

**Council on Aging
Minutes of Meeting
Town Hall Nickles Room
October 25, 2011**

Liz Bishop, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7 pm. Board Members present: Liz Bishop, Verna Gilbert, Elizabeth Acquaviva, Helen Taylor, Jean Sain, Tom Dunkers, Phyllis Goff. Board Members absent: Abha Singhal, Joanne Willens, Jim Elgin, Lillian DeBenedictis. Associate Members present: Mary Daigle, Marje Stickler. Associate Members absent: Nadine Bishop, Natalie Ives, Ted Read, Sandy McIlhenny. Also attending were Staff Members Debi Siriani and Angela Smith. Staff Members not present: Carol Killpartrick, Peter Cullinane, Bonnie Hansen. Friends' Representative present: Carolyn Shohet.

Liz Bishop reported that there were enough Board Members available to hold our next Board Meeting on the originally scheduled date of Tuesday, November 22, at 10:35 AM. However, she proposed moving the December Board Meeting tentatively to Tuesday, December 20, at 10:35 AM based on the response from Board Members to her email on their availability on the originally established date of December 23rd. Liz will send a follow up email before posting the meeting once she determines this will be a convenient time for a majority of Board Members.

A copy of the complete listing of Monthly Coffee volunteers was distributed. A copy of the 2011-2012 COA Committee/Group List was distributed for each Board Member to review with discussion held at a later time.

Elizabeth Acquaviva informed the Board that she would be recording the Board Meetings just as the Selectmen Meetings are recorded by their Secretary (as well as televised) to assist with transcribing the lengthy minutes. No concerns were raised and the recording started.

Liz Bishop informed the Board that she would be turning the meeting over to Vice Chair, Verna Gilbert, while she briefly attended the Selectmen Meeting at 7:20 pm. She also reminded the Board that at last month's meeting it was requested that all COA Staff Reports be submitted in a standardized format and be distributed by the 7th of the month and that Debi was going to convey that information to the staff, so we have more time to review the information.

Social Work Report – The report as submitted by Peter Cullinane was accepted.

Treasurer's Report – Abha Singhal was unable to attend the October meeting in addition to the September meeting due to unfortunate circumstances. Therefore, the September report combined with the October report will be presented at a later date. However, the records are on file with the Town Accountant.

Travel Coordinator's Report – Joanne Willens was not present to give a day trip or travel update.

Liz turned the meeting over to Verna and exited.

Friends of COA – Carolyn Shohet indicated the Friends were sending out fundraising letters on December 1 and that they know there are going to be a lot of requests for fuel help this winter. She reviewed the remaining cultural events in the series of four being offered and indicated that the November newsletter listed many more offerings. Angela read the list of upcoming offerings. Carolyn suggested spreading the word that donations to the Friends are welcomed from residents who may not be on their mailing list.

Transportation Coordinator's Report – The report submitted by Carol Killpartrick was accepted as submitted. However, there was discussion on how it was not quite in the format that was requested last month. Carol will be meeting with Debi next month to develop a monthly report that allows the Board to keep better track of the usage of both vans going forward, since there are more activities offered to seniors and increased requests for van services than in past years. It was discussed that the report

should reflect how many people use each van and what the reason is for the request and, if there is a conflict, who was impacted and why their request for transportation was not met. Angela informed the Board that in the last two months two disabled people moved to town who will routinely require van transportation and that disabled residents do not have to be seniors to qualify for transportation services. The thorough documentation of all transportation requests, including documentation of any time a request cannot be filled, will help support a request to purchase an additional van.

Outreach Coordinator's Report – The report submitted by Angela Smith was accepted as submitted. The Monthly High School Luncheon Volunteer Signup Sheet was passed around reflecting several open dates where volunteers are still needed. Angela brought a book she started to put together that provides data on all kinds of services available to seniors. Verna indicated the website has even more information as well. Angela informed the Board that she is moving into phase two of a resource guide she is developing as well as a list of volunteers and that Jane Anderson will take over pulling it together and that it is Angela's goal to place it on the web when completed. The topic of fuel assistance was discussed. Specifically, State funding has been drastically reduced, the Salvation Army's support will increase slightly and the Friends' Grant will provide roughly the same amount of fuel assistance as last year. Angela gave an overview of the various sessions she attended at the MCOA Conference. A discussion was held on how Angela can obtain CEUs (continuing education credits) now that she is a Certified MA COA & Senior Center Program Manager and that credits are only obtained from attending training.

Liz returned to the Board Meeting during the Outreach Coordinator discussion.

Secretary's Report – Elizabeth Acquaviva's report was submitted. A motion was made to strike the sentence under the Outreach Coordinator's Report that reads, "However, as of now, she is getting ready to cover Debi's vacation." since Bonnie had covered Debi's vacation prior to the September 27 meeting. The report was accepted as amended. Debi expressed concern with the action items portion of the minutes in a prior meeting with the Board Chair, but Liz felt the action items properly reflected what was discussed in the September meeting and should not be changed. Debi felt it was a good time to cover how the Board operates and the role of the Board vs. the role of the Chair and the role of the Director.

