

Council on Aging Minutes for Virtual Meeting of November 9, 2022.

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. A roll call identified those present: JoAnn Bernhard (JB), Martha Favre (MF), Susan Gomberg (SG), Janis Gray (JSG), Susan Millinger (SM), Linda Avis Scott (LAS), and Jeanette Stockton (JS).

Welcome to new Member Jeanette Stockton.

Minutes of the Meeting of October 12, 2022: a motion to approve the minutes of October 12 as presented was made, seconded, and passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Business: Updates:

Financial Update:

Expenses of FY23 to date:

Foot Care: \$730

Village Neighbors: \$500

MCOA dues: \$230

Geezette Issue: \$539.35

Fitness Class (Sward): \$845

Total: \$2,844.35

Grant Balance: After the above expenses were subtracted from what remained of FY22's grant:

-\$1,241.64 prior to receipt of grant (corrected to -\$ 1,441.64)

+\$6,000 grant

= \$4,758.36 current balance (corrected to \$4,558.36)

Anticipated expenses:

\$1,460.00 Foot Clinic estimate Nov-June @ \$182.50/month

\$550 estimate for Geezette issue.

Leaving: \$2,748.36 (corrected to \$2,548.36)

LAS answered several questions from newer members about the Grant: its source (Executive Office of Elder Affairs =EOEA); its arrival date (usually late, because dependent on the speed of the legislature in approving the budget); what determines its size (smaller towns currently receive \$6,000; larger towns get a sum determined by the size of their senior population.)

Questions were also asked about whether it would be cheaper to publish our newsletter by ourselves as in the past. LAS pointed out that the bulk of the cost when we produced it had been the time of the administrative assistant. Moreover, that the Post Office has become more demanding about what they will accept. Based on her experience as administrative secretary, LAS has discovered that it is in fact less expensive to have the newsletter commercially produced and mailed.

Discussion of Current Request: The Library Director has requested \$2,730 for second quarter fitness classes. Given the size of our budget and the likelihood that the Library Director would return to request funding for the spring quarter, the COA discussed how much it could afford to give and whether to give

for the class with the highest attendance. *The motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved, to give the Library Director \$780 toward fitness classes in the second quarter.*

The Age-Friendly Survey: Three COA members attended LifePath's virtual presentation on survey results. Slides from the meeting and a recording are available at LifePath's website. The combined data of all the towns in the survey is also available there. This topic will be continued in the next meeting so that all members have a chance to familiarize themselves with the survey results before the meeting.

Transportation Possibilities: Next Steps: It is understood that the Select Board is still waiting to get information from both PVTA and FRTA (since either could provide: PVTA to Amherst and neighboring communities; FRTA to Franklin County towns.)

The question of whether the COA should end MedRide, which has been inactive in Shutesbury since the pandemic began, was mentioned but not discussed in detail. Village Neighbors (VN) is actively providing rides to medical appointments; it was pointed out that one reason for our grant to VN was to support programs Shutesbury is not offering. VN is now publicizing reimbursement of drivers for gas costs; JS says it always did, though this reimbursement had not been publicized. This means one difference between Shutesbury's MedRide and VN's program does not, in fact, exist. An alternative form of MedRide is provided by Franklin County's FRTA; people in Shutesbury are currently being referred to it.

The Geezette: Discussion of when to publish a second issue of *The Geezette* decided that January or February seemed a good time to aim for. Sally Fairfield (SF)'s interview with Chief Burgess and the survey results would be the main content. SF is to be asked if she can send a draft piece on Chief Burgess to the December 14 COA meeting. A recent MCOA newsletter reported on a program proposing that towns identify processes by which they search for missing people, with special consideration for a lost person with dementia. It was suggested that Sally might ask Chief Burgess if she has or plans to have such a process. MF volunteered to interview the new Fire Chief, Lenny Czerwonka, and write an article for *The Geezette*.

It was suggested that the next newsletter should have information about how to access a paper copy of LifePath's *The Silverline: A Directory of Resources for Elders, Caregivers and Persons with Disabilities*

The **Annual Report for FY22** was sent to members for individual comments before the meeting. Changes were proposed by LAS and JSG ahead of the meeting and incorporated in a revised version, which was circulated. *A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to accept this final version of the Annual Report.*

Brief Report on Training SM attended the AARP's Age Friendly Communities Webinar on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion on Sept 13. She reported that it emphasized diversity of age and ability as well as race and ethnicity. Three different examples were presented, including a public park which was expanded and improved to have sections and attractions for people of diverse ages and abilities by the work of diverse groups of volunteers.

Another report made the point that diverse groups tend to have common problems and concerns, especially needing good transportation and affordable housing, and wanting opportunities for inclusive leadership and meetings in a variety of places and at a variety of times.

Attendees of the webinar were told that Community Challenge grants are currently focused on DEI work (broadly defined.)

Website Update: JSG described plans to include a brief summary of information from the Aging-Friendly Survey; a link to the *The Silverline: A Directory of Resources for Elders, Caregivers and Persons with Disabilities*; a note about LifePath's survey to explore interest in a possible Center for Community Engagement; and information on FRTA's MedRide program.

Unanticipated Topics:

LAS reminded COA members that suggestions, corrections, additions, etc. for a text they had been sent should be sent directly and only to the author of the text. Do not use "reply all" in this situation: to do so is a breach of Open Meeting Law. Only house-keeping details can be legitimately dealt with via "reply all."

LAS informed us the CPC had sent us information about applying for a CPA grant; we have no need at present for such a grant.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 14 at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Millinger, Secretary