

Council on Aging Board Meeting  
Ludlow Senior Center  
228 State Street  
Wednesday, November 20, 2024

Present: B. Mishol, K. Martin, H. Grabowski D. Potter, R. Radowski, J. Zepke, R. Forti, D. Johnson, D. Peacey, K. Ribero

Excused: F. Barroso, J. DaCruz

Guest: K. Green, H. Jolicoeur

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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 October 16, 2024 meeting were reviewed with one correction in the Director's Report. Sheila's last name should be changed to Greenia. M/S: B. Mishol/R. Forti. All in favor.

**III. Treasurers Report**

- a. The September Budget Report was reviewed, and it was noted that the Grant Total Budget spent through September should read FY 25 and not FY 23; the carryover should be FY 23/24, not FY 22/23. Otherwise, J. Zepke said the budget is right on target. She submitted the preliminary FY 26 budget with minor increases from the previous year. Postage and office supplies experienced a slight increase. An additional \$5K was added to the food budget, and \$1K for conferences as prices have increased. Overall, General Expenses increased from \$108,000 to \$114,000. In FY 26 half of the Administrative Assistant salary will be paid for by the town; it will be covered 100% in FY 27. Zepke is scheduled to attend a budget meeting with the Town Administrator and Town Accountant during the week of December 10.

**IV. Director's Report**

- a. Center Positions: The new Administrative Assistant, Mick Barr, started on November 4 and is doing very well. He is still learning front desk procedures and has been listening to My Senior tutorials. One volunteer is with him in the morning and two volunteers work in the afternoons, freeing him to do other things. Custodian D. Frodema is also doing very well. He will be assisting Center staff to deep clean the kitchen i.e., power washing the floors and scrubbing the equipment and shelves. The kitchen will be closed on Jan. 2 and 3 for this purpose. It will also be necessary to close the Center for one day in December for the installation of the new generator.
- b. Vans Update: The new van is on the road and the new decal looks great. The radio from the old van will be removed and installed in the new one. Once that happens, the old van will be auctioned off and the money will go to the town. The new van is much easier to get in and out of and there are grab bars.
- c. Age/Dementia Friendly Ludlow: H. Jolicoeur said the COA/Senior Center will be spearheading the effort and will be working with Becky Bosch from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, who has helped numerous other communities receive this designation. The first step is to recruit a work group comprised of community stakeholders such as businesses, public health agencies and residents. Recruitment has been accomplished through articles placed in the Ludlow Register and the Center's newsletter. Notices sent to other town departments yielded many responses from interested staff. The next step will be to draft a letter from the Selectboard to Michael

Festa, Director of AARP, expressing the town's commitment and intent to apply to AARP and the World Health Organization.

In January there will be meetings with the work group, and the Alzheimer's Association is on board to make presentations. Becky Bosch will conduct listening sessions that will be open to the public. H. Jolicoeur said Age/Dementia Friendly is a continuous process in which communities strive to create livable streets and neighborhoods, using an age friendly lens to view town projects. H. Jolicoeur said she would like to start working with businesses on accessibility and inclusion, such as training for restaurant staff to make dining a more positive experience for people with dementia and their caregivers. Anyone may come to the work group meetings and Board members were encouraged to let her know if they are interested. Once the project is established, meetings will be held quarterly.

In response to the growing number of older people who are alone and need assistance but have no family, children or partner, the Center plans at some point to develop a program(s) to assist this population.

**V. Chairperson's Report**

a. Bylaws: They were sent to M. Strange for review and J. Zepke has not heard back from him. D. Peacey will email the bylaws to him, ask him to share with the Selectboard for review, and remove the old bylaws from the town website.

**VI. Visitation:**

a. Friends Membership/Officers: K. Green said four out of the five Officers plan to step down or assume different positions during next September's election; she also noted that membership and attendance at meetings seems to be dwindling. She plans to kick off a membership recruitment drive in January utilizing the newsletters, bulletin board, and informal interactions in the café utilizing Friends members to increase awareness of what the group does and perhaps to solicit interest in holding office in the future.

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

*The next Board Meeting will be at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18, 2024.*

Respectfully submitted,

K. Martin, Secretary, COA

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