DEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING

Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2017

Present: Chairman Leanne Jasset, Geraldine (Geri) Pacheco, Diane Barry Preston, Maureen Teti, Sandra Tocman, Parks and Recreation Representative Charles (Chuck) Dello Iacono, COA Director Sheila Pransky

Meeting called to order at 5:05 PM.

Absent: Sherri Hannigan, Marie-Louise Kehoe, Russ Poole, HESSCO Representative Anne Heller

Public Discussion: None

Minutes: Sandy made a motion, seconded by Geri, to accept the August minutes. So voted.

Director's Report:

* Though we have advertised for one or two new van drivers, we have received only a few resumes from qualified candidates.
* Because of some labor and construction issues, we do not have a definite opening date for the new center. We are looking forward to having multiple spaces for simultaneous activities when the new center opens. Currently, some of our fitness classes are at the Dolan Center and others are being juggled to take place here. However, new offerings including a book group, line dancing, regular Tai Chi, and Strength and Posture classes are beginning.
* Gary Hylander, a history professor at Stonehill College and sought after speaker, will be invited to speak at the new center.
* There will be a veterans breakfast for seniors at the VFW in November.
* We are ramping up our volunteer programs. There will be a general meeting in September for all interested potential volunteers.
* Our special events are currently being sponsored by a variety of organizations. We have submitted a grant request to Beth Israel Deaconess Needham for exercise equipment. They have verbally committed to $1500 the first year and $1000 each year thereafter with no restrictions.
* We have contracted with the Hilton Hotel for the 90's Luncheon next year because with the success of this event the American Legion is too small. Donations will off set the increased costs.
* Sheila has decided not to pursue additional funding for staff and programs until she has a clear idea of the expenditures in the new building. As of now, the staff is stable and functioning well.
* Sheila is hoping the COA Board will take up the discussion of reviving and revitalizing the Friends of the Dedham Council on Aging. The organization is a source of support and funding for items outside the regular budget. The Board is hopeful that with the opening of the new site, there will be renewed interest in the Friends.
* Rob Stegman will attend our next meeting with a sample of materials we hope to have available for those who want to participate in programs at the senior center.

HESSCO:

* No report

New Business:

* In the new state budget, Dedham will be receiving only $9.75 per senior This is a cut from previous budgets. Representative Paul McMurtry had requested $100,000 for the new senior center, but it was attached to another bill and did not pass. However, the final budget has not yet been approved. If approved this money does not come to us directly. It goes into the general fund. The question arose as to who decides how that money is spent.

Old Business:

* Maureen requested the Board obtain a list of COA Trust funds that includes the balance in each account, restrictions on the accounts, and indicates where the interest accrued is deposited. Is the interest added to the fund or is it deposited into the General Fund? Leanne will follow up on the request.
* Chuck discussed the Safe Home Program. Discussion focused on what is a safe home and how to create homes that provide the safest environment for seniors. Several ideas were discussed: requesting mitigation funds to purchase home safety equipment, involving other town departments, incorporating Safe Homes under the Livable Dedham umbrella. Further discussion will follow.
* Legal counsel for seniors who are unable to pay for attorneys was discussed. It was suggested that there may be pro bono attorneys available. Further discussion will follow.
* Beth Rouleau, the new project coordinator for Livable Dedham, is working out of the Community House until the new senior center is open. She has taken over social media and is working with a UMASS Gerontology group that is developing a 3-5 year plan for seniors. They will have focus groups based on the Livable Dedham areas of concern that will provide a deeper discussion of these issues.
* Maureen made a motion to remove the Contentment heading from the newsletter. She stated the term does not reflect the vitality and enthusiasm of Dedham's seniors. Geri seconded the motion. It was unanimously voted.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM.