

DEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING
Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2021

Present: Vice-Chairman Marie-Louise Kehoe, Sherri Hannigan, Geri Pacheco, Diane Barry-Preston, Maureen Teti, Sandra Tocman, Police Chief Michael D'Entremont, COA Director Sheila Pransky.

Absent: Chairman Leanne Jasset, Parks and Recreation Representative Charles (Chuck) Dello Iacono, HESSCO Representative Anne Heller

Meeting called to order by Vice-Chairman Marie-Louise Kehoe at 5:08 PM. She will serve as meeting chair until Leanne is able to return from additional work with the Board of Health (BOH) due to Covid-19. All votes were by roll call because this was a remote meeting on Zoom,

Motion made by Diane, seconded by Sandra, to accept the January minutes. So voted.

Director's Report:

- We have been working with the BOH to assist with scheduling, staffing, registering, and transporting seniors 75+ to the clinics on 2/6/2021 and 2/18/2021. Our volunteers have helped with completing vaccination record cards and phone calls.
- Because of Governor Baker's vaccination orders, it appears Dedham and other towns will not be able to hold future vaccination clinics. We will be able to administer the second doses to those who have received the first shots at our previous clinics.
- The Covid-19 Relief Committee is discussing a program to provide a grant program for seniors enrolled in the Tax Work Off Program. Seniors usually earn up to \$1500 off their tax bill. Seniors earned little last year and it appears they won't be able to reach that amount again this year. Though it will only be a modest amount, it will help the seniors.
- We have been trying to provide some uplifting programs for seniors who are mostly at home due to the weather. We celebrated Valentine's Day with the delivery of senior gift bags. Along with community volunteers, the COA staff, and the regular food pantry deliveries, we delivered bags to about 160 seniors. We also hosted a Zoom concert program in conjunction with area COAs.
- We hope to get the center in a more functional state in the coming months. We need to prepare the multi-purpose and multi-media rooms to host the AARP tax preparation program that runs from early March until April 15th.
- The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) Urgent Taxi Grant runs until the end of March with an effort being made to extend it until the end of June. That will give us an opportunity to expend a greater percentage of our \$10,000.
- We are hoping to see Dedham seniors here soon!

Motion made by Diane to accept the Director's Report, seconded by Sandy. So voted.

HESSCO: Sandra Tocman

- There is a significant waiting list for clients who want homemaker/health care aides.

Senior Center Update:

- The staff in is the center everyday and there are now volunteers helping out.
- We are working with the Facilities Department to do a major cleaning of the center.
- We are asking the Town for a new van that will be easier to navigate some of the streets in Dedham.

Livable Dedham/Human Rights Commission: Diane Barry-Preston

- The HRC would like to create a program to be shown on cable showing our senior diversity. They would like people to share their ideas. Some examples given were senior involvement in town government, serving on various boards, and the Endicott greenhouse.
- The clearing of snow from the town sidewalks is a major challenge. LD had an idea to print maps of where the town plows and safe ways to get to schools.
- Another issue is what can we do to help seniors who are unable to shovel or clear snow? Marie-Louise brought up the Snow Angels program to get volunteers. Sheila has contacted youth groups and centers in the past, but it is hard to get kids to shovel. Liability and insurance add to the problem. Sheila noted that most of the calls to the COA are from seniors who need snow removal and are looking for the names of contractors. Work on these issues will continue into next year.

Covid-19 Relief Fund: Marie-Louise Kehoe

- We are looking to see if people working in the Tax Relief Program are eligible for assistance. A report will be out soon.

Vaccination Clinic Update:

- There was an excellent response to the vaccination clinic at the Middle School.
- Second vaccinations will be available and those eligible will be contacted.

Old/New Business:

- Nancy Baker will be posting the open Board position due to the passing of Russ Poole.
- Reappointments may be done either individually or as a group. If as a group, Sheila could submit it.

Motion made by Diane to adjourn, seconded by Sandy So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 PM.