

DEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING
Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2021

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

Absent: Vice-Chairman Marie-Louise Kehoe, Geri Pacheco, HESSCO Representative Anne Heller

Meeting called to order by Chairman Leanne Jasset at 5:06 PM. Since the meeting was partially remote all votes were by roll call.

The July minutes will be voted on next month.

Meeting Documents:

- Director's Report
- Town Counsel Response RE: The Opening Meeting Law

Director's Report: Sheila Pransky

- We continue to see increased attendance in most of our programs. The age distribution is varied and encouraging as our efforts seem to have attracted younger seniors. More than 60 % of attendees are under 80 and 22% are under 70 with 1,317 visits in total.
- From June 21 to August 9, 2021, 367 individuals have checked in at the kiosk. (35 new individuals have registered since July 30th.) I have been told by numerous people, from a variety of backgrounds, that there is definitely positive buzz about the Senior Center events and services.
- We continue to get all our paperwork in order to purchase the handicapped accessible van approved at the last Town Meeting.
- Our program plans are in place for a busy fall, and we will remain flexible with regard to Covid precautions. Currently, the staff is wearing masks in public spaces and seniors have been asked to wear masks as well. We are concerned we may be heading into the fall and winter with more restrictions.
- We are looking at flu clinics. As we have done in past years, we will speak with the Board of Health about dates for the clinics here at the Center. We expect a lot more people will participate this year.
- We are looking forward to our "Welcome Fall Breakfast" on September 17th from 10:00-12:00. We now have four co-sponsors, Epic of Westwood, Hebrew Senior Life, Synergy, and the Linden. We are planning on either serving food outdoors or sending pre-packaged breakfast treats home with the attendees after they enjoy the entertainment, socializing, and coffee at the Center. Again, we will remain flexible with regard to Covid safety practices.

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

HESSCO:

- There was no HESSCO meeting in the month of August.

- Following up on the discussion during our July meeting, Sherri said the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) monies are being distributed with a rate enhancement for certain providers of Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) through December 2021. The next round of ARPA initiatives will be strategically focused on various LTSS areas with a spending plan due to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid in October. More information will follow on how this affects service providers and recipients in Dedham.

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Senior Center Update: Sheila Pransky

- Things are going well at the Center though there was some push back about masks which was resolved.
- There are still some issues with the doors. The timing on the handicapped doors at the entrance to the Center is off. The door closes too quickly.
- There are similar issues when entering or exiting the bathroom. The American Disabilities Act requires only a handle on the doors, but not automatic doors. Board members questioned why this was not done as part of the construction. Now, it is expensive to fix.

Livable Dedham / Human Rights Commission Diane Barry-Preston

- The group is continuing work on the opening of the Gonzalez Adult Recreation Area.

Senior Center Ribbon Cutting Event:

- Sheila has continued to plan the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and has contacted Senator Michael Rush and Representative Paul McMurtry about the event.
- Activities will take place on the outside patio and in the community room which opens to the patio.
- Chuck made a motion the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony take place on Saturday, October 2, 2021, seconded by Sherri. So voted.

Old/New Business:

- There will be a Veterans Breakfast on November 10th. Sheila noted there will be better planning for all veteran's events now because of the work of our new Veterans Agent Joe Hamilton.
- With the new Covid restrictions, Chuck said he will make the decision about having the Senior Barbecue soon.
- An interested group of seniors would like to resurrect the Friends group. Jackie and Sherri will work with them as a subcommittee of the Board.
- Marketing is very important in promoting the Senior Center. We will ask Amanda Smith, the town's Public Information Officer, to help promote the Senior Center's programs, events, and services. She is a guest columnist for *The Times*.
- Chief D'Entremont spoke about a new twist in the grandparent scam. Perpetrators have begun meeting with the victims. There have been arrests in neighboring towns.
- HESSCO has received some money to stabilize its work force.
- Leanne spoke to the Town Counsel about whether or not emailing among Board members violates the Open Meeting Law. Town Counsel responded that when members receiving and responding to an email regarding their availability for a meeting is not a violation. Thus, a reply all response may be used. However, there is a risk if the communication is about the business of the Board, personal feelings or concerns about an agenda item.

Public Comment: None

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:59 PM.