

City of Westfield  
Council On Aging  
Monthly Meeting  
September 13, 2018  
City Hall, Room 201



59 Court Street, Westfield, Massachusetts

I. The meeting was called to order by the Chair, James V. Liptak, at 1:01 p.m.

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

II. **Approval of minutes of June 11, 2018 and July 9, 2018 meetings (there was no August 2018 meeting):**

Upon Motion duly made by Barbara Taylor and seconded by KerryAnn Kielbasa it was unanimously:

**VOTED:** To approve the minutes of the June 11, 2018 and July 9, 2018 minutes 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 HVES has concluded its search for a new location. They decided to stay at the same location and signed a new 5-year lease. The Landlord has committed to spending \$25,000 to do improvements. Previously HVES was responsible for maintaining the elevator. Now the landlord will fix it. The employees made it known that they wanted to stay at their current location. 2. Currently the Board has 15 members. They can go up to 30 members. There are representatives for 24 towns and communities and there are 6 at-large positions. 3. The Annual Meeting is being held October 4, 2018 from 4 - 5:30 p.m. at Hadley Farms Meeting House and it is entitled the Keys to Aging Well Expo. There

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will be a brief 15-minute Board meeting. They are trying to get more people to come. Next year it is likely to be a fundraiser. 4. Nutrition Committee: they served 524 meals per day in August. They are working on produce bags from Outlook Farms and a gift certificate for the 202 people receiving home-delivered meals. There is a new coordinator in Westfield for Meals on Wheels. They also distributed diabetes socks. They are also distributing certain commodities: raisins, figs, etc. at the congregate meals sites.

**B. Review State Formula Allocation:** They are 99% sure that we will be receiving \$12 per elder for our State Formula Grant which will result in \$95,904 for our state grant. MCOA has been working with the state officials. Last year it was set at \$10 but then it was cut to \$9.50. MCOA said they were going to try to get \$12 by next year but we got it this year with the understanding that it will not go up next year. EOEA is waiting for reports as to unused funds from the various COA's to determine what funds are left.

**C. COA Staffing Changes:** Ms. Gorman distributed a handout regarding the changes in staffing and the effect on the budget (copy attached). On the city side of the budget we received full funding for the craftsman (fulltime custodian). They have narrowed down the applicants to 2 people after interviews. They encouraged applicants to come to the Senior Center for a tour. Jane Sakiewicz, the City's Personnel Director, suggested that Bryan Forrette, the City's Director of Facilities, also interview the candidates. The state side of the budget has been altered a bit. Carl Bak, our part-time custodian, did not apply for the position of craftsman. He received an offer from Smith College. His last day with us is September 28, 2018. The part-time custodian position has been eliminated due to the new fulltime craftsman position. The fulltime craftsman will be pretty much strictly days. It depends on the hire whether they can do nights. Tara LeBlanc our Program Associate resigned the end of July. She has a new position with the State Gaming Commission. Originally the Program Associate position was added to assist Fran Aguda with the Companion Program. Then at the new Senior Center we needed someone to answer the phone. Ms. Aguda retires at the end of November 2018. The Companion Coordinator position is being carved out as a 15-hour position under the state grant. Originally, Ms. Aguda was going to switch to that part-time position but now she will not be taking that

position. Instead she will fully retire. We hope to have our new Companion Coordinator by mid-November so Ms. Aguda can train the person. Tina St. John, our morning greeter will be taking over the Program Associate position. It is better for her and she is very happy. Our Kitchen Assistant, Sandra Fisher, will be moving to the Morning Greeter position working from 8:15 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Our Afternoon Greeter, Linda Murphy a retired nurse, has opted to stay in her current position working noon to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday and noon to 3:30 p.m. on Friday. We need to hire a Clerk for a 17.5-hour position. We need to hire a Kitchen Assistant. Joann Spear, our Kitchen Manager, is in charge of hiring her assistant. Ms. Spear would like to hire someone with restaurant experience so she could take some time off and know the kitchen was left in good hands. Our new Outreach Coordinator will be in charge of crisis intervention, and protective services cases. Just recently we had to send a couple in their 80's to the Samaritan Inn because their house was foreclosed on. Ms. Gorman is working on the job description. The Outreach Coordinator will be working 35 hours per week. We want someone with at least a bachelor's degree and at least 3 years experience. A Master's Degree would be preferable. Ms. Kielbasa, a fellow Senior Center Executive Director, offered to help with the interviews. The types of cases this person will be handling are very time-consuming.

