

DEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING  
Meeting Minutes  
April 15, 2021

Present: Chairman Leanne Jasset, Vice-Chairman Marie-Louise Kehoe, Sherri Hannigan, Diane Barry-Preston, Maureen Teti, Sandra Tocman, Parks and Recreation Representative Charles (Chuck) Dello Iacono, Police Chief Michael D'Entremont, COA Director Sheila Pransky

Absent: Geri Pacheco, HESSCO Representative Anne Heller

Meeting called to order by Chairman Leanne Jasset at 5:05 PM. Because this was a remote meeting on Zoom, all votes were by roll call

Motion made by Diane, seconded by Sandra, to accept the March minutes. So voted. Leanne voted present.

Meeting Documents: Director's Report

Director's Report: Sheila Pransky Director

- The way we have been working since the pandemic began is taking its toll. The stress is wearing and as we move toward gearing up for the re-opening there will be a different kind of stress, but a welcome change.
- Some of our fitness classes continue at outdoor venues and indoors in small groups along with our online Dedham TV programming. We have been offered some outdoor space at Legacy Place and are discussing what might work for us there.
- Our Technology Pilot program is about to begin. We will have small group meetings to complete the necessary documents and assign equipment.
- The Pen Pal Project has begun with enthusiastic participation. Approximately 23 seniors and 23 middle schoolers have exchanged letters.
- The Ames Building re-opening appears to be being planned in the next few months. (See the Senior Center Update for further discussion.)
- We have been asked to help staff the main entrance at the rear of the building with tax work off or other volunteers while at the same time having people at our own front desk. I will try to combine some of the duties of both positions.
- We hope to be able to increase ridership in our own vehicles soon and to get our new van during the summer. The Capital Committee has tentatively approved the purchase. Half of the van's cost will be paid by our municipal budget or Formula Grant.
- This year's budget hearing went well. There appeared to be support for our endeavors. I try to give important information about the COA they may not be aware of at this time.
- At Town Meeting, we will be asking for an increase in our annual Revolving Fund Account from \$15,000 to \$35,000. We deposit all of our revenues from transportation and classes into this fund and would like to use it to pay for allowed expenses.

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

HESSCO: Sandra Tocman

- Union negotiations are ongoing.

Senior Center Update:

- Leanne stated that some Dedham residents believe the Board of Health is standing in the way of the opening of the Senior Center. This is not true. One senior told her seniors are at home "withering away." She has spoken with the Town Manager.
- Diane stated the seniors need the Senior Center for social, emotional, and physical reasons. It is time to open the center.
- Marie-Louise stated the cost to seniors is just too much to stay closed.
- Maureen asked if parking is the reason it is not open. If so, a solution has to be found.
- The discussion continued with Board members asking why the Senior Center is open for voting, but is not open like most surrounding COA seniors.
- Sheila said the Board will probably continue meetings via Zoom unless regulation guidelines are changed. Chuck and Marie-Louise will look into cable videoing meetings.
- A motion was made by Chuck, seconded by Diane, to send a letter to the Town Manager and the Select Board regarding the opening of the Senior Center. So voted. Sherri and Diane will work on the letter.

HESSCO: Sandra Tocman

- Union negotiations are ongoing.

Livable Dedham / Human Rights commission Diane Barry-Preston

- Diane and Jon Briggs are still waiting for approval from the Conservation Commission for the adult park. When approved they will order the equipment which has been vetted for safety.
- Maureen asked if there will be a security system in place to prevent vandalism at the park. Chuck responded the Parks and Recreation Department is working on this.
- The Human Rights Commission is pulling together a cable show, *I Am Dedham*. Because ageism is an issue in Dedham, Diane will interview seniors about their volunteer work and what seniors can do to improve the town.

Old/New Business:

- Leanne reported she will have information about Board reappointments soon.
- In further discussion about honoring Russ Poole, Leanne said we could possibly collaborate with another group on a plan. The discussion will continue.

Public Comment: None

Motion made by Chuck to adjourn, seconded by Sherri. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 5:53 PM.

