

**Billerica Council on Aging
25 Concord Road, Billerica MA
Board Meeting Minutes**

February 8, 2023, 5:30 pm

Present: Jean Patel Bushnell, Richard Carroll, Phil Doiron, Barbara Flaherty, Gerald Johnson, Marguerite Massey, Bill Neeb, John Pellegrino, Mary Riley, and Mike Riley.

Absent: Kim Conway, Mary Jones

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chair Mary Riley, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for the sick and departed.

Selectboard Member Mike Riley introduced John Metivier who was present for the meeting.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the January 11, 2023 meeting. M/Phil Doiron S/Barbara Flaherty. All members were in favor and motion passed.

COA Director Jean Bushnell reported on the Following Activities and events.

Cultural/ Ethnic /Civic celebrations past and upcoming

- Jan 18th, excellent lunch for 35 patrons to celebrate MLK
- Jan 31, Chinese New Year meal for 45.
- Movies shown at both, MLK: Till, Chinese: Dim Sum
- March 17th: St Patrick's Day – entertainment with chocolate tasting
- Red Sox Opening Day March 30th: Free Hot Dogs plus
- Soup-A-Bowl lunch party Feb 9th .
- AARP Tax Aide program launched Monday Feb 6th
- Breakfasts on alternate Fridays led by John Pellegrino are going well.
- Snacks will now be sold at Bingo to raise a few dollars

Partnering

- Working with Board of Health/ Bethany Slack to store their data the My Senior Center operating system.
- Decision on Jan 18th to relocate the Farmers Market.
- We will be hosting a Learning Visit from Singapore's most respected Medical Center Friday March 24th, 9-1 PM, 25 Concord Rd
- Edible Arrangements® donated cookies for us to sell on Valentine's Day

The Friends Organization

- No requests submitted in January
- Drawings of the February Calendar Raffle on Fridays here at the BCOA
- Tickets for the March 31st Black-Tie Bingo now available

FY2024 Budget

Presentation to Town Manager on Jan 12th Flat lined with 3 % COL adjustments
Employees remain underpaid against market..

Planning

- Celebrating our 2022 Volunteers Event: “home-made Italian dinner” with a glass of wine, some music and giveaways - June 6th, 5.30 to 7.30 PM
- Tax Work Off Feb 13th at BATV: Light lunch: Participation in TWO program has declined significantly since it was full in 2016, and close to full in 2018

Operations

Pay As you go System

- Conducting an analysis of income versus expenses for exercise programs
In April will decide on no longer offering classes that cannot be sustained due to low participation and subsidy drain.

Transportation

- Rethinking operations given cost considerations. COA charging \$12/trip
Average cost is \$14.
- Concerns about personal liability dissuading volunteer drivers.
- Rich Carroll shared information on the Homestead Act addressing protection of property against lawsuits.

Weather – FRIDAY Feb 3rd

- We opened from 8 AM to 6 PM during extreme cold to offer a warm place.
- Discussion ensued regarding broadcasting the COA as a warming center

Staff –In keeping employees productive, engaged and successful a fun dinner gathering on Jan 18th with raffles etc. generated strong feelings of TEAM.

Cohesive Social Services platform in town.

The Director continues to study other towns with approximately the same population size of persons 60 years and older and will bring key findings to a future Board meeting

The Chair recognized Selectman Mike Riley for an update on Capital Planning meeting

New Architectural firm, Abacus, has been hired. Introductory meeting Monday, Feb 13 , 5:30 pm at town Hall. Capital facilities committee targeting June to make their recommendation to Select Board

The Director reiterated that the design needs to look at functionality as opposed to creating a bigger space. Should the Cider Mill site not materialize, the Town could pursue the purchase of property adjacent to 25 Concord road to facilitate expansion of the existing building. Visibility is important to the seniors in relation to the location of the center.

Next meeting, March 8, 2023, at 5:30 pm

Motion to Adjourn made by Phil Doiron S/Barbara Flaherty

M/Passed Meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted



William Neeb, Recording Secretary