**D. Update: Senior Safety Office:** Ms. Gorman reported that the door is here. They expect the office to open in early October. Lenore Bernashe, the City's Information Technology Manager will work with Officer Mark Carboneau to see if he needs a special computer.

**E. Review: Staff CPR, AED, First Aid Training:** The Senior Center will be closed Tuesday morning September 25, 2018 so that the staff can get CPR, AED and first aid training. The Center will open at 1 p.m. for all afternoon programs. Bryan Forrette wants to schedule the installation of the door for that morning. One of the Board members asked if Officer Carboneau will be having regular office hours. Ms. Gorman explained that Officer Carboneau will be doing his regular policing job and will do his paperwork at the Senior Center. He will not be posting hours and the seniors will have to understand that if he gets a call he will have to leave. However, just having him stationed at the Senior Center will allow for the Seniors to have opportunities to meet with him.

**F. Upcoming Conference Presentations: Fire & Safety Education Conference and MCOA Annual Conference:** Ms. Gorman will be presenting "Downsizing in Place: A Journey From Possessions to Peace" at the Fire & Safety Education Conference presented by the Department of Fire Services and the State Fire Marshall. At the MCOA Annual Conference Ms. Gorman will be doing the same presentation as well as facilitating a discussion regarding fundraising for a new senior center including the important consideration as to whether or not to hire an outside group to do the fundraising. It is a three-day conference.

**V. Items For Action: None**

**VI. Our Executive Director, Tina Gorman, then presented the Director's Report, copy attached:**

**Review of Programs:**

**Senior Citizen Property Tax Work-Off Program:** The application deadline is September 27, 2018. Each applicant has to meet with Ms. Gorman. Forty-five application requests were made and twenty applicants have all paperwork completed and have been CORI checked and approved. Most of them participated last year. Five applicants withdrew their applications: three were over-income; one has family health issues; and one has his house on the market. Marketing included a front-page article in the Westfield News, press releases in the Westfield News and the Pennysaver; Channel 15 announcement, WSKB Radio announcement; and flyers available at the Senior Center, City Hall, and the Assessor's Office. Ms. Gorman will give Councilor Figy an update.

**Visiting Angels "Ice Cream Splurge":** The annual splurge was held Thursday, July 12, 2018. It was very successful with a sell-out crowd. The entertainment was by Dave Colluci including lots of dancing and a conga line. It was a lot of fun.

**Presentation: ClearCaptions Phone:** On Wednesday, July 18, 2018 Dave Arnold a Title IV Americans With Disability Act Specialist gave a presentation regarding a phone that is designed for those with any form of hearing loss. The phone displays text of conversations in near real time on a large color touchscreen while also amplifying voice. To qualify for this free caption phone the person needs access to a landline phone as well as internet service. In addition to the

presentation Mr. Arnold will go to the homes of our Companion clients to meet with them about the phone. Ms. Aguda went through her list of 200 clients to find people who were interested. The phone is free to participants. Ms. Gorman said the phone is not complicated and people who have used it say that it is great.

**Let's Make a Deal and Eat Watermelon Party:** Sandra Fisher, our kitchen assistant hosted a game show with prizes with help from our Westfield State University (WSU) intern, Jason Phillips. It was a great success and the seniors have asked for another game show type of program.

**My Life, My Health Workshop Series:** The workshop is filled to capacity at 15. It is a 6-week workshop series on chronic disease self-management. There was excellent feedback after the first session.

**Meal Prep for One on a Budget:** This is a four-part series running on Friday mornings. There are sixteen participants. We are experimenting to see if Friday mornings work well for a series of workshops.

