

Council on Aging Board Meeting  
Ludlow Senior Center  
228 State Street  
Wednesday, October 18, 2023

Present: J. Zepke, D. Peacey, R. Forti, B. Mishol, B. Radowski, H. Grabowski, D. Johnson, K. Martin, F. Barroso, K. Ribeiro, K. Green, guest  
Excused: F. Krzanik, J. DaCruz

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**I. Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairperson D. Peacey

**II. Secretary's Report**

a. Minutes from the September 20, 2023 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved with one correction; the grant for Healthy Bones & Balance is from RSVP of Pioneer Valley, not JGS. Typo related to MCOA was also corrected. M/S: B. Mishol/R. Forti. All in favor.

**III. Treasurers Report**

a. FY 24 Budget Status: On target. J. Zepke beginning to work on Level 1 of FY 25 budget.

**IV. Director's Report**

- a. Grant Updates: J. Zepke submitted a letter-of-interest for a \$25,000 Service Incentive Grant (SIG Fund) for a new van. Additional funding may come from leftover Formula Grant monies, the Friends, and the town's Capital Improvement fund. She will also be applying through MassDot for a second van. It would take between 1.5 to two years to secure a van(s). J. Zepke also plans to apply for a Senior Center Modernization Grant through SIG to modernize the reception desk and obtain computers and software to streamline program registrations/cancellations and increase efficiency and accuracy.
- b. Center Numbers: Nine months into the fiscal year, the center is already 2,000 meals ahead of the previous year. Projections suggest the number of meals served will surpass 30,000. The number of people visiting the Center has also dramatically increased and tours to perspective new participants are given nearly every day. Ways to capture this data electronically for reporting purposes and future funding requests were discussed, with D. Peacey and K. Green offering their expertise. Showing the growth in the newsletter or on a wall chart would help to remind staff of the many activities that are being offered.
- c. Fall Classes and Activities: While there are no new classes in November, there are a lot of special events i.e., Coffee with a Cop, Sand for Seniors, Victorian art, Food Bank nutrition demonstration, fraud prevention, three special event lunches. Maria has applied for six Cultural Council Grants for paint and punch, chair impersonator and several other programs.
- d. Alice Training: Active Shooter Training for Center staff was conducted earlier today with Lieutenant Kernacki and Officer Brennan; this gave staff the necessary tools to deal with such a situation and put them at ease.
- e. MCOA Conference: It went very well; the Keynote speaker was excellent and gave suggestions for dealing with difficult participants and situations.

- f. Future Planning: With the increase in traffic and the large number of activities, J. Zepke is requesting some changes in current funding for staff at the Senior Center. These would improve efficiency and record keeping and be in line with the town's focus on succession planning. Some of these possible changes were described by Zepke and discussed. She will be meeting with Carrie Ribeiro, the town Human Resource Director, to further discuss these changes before she presents them at the December 5<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. If approved, these changes would go into effect on July 1, 2024. F. Barroso and other members brought up the need for an assistant to the Cook, as J. Zepke fills in when she's absent. This is not on the table currently. It was noted that staff at times must assist in performing some janitorial duties and the current maintenance arrangement is not meeting the Center's needs. J. Zepke said it might be advantageous to have this position directly on the Center payroll.

**V. Chairman's Report**

- a. Policy Manual: B. Mishol said the work group is making steady progress and is optimistic that it will be completed by the end of 2023. J. Zepke will have more time to review the changes now that her role in putting together the MCOA Conference is finished.
- b. COA Goals/Strategic Plan Discussion: Before beginning work on a Strategic plan, K. Green recommended reviewing and updating the current generic COA Mission Statement. D. Peacey said the Board's expertise can be a resource for J. Zepke and suggested a future discussion about ways the COA can best assist the Center Director. J. Zepke said the role of COA Boards is something MCOA is looking at and they will be developing future Board training. Further discussion will occur at future meetings.

**VII. Adjournment:** 5:30 p.m. M/S: F. Barroso/B. Mishol. All in favor.

*The next Board Meeting will be at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 15, 2023.*

Respectfully submitted,

K. Martin, Secretary, COA

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