Director's Report – The report submitted by Debi Siriani was accepted. Debi handed out the Friends Gift Fund Request document and the response document from the Friends approving three sub-grants totaling \$14,650. Debi is working with the Town Treasurer and Town Accountant to set up accounts and they are figuring out how to process the sub-grants. The first payment has been received while the second will be after the first of the year. The topics of how fundraising is down from prior years and fuel assistance needs are going up were discussed. Debi indicated that Carol Killpartrick will be back to regular hours and that she will come in one day a week to work in the office and that Joanne Willens was unavailable short-term, so Sandy McIlhenney is covering for her. Debi distributed an amended LRTA Passenger Operations and Vehicle Data report and pointed out that it may look like we doubled the number of trips in one month, but Clare Hamilton of LRTA requested that each one-way trip be recorded as a complete trip (previously we recorded each round trip as a complete trip) although we only charge per round trip. Debi is tracking the LRTA statistics and will have a chart reflecting the usage and other stats for the next Long Range Planning Meeting. For the Board's purposes, a report will also be compiled showing round trips as one trip. Debi reported that the retiring LRTA van that she, Liz and Verna (along with a mechanic) were going to be shown was not the van we would consider purchasing, so the visit was cancelled. Debi will follow up with the LRTA to find out when they decide which towns are matched to a retiring van before inspecting the van of our choice. A first draft of the Added COA Director Responsibilities under contract with the LRTA report was distributed and Debi is looking for feedback from the Compensation Committee on how to present her report going forward. Debi submitted a FY12 COA Program Budget Evaluation and will include how various programs are funded in the next version. She will evaluate programming to determine which programs are needed and what she should ask of FinCom. The report does not reflect the Board's request to also indicate the number of people attending each of the programs and Debi will amend it to reflect this information by the November meeting along with corrected numbers. The topic of the contract negotiations with the Newsletter Publisher was

discussed as well as other alternatives to publish a Senior newsletter and how the State grant can absorb some of the newsletter costs. Tim Goddard will sign the publisher's contract, but Debi will show the Chair and Vice Chair the contract as well. The loss of funding from a grant for a newsletter formatter salary was also discussed and how a fallback plan needs to be in place. Liz questioned why the LRTA unpaid administrative hours line was not on the first page of the Director's Report along with the other paid and unpaid hours as requested in last month's meeting in order for us to be an advocate for getting those hours approved as paid hours. Debi did not feel she needed to post them in her September report since she only worked 3 hours on LRTA administration.

Minuteman Senior Services: Jean Sain and Phyllis Goff reported that Minuteman will hold a holiday on-line auction fundraiser from December 1 through December 8. Information can be found on their website. They had a long discussion on the transition program from hospital to home and whether they should get the state recognition, but decided it is not the right time.

Liz made a motion to extend the Board Meeting by half an hour, if necessary. Motion was seconded and accepted.

Debi indicated that the Strategic Long Range Planning committee broke into sub-committees to tackle issues and brought the results back to the full committee to share as well as to present to FinCom. Debi thought this was a great model and felt the Board should use it. She then handed out a one page list of Board Responsibilities that she received from the MA COA to help facilitate how we should work together. A discussion on how our Board operates today as well as prior to a COA Director position was held.

Old/New Business:

Strategic Long Range Planning Committee – Liz reported that they had a productive month. They produced a few documents that covered the 3-5 year plan which addressed housing, transportation and health and wellness. Space needs to be addressed as well as tax relief. She will provide the Board with the recommendations prior to going to FinCom to get more input. Parkman Howe is working on the final documentation as well as a Power Point presentation.

Action Items: Liz reviewed last month's action items and checked off the goals we met. With the exception of viewing the LRTA van and revising the FY 12 Program Budget Evaluation and Transportation Report to reflect requested information, the majority of the action items were complete.

Salvation Army Bucket – Angela explained that in the past Ray Taylor picked up the money from the bucket at Ferns, put it in the Friends account and then mailed a check to the Salvation Army; however, this created accounting problems. A volunteer (Mike Hanauer) will manage this process through an arrangement Angela made with a bank she deals with to eliminate any associated fees most banks would charge.

Community Chest – Liz is attending Regional Housing Information Meeting with Angela on Nov. 2 and also attended recent meeting on social media with Debi. She recommends attendance at these meetings when Debi extends an invitation to obtain valuable information on what is available for our seniors.

Action Items:

Director

- 1) follow up with the LRTA to find out when we would know whether or not they would sell us a particular van for \$1.00 even though we understand it would not be available until January
- 2) arrange to view the van we would consider purchasing along with Verna, Liz and a mechanic.

- 3) have Transportation Coordinator arrange for van to pick up at Congregational Church on November 17 for COA lunch and drop off after lunch since parking is a challenge at FRS and Sleeper Room with school building construction workers (also December 15).
- 4) update FY 12 Program Budget Evaluation
- 5) report LRTA data to reflect trips as a round trip for the Board's purposes in addition to what is submitted to LRTA for their purposes which is to report each way as a full trip (vs. round trip as one trip)
- 6) finalize the contract with the printer and have it reviewed and signed by Tim
- 7) work on a plan for the newsletter formatting as funding will not be provided next year and we may lose the current newsletter format person if we are unable to pay her. Verna will help the Director
- 8) include a Travel Policy in the handbook reflecting the policy, chain of command, etc. as well as any other information to assist a volunteer stepping in, if necessary
- 9) evaluate programming and amend report to reflect the number of persons attending each program
- 10) provide a chart reflecting the usage and other transportation statistics for the next Long Range Planning Meeting
- 11) provide a line item for LRTA hours spent each month in the same part of the monthly Director's Report as she lists other hours

Transportation Coordinator

- work with Director to develop a report that is visually easy to read that shows the breakdown of each van's usage including who is not serviced and why

Compensation Committee

- meet to discuss how to best present Director's LRTA data for future presentation to the Personnel Board

Chair/Vice Chair

- view van with the COA Director and a mechanic

Next Meeting November 22 at 10:35 am - Clark Room, Town Hall

Adjournment at 8:45 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Acquaviva

Secretary