



## COUNCIL ON AGING and ADVISORY BOARD

### Meeting Minutes February 27, 2024

**Present:** Joan Belle Isle, Sandra Davidow, Naomi Krasner, John Pelletier, Robert Pierson, Ellen Penso, Sue Rasala, Eric Rosenbaum, Nancy Scammon, Laura Shaw, Dan Shaw

**Absent:** Mary Glendon, Ena Lorant, Maria Meyer, Julie Norstrand, Susan Schlesinger, Allison Sharma, Tom Shoemaker

**Staff:** Mignonne Murray, Liz O'Connell

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#### **Welcome/Call to Order/Vote on Minutes**

Joan Belle Isle called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM, welcoming all. The minutes from the January 2024 meeting were approved.

#### **DPW Transportation Operations**

*Guest Presenter: Ned Codd, DPW Director of Transportation Operations*

Ned joined the City of Newton early in 2024. His experience includes transportation and planning engineering for both public and private entities. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for Newton's public infrastructure. Ned leads the Transportation Division and is responsible not for planning but for the design and implementation of new projects, for operations of the streets (lights, etc.). Newton is currently addressing multi-modal types of transportation, e.g., cars, bikes, pedestrians, motorized wheelchairs.

Washington Street Discussion – The City is working on increasing the visibility of the jersey barriers that effectively close one lane of traffic. The speed along that stretch of Washington Street causes problems. The traffic lights on that strip are inadequate and it can be difficult to merge into another lane of traffic. The island at Washington and Walnut Streets is a hazard: it cannot be seen at night. Sidewalks are problematic as they have become uneven over time due to tree growth. The upgrades to the lighting and infrastructure of Washington Street will take time.

Ned Codd is surveying intersections that are problematic. Citizens are asked to report anything through the 311 system.

Older adults have a bit more difficulty with transportation issues than younger people. Lighting, signage, and smoothly paved sidewalks all help. Ned is committed to doing the best possible work. He is glad to know about seniors' needs, along with the ADA's and other organizations' requirements.

#### **NewMo Update**

NewMo has been running smoothly. The City is still moving through the procurement process and has received three bids. We should have more information available next month.

### **New CAL Update**

In her State of the City speech, Mayor Fuller announced the name of the new building: (the) Cooper Center for Active Living. The groundbreaking will be held on Thursday, March 7, at 10 a.m. All are invited. Community update meetings with Josh Morse are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. on Zoom. Our 10-year project is coming to fruition! Josh Morse is leading the Groundbreaking event. Joan Belle Isle will check with Josh to see if refreshments are needed.

A working group consisting of Joan Belle Isle, Mignonne Murray, Sue Rasala, Nancy Scammon, and others will make suggestions regarding the arrangement of the interior, etc., as things move forth. Please give your suggestions to Joan or Mignonne.

### **Needs Assessment Project Update**

The deadline for submitting needs assessment surveys has passed. Over 2,700 surveys were returned, or more than 10% of the entire senior population in the City. This number is solid, statistically speaking. A full report will be presented in the fall. It was noted that one interview and two focus groups still need to be completed.

### **Department of Senior Services Update**

Volunteer Coordinator Julie Joy has resigned for personal reasons. This position is funded through the formula grant and hiring goes through the City's Human Resources process.

The budget process is underway; Mignonne is looking at this year and next, with an eye toward the additional staffing that will be needed for the new Center.

### **Other Pending Issues**

1. The Deputy Director will be on board before the end of the fiscal year.
2. Joan Belle Isle will follow up on the ordinance issue to advance the project of merging the COA and Advisory Board.
3. Springwell's Information and Referral line may always be called when people have questions. Volunteers are always needed. Call Naomi Krasner or Laura Shaw with questions.
4. There is no update on the RUOK? Program this evening.

The meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.