

Minutes of COA Board Meeting April 12, 2022 – Via Zoom

Board Members Present: Lois Carra, Jennifer Chisholm, Kathy Dalton, Lily Owyang, Eva Paddock, and Beverly Sealey.

Absent: Stephanie Becker-Stone, James Bennett, Mary DeCoursey, Pearl Hines,

Staff Present: Lisa Castagna, Alicia Johnson, Susan Pacheco, and Vincent McCarthy

Call to Order – President Owyang called meeting to order at 9:36 a.m.

Review/Acceptance of minutes: Motion made by Kathy Dalton, seconded by Eva Paddock. Minutes unanimously approved.

Executive Director – Susan Pacheco

- COVID

COA continues to have available for distribution Rapid Test Kits and KF94 masks. Also, for anyone looking in Cambridge to book an appointment for a vaccine or booster, the following is an option available every Wednesday. Beginning Wednesday, April 6, the Cambridge Public Health Department will be offering **COVID-19 vaccine clinics** by appointment only every Wednesday from 2-4 p.m. at 119 Windsor Street. Learn more and book an appointment [here](#).

There was discussion by Board regarding “uptick” of positive cases in Cambridge. This led to an informative discussion on wastewater data .

- EOEA Formula Grant

FY 22 contracts were finally posted. It has been signed by the City Manager and will be appropriated at a soon to be scheduled City Council meeting. The contract amount is the same as in the past (\$174,360). The amount is \$12/elder and set according to the 2010 census (14,530 residents age 60+). The amount for future years will be determined, once 2020 census data is available. The contract has effective date of July 1, 2021 and terminates as of June 30, 2032.

- North Cambridge Senior Center

In person programming has resumed as of March 28th at NCSC on Mondays 11:30-5 and Fridays 12 noon - 3:30 pm. Alicia and I have worked out a schedule for staffing coverage thru June. We will be reviewing NCSC Director job description and then determine posting.

- Food Services Manager

Julie King has retired as of April 1st. Alicia and I are reviewing job description (written 20+years ago), along with other food related job descriptions. We do want to hire a FT staff person again for Kitchen operations. We are also currently meeting with Somerville Cambridge Elder Services (SCES) and their desire for ongoing commitment to the congregate meals program. SCES very much wants to remain part of the program.

- De-Escalation Workshop Tuesday, April 12th (2:00-3:30). VIA Zoom. We have been challenged by various participant issues these last few months. One of course resulting in a No Trespass Order. I have been meeting with Sue Walsh, along with City colleagues: Marie Mathieu (Library), Elana Klein (Police), Jamie Barrett (Police) and Maria Melo (MSC). What we have experienced, has also been occurring at both the Library and Multi-Service Center. Based on our conversation, we agreed that an

overview of dealing with difficult residents/clients/participants would be beneficial. There are many staff who are very skilled in deescalating situations, but it is always beneficial to remind ourselves of the resources available to us when working with challenging individuals.

The session will be facilitated by Marie, Elana, and Jamie. Both teams from the COA and MSC will attend jointly. Our hope is that this session will assist all of us in identifying potential issues and how to deal with them. The main objective: to ensure that we all feel safe!

Today's session is the first in a series.

- Warming Center
As reported to the Board, Warming Center opened December 1st and will close April 30th. It has been a relatively quiet and successful season.
- COA Staff Meeting ED has been working with consultant Ora Grodsky. There will be a staff "retreat" scheduled on May 5th. The purpose of the session is to set the stage for COA reconnection in FY 23.
- Human Services Budget hearing is scheduled for May 17th.
- Joint programming with Living Well Network
COA and Living Well Network will jointly sponsor Dr. Daphne Schneider on May 19th @ 1:00. The program topic: Osteoporosis and Bone Health.

COA Activities Team – Alicia Johnson

- During the weeks of March 7th and March 14th, the Activities Team coordinated with class instructors to start classes 15 minutes early or to end 15 minutes later, to hold Q & A sessions with participants. The goal of these sessions was for participants to voice their questions or concerns about the limited classes that returned to in-person the week of March 28th. A total of 18 virtual classes were visited.

Also discussed was the lifting of the mask mandate in Cambridge municipal buildings on March 28th.

- The Council on Aging conducted a brief, anonymous survey about virtual and in-person classes. During the week of March 14th, instructors included a link to Survey Monkey in their Zoom class email invitations. A total of 148 survey responses were received.
Results to be shared with the Council on Aging Board
- April's virtual special events:
 - April 6th Virtual presentation by Northeastern University Students
 - ❖ The history behind Northeastern University
 - April 11th Virtual discussion with Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
 - ❖ Topic: Health Screenings
 - April 14th Hybrid Book Group with Cambridge Librarian: Janet Borron
 - ❖ Book selected: ***On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous***
 - April 21st Live virtual walking tour of Florence Italy
 - April 28th Virtual Chef's Table cooking demonstration with Neville Place
- April's in-person special events:
 - April 14 Health and Wellness Talk with Roberta Robinson, Cambridge Health Alliance
 - ❖ Topic: Emotions- Are they our friends or foes?
 - April 14 In-Person Arts and Crafts Class is cancelled.

Client Services – Vincent McCarthy

- Update on open Case Manager (CM) position
Vincent, Maryellen McEleney and Rachel Tanenhaus, Executive Director of Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities conducted the first round of interviews for the CM position on Wednesday, March 30th & Thursday, March 31st. We interviewed seven very qualified candidates and will be conducting the second round of interviews on Thursday, April 7th.
At this time, we will be joined by Susan Pacheco and will meet with the interview teams' top 4 candidates. After our second interviews we plan to choose the candidate who will be hired to fill the open position. We have been very pleased to have had so many impressive candidates interview for the job and are looking forward to welcoming a new staff member soon. We hope to have this individual in the position by early May.
- Men's Group: We look forward to resuming our monthly Men's group meeting this month. The group will meet on the third Tuesday of each month. We will meet on the Tuesday, April 19th @ 10 am – 11:30am.
- There are 4 to 8 Pool players representing Cambridge in the Travelling Senior Pool League.
- The Cambridge Consumers' Council will be sponsoring a 'SHRED DAY' event on Saturday, April 23rd from 9:30am – 1pm in front of City Hall. The event will provide free public shredding and allow residents to safely dispose of unwanted records and documents. Documents will be destroyed on the spot in a highly advanced technical mobile shredding truck.

Old Business: Follow up to questions asked at the March 8th meeting.

- Kathy- Receiving staff reports (Vincent's) ahead of time is more efficient. Board members can review ahead of the meeting and ask questions during the meeting.

A very good suggestion and as of this month staff prepared reports and included in the COA Board Meeting email.

- Lily- What is the timeline when hiring for the Case Manager position. How long is the timeline and what goes into deciding the timeline? Is it budget, or fiscal year deadlines?

The goal is to have the position filled by 1st week of May.

- During the discussion of the return to in-person classes and the upcoming survey, Eva asked if the Board Meetings could stay virtual.

At this time, the City has stated that Board and Commission meetings may remain virtual.

New Business:

Beverly Sealey motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Jennifer Chisholm. Meeting adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 2022 @ 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Castagna.