

Acton Council on Aging Board Meeting Minutes for 5/11/2009

Present: Stephen Baran, Chair; Sally Thompson, Secretary; Pat Ellis; Gena Manalan; Paul Turner; Jim Papachristos; Barbara Willson; Jean Fleming, Director; Mike Gowing, Liaison from Board of Selectmen; Paulina Knibbe, Outgoing Liaison from Board of Selectmen

Absent: Barbara Tallone, Treasurer; Connie Ingram, President, Friends of the COA; Charlie Aaronson; Anita Dodson; Detective Dan Silva, Liaison Police Department

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 PM on 05/11/2009 at the Senior Center by Steve Baran.

Board and Liaison Membership:

Steve Baran announced recent changes in the COA board of directors. Anita Dodson resigned as a board member. Charlie Aaronson, Jim Papachristos, and Barbara Willson have been appointed as new board members. And Mike Gowing has been appointed as the new Liaison from the Board of Selectmen.

Paulina Knibbe resigned as the Liaison from the Board of Selectmen. After providing a brief summary of the board's accomplishments in the last year, Paulina thanked the board for their work on the senior center expansion committee. The COA board and Jean Fleming then thanked Paulina for her leadership in the senior center expansion project and recognized her for the interest she has shown in our COA board with her regular attendance and contributions at meetings.

Review of the Minutes:

The minutes of the Acton Council on Aging Board meeting for 04/13/09 were accepted without correction.

Director's Report:

The May-June COA Newsletter has been sent. The next edition of the COA Newsletter will be a combined July-August two month edition. We now have more than 200 seniors who receive their newsletter by email, saving paper, printing, and postage. A discussion ensued about encouraging more seniors to receive the newsletter by email. Program highlights were presented.

The Mothers' Day luncheon and Pam Hines Jazz Trio performance were held May 7th. About 40 people attended the event.

May 11th begins the three part series called Big Bands Music Appreciation.

Margaret Hoag will present on Elder Law issues on May 14th. Family and friends are invited to come with their questions.

May 15th Lt. Dan Silva will give a presentation of safety issues for seniors in Acton.

Wednesday May 20th there will be an evening program on retirement health options offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA.

A three part series begins May 21st called Art Matters focusing on Post Impressionism, Northern Renaissance, Rembrandt, and Vermeer. Art Matters was offered previously and was very popular and well attended.

On May 27th, the COA staff will hold the first Day of Remembrance. COA staff are very aware of the many losses and deaths of loved ones experienced by seniors. All seniors are invited to attend and remember a loved one who has passed away with a simple and meaningful ceremony.

Representative Jen Benson will be coming for a coffee hour on May 29, 2009. Seniors are invited to contact the senior center staff with concerns or questions for Rep. Benson to address.

Tuesday, June 9th Fathers' Day will be celebrated with a lunch and barbershop quartet. There will be a demonstration of chair yoga 1:30 to 2:30 that day.

Thursday June 18th is the COA Volunteer Reception.

Members of the board recognized COA staff for the variety of excellent programs being offered.

Jean reported that she will be applying to the state for a formula grant. In the past the value of the grant has been approximately \$16,000. COA staff are reviewing ideas for the use of the monies.

Safety Net activities include an increase in need for grocery certificates in the month of April. The Board of Selectmen have allowed use of the town gift fund to buy more grocery certificates. Town employees have been offered the option to make automatic deductions to help with safety net programs. Community Supper funds are not lasting through spring as in the past. More people are in need, including receiving electricity shut-off notices. The Town social worker and Carol Steiner have been offering assistance to make appropriate referrals. The use of food pantries has been increasing.

The Senior Center improvement projects are under discussion. A new audio system is needed. Monies from Rep. Jen Benson's donation and from the municipal budget may be used. The Friends of the COA have a gift fund that may be used for landscaping services. Research into flooring, partitions, and video cameras is underway. The possibility of moving one of the pool tables off the premises is being explored.

Old Business:

Steve Baran thanked the Town of Acton employees who generously prepared and served a delicious lunch to seniors on April 27th. The event was fun for everyone.

New Business:

Gena Manalan presented a plan to bring the COA board into line with other boards in the Town of Acton by staggering future COA board member appointments so that a cadre of solid, experienced members is available to orient and guide the new members. The goals would be a system in which each member of the 9 person board serves a three year term which is renewable for an additional three year term. Board member terms would expire in a synchronized manner, allowing for two thirds or more of the board to remain in office. Subsequent expiration of terms would occur in a preplanned fashion until the entire board turned over with the passage of years while maximizing retention of experienced board members. The board members requested that the COA Charter be emailed to them for examination.

Board members were asked to mark their calendars for November 16th at 8:15 p.m. when the COA board meets with the BOS.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the COA Board is June 8, 2009 at 3:45p.m.at the home of Barbara Tallone. It will be followed by a party for COA staff.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Thompson, Secretary