

RECEIVED

JUN 11 2018

9:30AM

WESTFIELD CITY CLERK

City of Westfield

Council On Aging

Annual Meeting

May 14, 2018

City Hall, Room 201

59 Court Street, Westfield, Massachusetts

I. The meeting was called to order by the Chair, James V. Liptak, at 1:03 p.m.

The following Board Members were present: Cynthia Lee Andersen, Elizabeth Boucher, KerryAnn Kielbasa, James V. Liptak, Eileen Rockwal, and Barbara Taylor. Also present was our Executive Director, Tina Gorman.

II. Approval of minutes of April 9, 2018 meeting:

Upon Motion duly made by Elizabeth Boucher and seconded by Eileen Rockwal, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes of March 12, 2018 Board Meeting with corrections.

III. Public Participation: There was no public participation.

IV. Items for Discussion/Information:

a. Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) Report:

1. Mr. Liptak reported that the Annual Meeting for HVES is October 4, 2018, at the Hadley Farms Meeting House from 4 - 5:30 p.m. They want more participation and COA members are welcome. They also want to get some vendors. Ms. Gorman stated that it would be best to send an invitation to the COA. Ms. Gorman asked what their thoughts were about the vendors. Were they looking to do something like the Senior Options with outside people or were they trying to highlight their programs? Mr. Liptak said he didn't know the answer to that and he would have their Executive Director Allan Ouimet contact Ms. Gorman.

Gorman was able to find out most of the information about her online. The comment was made "Don't call 911." Ms. Gorman explained that we "must call 911 but you are free to refuse treatment." Ms. Kielbasa commented that the woman's behavior may be a sign of early dementia.

c. Review of Safe Zone Training: Ms. Gorman reminded us that one of our strategic goals is LGBT inclusion. There was a free Safe Zone Training at Westfield State. Denny Akins has been helping Ms. Gorman on this issue and he attended the training with her. The training took place Monday afternoon for 3 to 4 hours. It was fabulous and experiential. The group running the program is very liberal and they are trying to promote that on campus. Ms. Gorman tried to educate them on our culture. Our challenge is to find this group of seniors and encourage them to use our services. Ms. Gorman is going to ask for another workbook from the program. The next step would be to form a steering committee. Board member Barbara Taylor commented: "I would love to learn about this especially the language." Ms. Gorman said the trainers were great and very tolerant of questions. Mr. Liptak wondered if they discussed the difference between a female coming out versus a male. Ms. Gorman commented that most of the people attending were women. Ms. Kielbasa noted that in general females have a network for support. Ms. Gorman commented that one area that is often difficult for an LGBT person is in end of life issues especially if the person's family disowned him or her. Ms. Gorman and our Program Director Mary Lou Niedzielski attended a training in Northampton where the presenter had graphics dramatically depicting the lack of support for gay elders.

d. Upcoming Presentations on Downsizing In Place: Ms. Gorman will be presenting workshops at the Senior Center this June on this issue. This is something seniors need to address before they move or face a crisis. The EOE (Executive Office for Elder Affairs) contacted Ms. Gorman 1 month ago. They were looking for a co-presenter on the subject of hoarding and asked Ms. Gorman if she could do it. The MCOA has put out a request for proposals. The State Fire Marshal's office contacted Ms. Gorman about co-presenting at their September conference. Ms. Gorman has done quite a bit of research. Ms. Gorman explained that the psychology of the accumulation of items starts early. Issues come up like "How do I get rid of Grandma's china?"

Companion Program Volunteer Interest Social: The Social was held on Thursday, April 26, 2018, at 6 p.m. Only 3 people attended but 2 of them signed up to be Volunteers within 24 hours. The frequent publicity in the Westfield News has generated interest in volunteering, we already had 5 - 7 people signed up before the Social.

Pop-up Grocery Store: The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts hosted an educational program on May 2, 2018, using their "pop-up grocery store" to assist participants with learning how to purchase healthy groceries and plan nutritious meals and snacks. It went well, our nutrition programs seem to go really well.

Responsible Gambling: a staff member from GameSense, a program of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission, presented a program on slot machines. Ms. Gorman had received an email from them explaining that they were not an anti-gambling group but rather intend to educate the public how to gamble safely and responsibly. There were 25 people in attendance and the program was very well received. GameSense volunteered to come back and present on table games.

Volunteer Recognition Breakfast: The annual event was held Thursday, May 10, 2018, at Tekoa Country Club. Mayor Sullivan and Councilor Figy were in attendance. There were 114 volunteers attending. The thank you gift this year was a Gift Certificate for a lunch at the Senior Center (not a special event) to be used by 12/31/18. We received extremely positive feedback from the attendees. Ms. Gorman is rethinking where we have the Recognition Breakfast. The food was just fair, but the volunteers did appreciate the certificates, the heartfelt speeches and the presence of Mayor Sullivan and Councilor Figy.

Sarah Gillett Annual Meeting: The Sarah Gillett Annual Meeting was held at the Senior Center again this year on Thursday, May 10, 2018. There were approximately 25 in attendance, 10 Trustees and 5 information tables from a selected group of organizations receiving grants. The Companion Program, Art Unlimited Class and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group were among the grant recipients. There were 60 applicants for grants and they managed to give money to every organization even if it was just a small amount.

The other programs they offer are Chronic Pain and Chronic Illness. The one drawback to getting participants is that it is a big time commitment. Ms. Gorman was thinking of booking it for September into October. Ms. Kielbasa agreed that would be perfect.

Friends Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting will be held Tuesday, June 5, 2018, at 1:30 p.m. All Friends members will receive an invitation.

Miscellaneous:

Safe Zone Training at Westfield State University: Ms. Gorman and Denny Akins attended the LGBT diversity training at Westfield State University. The topics covered were:

Core vocabulary

Coming out

Identity acceptance, pride, and synthesis

A variety of experiential exercises

Thoughtful analysis of the differences between LGBT college campus issues and COA/Senior Center issues.

Conference Presentations:

Downsizing in Place: A Journey From Possession To Peace

Aging With Dignity, June 6, 2018

Fire and Safety Education Conference, September 25, 2018

MCOA Conference, October 2018

VII. The Chair reminded us that our next meeting will be held on Monday, June 11, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. at City Hall in Room 201. However, he will not be able to attend.

VIII. There being no further business to come before the Board, upon Motion duly made by Elizabeth Boucher and seconded by Barbara Taylor, it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 2:01 p.m.

A true record.