the original.

Presentation of the proposed FY 16 COA Budget. Gayle Thieme thanked the Finance Committee, consisting of Miguel Lessing, chair, Diane Lapon, and Tom Kealy, for developing the material for the budget request. The total budget submitted was \$472,229 or 19.87% total tax impact increase. This budget includes 2 additional fulltime positions and their benefits of \$40,000, an assistant senior administrator and a transportation coordinator, an increase in senior programs and activities, and added space for in-house transportation staff. The financial impact of the 2016 budget has been reduced by \$85,000 by offsetting COA costs through grants and gifts, and the work of volunteers. The figures for the operating budget accompanied the minutes for this meeting; they and the covering narrative are on file. (Any last minute changes will be brought up at the next board meeting.)

Among the comments made in the discussion were:

- This budget is realistic and transparent.
- This budget is unrelated to the Tolles Parsons submission.

- That there is a lack of hard numbers related to program attendance and users of COA services.
- There should be an emphasis on the value of seniors to the Town. The average tax bill in Wellesley is \$12,000, and the average senior receives \$80 in benefits from the Town. The COA will ultimately save the Town money by encouraging seniors to stay in Wellesley.
- The rental of COA space from the Community Center has seen a 20% increase over 4 years which makes budgeting extremely difficult. We know that the number of seniors using our services has escalated and we have outgrown our space; our lunch program is oversubscribed. But we need explicit examples and firm numbers.

Capital Budget. The Board was also asked to approve the capital budget which was previously submitted to the Town. It includes furniture (speakers and microphones) and ADA required upgrades to the building which are not being covered by the landlord. It is a matter of safety for our community. The building needs to be compliant; currently it and the landlord are not ADA compliant. (Whether the Town will pay for these upgrades is still under review.)

After being moved and seconded, the voting Board members voted to approve both the operating and capital budgets unanimously, 11 to 0.

Long-Range Strategic Plan. Susan Kagan Lange gave the Board an update on activities of that committee since the last Board meeting. The Wellesley Council on Aging Long Range Strategic Plan FY2015-2020 and the accompanying Comprehensive Guide were distributed to the Board, October 28, 2014. These documents were approved by consensus by the committee before distribution. They are to be considered a guide; the COA is not bound to every suggestion proposed. The strategy for implementation is that every year the chair of the Board and the director are to decide on priorities for the year. This year, the priorities set for the year, depending on money and time, are transportation, communication, the Tolles Parsons Center, and regionalization. A retreat for the Board to further discuss the Long-range Plan is being planned.

Sandy Budson moved that the Board accept the mission statement for the COA as set forth in the LR Plan. The motion was seconded.

Discussion. A new mission statement is needed for the use of the COA; the original mission statement is outdated. A vote was needed that night, November 24, to accompany the budget request to the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Board, therefore, the statement should be approved now and amended, if necessary, at a later date. The question was called.

The motion to accept the mission statement in its present form was approved by the voting members of the Board 11 to 0.

Approval of the tag line was not taken up.

Director's Remarks. Ms. Thieme elaborated on her report prepared for this meeting of the Board.

There have been good candidates for the position of Program and Office Assistant. References are still being checked. The lunch program is proving to be very successful rising from 5 customers on 11/4 to 18 on 11/21. A robocall program, called Voice Connect, is part of My Senior Center software. It is being tested; there will be a one-time only charge of \$300.

Demographics Needs Assessment Committee is preparing a survey to assess the needs and interests of seniors in Wellesley. They are canvassing other senior centers as they develop survey questions.

Other Business

Miguel Lessing reported on the work of the 900 Worcester St. site committee. There is work being done for a RFP for a consultant to develop a comprehensive idea of what an aquatic facility on that site should contain and a business model. Approved by Town Meeting, \$60,000.

Announcement of a Planning Board meeting to be held on 12/1 to discuss whether or not to reconsider the PSI on the Tolles Parsons Center submitted by the Board of Selectmen based on the new data.

Susan Kagan Lange reported that she had been asked to represent the COA on a Town Study Committee, looking specifically at the board structure of town committees. In this connection, Sandy Budson reminded the Board that things are moving very quickly and publicly. This emphasizes the importance of the Long-Range Plan.

At approximately 8:30 it was moved and seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Quinn, Secretary