

DEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING

Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2020

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

Absent: Sherri Hannigan

Meeting called to order by Chairman Leanne Jasset at 5:08 PM. All votes were by roll call because this was a remote meeting on Zoom,

Motion made by Marie-Louise, seconded by Sandy, to accept the September and October minutes. So voted. Chief D'Entremont voted present.

Public Discussion:

Planning Board member, Jessica Porter, and Town Planner ,Jeremy Rosenberger, spoke to the Board about the updating of the Town Master Plan. They would like help from the COA to get the information out to seniors, especially those who do not use technology, The plan covers a variety of topics including, public health and housing, both areas of importance to seniors. There will be three Community Open House meetings, each covering different topics. Public health and housing will be discussed at the January 26th remote meeting. They noted it was important to work with all town departments.

Sheila said she would use the COA newsletter and/or an insert within and social media, Diane will use the Livable Dedham page and website and hand out flyers at Livable Dedham meetings, and Leanne will use the Board of Health outreach resources.

Director's Report:

- Outside fitness classes and coffee socials are continuing.
- Almost 50 seniors attended our Veterans Day drive-through lunch at the VFW. Guests enjoyed their lunches in their cars while listening to musical entertainment.
- Some fitness classes are being held at the Dolan Center with limited participants.
- Transportation is available on the big bus with a limited number of passengers. We purchased a spray disinfectant machine for use between trips. The van is available for medical trips with only one person at a time.
- The MAPC transportation grant has been extended through March. HESSCO is applying for an additional grant that will also be available to us.
- Select Board member Sarah MacDonald assisted in the coordination of the Thanksgiving meals. All those who wished to receive a meal were accommodated and we avoided duplication.
- We helped organize volunteers for the Sunday Food Pantry turkey basket delivery and a regular Wednesday grocery delivery. We also coordinated with HESSCO for the prepared meals for seniors. There were over 50 meals in Dedham.
- In partnership with the Library and the Dedham Housing Authority, I have sent a request for a \$5,000 grant to Beth Israel Deaconess Needham. It will provide 20 iPad tablets to residents in senior housing, one year of Comcast Essentials, and the internet connection.

Some costs will be covered by the CARES Act and the hospital will cover some additional costs with the goal of reducing social isolation and mental illness. The Library will assist with support services and possibly more tablets if needed.

- This year there will be a virtual Mitten Tree. The Housing Authority is gathering names of senior gift recipients and asking for the names of additional seniors along with a list of gifts they would like to receive. Seniors must opt in if they wish to participate.

Motion made by Marie-Louise to accept the Director's Report, seconded by Geri. So voted.

HESSCO: Anne Heller

- The monthly meeting was an assessment of how the organization was doing handling the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Home visits are done when necessary, but more are being done electronically. There is a written procedure for each home visit.
- Direct care providers received a 5% salary increase and will receive reimbursements in the new year.
- Covid-19 has shown less office space is required to function.
- There is a plan to get the Norwood Hospital Emergency Room operational.
- Thanks to HESSCO some holiday meals will be delivered on Sunday. Two to three times more meals than usual will be delivered.

Livable Dedham: Diane Barry-Preston

- Diane presented a new pilot Phone Pal program with the COA to address social isolation. There will be training covering sample conversation topics for the volunteers who will make weekly phone calls to seniors.
- The program will begin next month and volunteers are welcome to join.

Senior Center Update:

- Most of the materials left in the COA area have been cleaned out.
- The staff is working on putting rooms together.
- Geri asked if we could meet in the center. Leanne will follow up on the request.

Old Business/New Business

- Since completion of the Senior Center is still in flux, the vote on a memorial for Russ Poole was postponed.
- Diane and Chuck have expressed interest in filling Russ's seat on the Human Rights Commission. Each spoke briefly on why they would like to serve. A vote will be taken at our next meeting.
- We also need a new COA Board member. Appointments/reappointments to the COA Board need to be revisited.
- As the holidays come upon us with Covid restrictions in place, the Board discussed various opportunities to make the holidays more pleasant for others. Chuck said the annual Christmas lights will be on at the Cushman home, but visitors may not do the usual walk through. There will be a motorcade on the 6th to show Rita Mae and Lloyd Cushman how much the things they do for the town are appreciated by residents. Leanne said the Dedham Pharmacy is collecting food and accepting donations for the Food Pantry.
- The Board of Health is participating in the Mask Up program to keep people safe.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:23 PM.