**Senior Theater:** This a grant-funded program through the Westfield Cultural Arts Council with additional funding from the Friends Group. Steve Henderson held an informational and casting session was held on September 6, 2018 and 14 enthusiastic participants attended. There were no auditions, everyone is included. Mr. Henderson wrote the script so he is writing in a participant's guide dog as well. There will be 10 rehearsals and two performances in October.

#### **Upcoming Programs:**

**Movement Improvement Exercise Classes:** A no-cost fitness program will be conducted by students in WSU Movement Science program under the supervision of Dr. Melissa Roti. Classes will meet six times at the Senior Center: twice in October, twice in November and twice in December. The Senior Center is essentially the "lab" for this Exercise and Aging course. The program is capped at 20 participants. There are currently 19 seniors signed up. There are a group of 20 WSU students. Four to five of them lead the class each week and the other students help. This is great for the students to work with the senior population. They will be working with broad ranges of the senior population with varying disabilities, personality types, etc. One of the Board members asked if this is a fitness class. Ms. Gorman explained that there will be a specific focus each week such as cardio,

balance, mind/balance, etc. There will be handouts for the seniors. They make it fun for the seniors who participate.

**"Run Stanley" Senior Stroll Team:** this is a fundraiser for Stanley Park that is being held at the Park on Sunday, October 14, 2018 at 11:15 a.m. Ms. Gorman suggested the "Senior Stroll" so that the seniors could get involved and was then put in charge of making it happen. The Senior Stroll is a one-mile untimed route on a flat surface. Barbara Martone our co-captain will be there the day of the race. Our captain Mary Lou Niedzielski can't be there that day. The registration fee is \$15 and you receive a Run Stanley t-shirt if you register by September 28, 2018.

**Sarah the Fiddler Concert:** The concert will be held Sunday, September 23, 2018 at 2 p.m. at the Senior Center. This is a fundraiser for the Friends Group. It is being sponsored by the Westfield Kiwanis. The Kiwanis used to sponsor a senior picnic but they were unable to do it last year. They wanted to do it at the Senior Center this year. Ms. Gorman suggested that they sponsor the concert instead and they liked the idea. The Kiwanis will help set up. Each participant will go home with an ice cream sundae and there will be a silent auction and a 50/50 drawing.

**Flu shots:** the Westfield Department of Health will be holding a flu clinic at the Senior Center on Tuesday, October 2, 2018 and Wednesday, October 3, 2018 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. There is no charge, but the seniors must schedule an appointment, live in Westfield, be at least 60 years old, and bring their health insurance cards. The appointment slots are filling up quickly.

**Driver's License and ID Presentation:** Joyce Peregrin of the Westfield Athenaeum contacted Ms. Gorman. Carol went to a presentation regarding the new licenses/ID requirements and came to the conclusion that it will be a nightmare and we need to do a presentation in Westfield to explain it. On Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at 1:30 p.m. at the Senior Center and then again at 4 p.m. at the Athenaeum, Michele Ellicks of the DOT will explain Standard ID and Real ID. Both presentations are open to the public.

#### **Miscellaneous:**

**Senior Center closed Tuesday morning, September 25, 2018:** The Center will be closed during the morning of September 25, 2018

so that all the staff can be trained in CPR, AED and first aid. The Center will open at 1 p.m. for all afternoon programs.

**Ballot Question "presentations":** Ms. Gorman has someone willing to do a presentation regarding one of the questions on the ballot this year. However, they would only be presenting their viewpoint not both sides of the issue. Ms. Gorman wondered if our Political Activity Policy Statement requires that we have to have someone present the opposing argument regarding the ballot question at the same presentation. The Political Activity Policy Statement was reviewed and read out loud to the Board members. There does not appear to be a requirement that both sides of a ballot question present at the same time.

**VII.** The Chair reminded us that our next meeting will be held on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 1:00 p.m. at City Hall in Room 201.

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

**VOTED:** to adjourn at 1:58 p.m.

A true record.

**List of Exhibits:**

- a. Agenda
- b. Handout:Senior Center Staff Changes-Fall 2018
- c. Director's Report

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Cynthia Lee Andersen-Secretary

