

## **Draft Acton Council On Aging Board Meeting Minutes for 2/11/2008**

**Present:** Steve Baran, Chair; Gena Manalan, Vice-Chair; Mike Gowing, Secretary; Pat Ellis; Paul Turner; Sally Thompson; Jean Fleming, Director; Barbara Tallone; Paulina Knibbe, B.O.S.; Suzanne Brozek, Liaison, Minuteman Senior Services

**Absent:** Police Liaison; Sue Chase & Connie Ingram, liaison, Friends of the Council on Aging; Anita Dodson;; Ed Carell, Treasurer; Barbara Cantrill; William Ely;

### **Call to Order:**

Steve Baran called the meeting to order at 3:45 PM on 2/11/2008 at the Senior Center.

### **Minutes of 12/15/07:**

The December minutes were read and accepted without corrections.

Joke of the month – Paulina Knibbe

### **Financial Report:**

Jean Fleming reported on an opening balance at 2/11/2008 of \$11,539 and non-personnel expenditures of \$2,564 for a closing balance of \$8,975.

### **Director's Report:**

Jean Fleming reported that any input to the March newsletter would need to be in by end of week. New bulletin boards have been erected in the lobby to appear more welcoming. She has mounted a suggestion box in the lobby (suggestion slips were given to Gena). "Coffee and conversation" sessions will end at the end of February unless it is determined more are needed (she asked for a board member to attend this Friday's and Paul volunteered).

She indicated that the newsletter has the following on its calendar:

- Income tax prep appointments
- Fuel assistance program (Carol S.)
- Emergency fuel assistance (Jean)
- April town warrant will have an item to fund a shortfall in the COA van budget caused by an unexpected long-term illness in one of the drivers.
- Valentines day luncheon with jazz concert afterward.
- COA monthly breakfast
- St. Patty's day lunch March 12<sup>th</sup>
- Lion's Club St. Patty's day lunch March 8<sup>th</sup>
- A "famous trials" series
- Spanish classes
- Opera program

She brought up the subject of a special, evening program to bring in some of the working seniors and asked for suggestions. Gena suggested Chinese night to help assist the elder Chinese population in integrating. Mike suggested a D.J. and dancing. Pat suggested a wine & cheese party.

She is trying to schedule a legislative visit from a state senator and/or congressman to hear about senior issues from the population. Pat, Steve and Jean will work on completing the slate.

The Board of Health (in conjunction with Emerson Hospital) will be sponsoring "Wellness University" April 26<sup>th</sup>. We may want to have COA Board members staff a table.

### **Report on the Steering Committee presentation:**

Barbara reported on the presentation given to the Senior Center Expansion Steering Committee (Scex) and it was suggested we show it at the next COA Board meeting so the other members can see what we are doing.

**Overview of the task force responsibilities:**

Paulina gave an outline of what is being done regarding the expansion/replacement of the senior center titled "Whom will we serve in the future?" She discussed the task forces and what they were tasked to do.

- Mike gave an outline of what the site selection task force was doing. Sixty town/school potential sites were whittled down to ten using a weighted system in site selection (space, parking spaces, appropriate access, etc.) and are further reducing that number to 3-5 to submit to the Steering Committee and then will begin evaluating lease space, possible town purchases and possible partnerships with developers.
- Barbara gave an outline of what the financial task force was doing. She indicated that they are connecting with other towns to determine who finances what in these towns for some insight into possible changes we might make. They also are constructing a map of where seniors in town currently live to help determine placement.
- Gena gave an outline of what the function task force is doing. Basically outlining what we offer today and what we would hope to offer in the future to entice younger seniors (60-70) to also attend. They are hoping to produce a focus group of 50-60 year olds to try to determine what those programs would look like.

**The Elder abuse/neglect bill:**

Pat discussed whether the bill that stalled on the hill this past year (approved by the senate & house – vetoed by the then Governor) could be resurrected. Sited a Boston Globe article on non-enforcement of state regulations regarding committing senior to SNF's without representation.

She also brought up tax concerns for taxation for low-income families in Acton. According to a chart she provided from the Boston Globe January 31<sup>st</sup> that stated that Acton had the highest tax rate of the 35 communities sampled. It was suggested that it be put on the next meeting agenda for further discussion.

**Minuteman Services:**

Suzanne presented the annual requests for Minuteman Services. She advocated for budget increases to:  
Geriatric mental health  
Elder abuse  
Community options

She mentioned their annual "March on Beacon Hill" February 26<sup>th</sup>.

She also asked if members of the Board of Selectmen would participate in the meals on wheels program sometime in March.

She also mentioned the concept of "Green house", a new program making elders currently in SNF's an option of more congregate living circumstance. She had a 15 min. video on the subject. This will be scheduled for next meeting.

**Voter access:**

Paul and Steve visited with the League of Woman Voters earlier to determine some of the barriers to voting that the elder community face regarding voter access at the polls in town. The three greatest problems were:

- Parking
- Lighting
- Handicap Access

Paul spoke with Officer Cowen, the voting overseer from the police department.

**Old Business:**

The “joke of the month” will rotate to Paul for the March meeting.

**New Business:**

Comprehensive Community Plan (headed by Lauren R. B.O.S.) – should there be a member of the COA board on it?

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the COA Board will be scheduled at 3:45 PM on Monday, March 10th, 2008 at the Senior Center

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mike Gowing  
Secretary