

## COUNCIL ON AGING—APR 28, 2020

**Present:** Dov Bard, Jayne Colino, Sandra Davidow, Marian Knapp, Naomi Krasner, Mary Glendon, Jo Edith Heffron, Jess Johnson, Ena Lorant, Norm Meltz, Maria Meyer, Donna Murphy, Julie Norstrand, John Pelletier, Ernest Picard, Joyce Picard, Sue Rasala, Nancy Scammon, Allison Sharma, Sue Schlesinger, Laura Shaw, Gordon Szerlip, Emma Watson,

**Absent:** Beth Dugan, Adele Hoffman, Tyrone Hooks, Joan Murray, Eric Rosenbaum, Lisa Samelson, Tom Shoemaker

**Guests:** Joan Belle Isle, Dan Shaw

Meeting was held by Zoom Videoconference in light of statewide stay-at-home order; meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Minutes approved from February 25 meeting (minutes approved in a voice vote at the start of the meeting, and later in the meeting in a roll call vote as required in meetings with remote participants). Approval was unanimous.

### **General Update**

Jayne provided an update on the Newton Senior Center, staffing, and how NDSS has continued to provide services while the Newton Senior Center is closed.

The Newton Seniors website ([www.newtonseniors.org](http://www.newtonseniors.org)) provides a complete list of the remote programs now being offered, including Zumba, Meditation and Bereavement. The Zumba class is particularly popular, with 190 people participating in the last class offered.

It is not clear when the Senior Center will reopen, but steps are being taken every day to ensure that needs of older adults are being met. Those who had signed up for tax assistance, for example, will be scheduled for socially distant meetings starting June 1.

Senior Center Staff and qualified volunteers have been making calls to older adults living alone; the most frequent request is for follow up calls, followed by groceries and prescriptions.

Technology has been key to keeping people connected during this 'stay at home' period.

Many people who previously had no connection to the Senior Center are attending the remote classes. In order to continue to pay instructors, the suggested donation for classes is being raised to \$5.

The Boston Globe did a feature on what Senior Centers are doing to continue to connect with older adults.

### **NewCAL**

The shortlist for potential sites now includes only Newton Center and Newtonville; the architects are working on preparing proposed designs for each site.

A community meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 21.

### **Age Friendly Award**

Candidates for the 2020 Age Friendly Award were discussed and refined. New candidates can be submitted until Friday, May 1 at 5PM.

### **Life in a Post Quarantine World**

Members discussed learnings from living in a quarantined world, and cited technology as a key means to keep people connected. This has also raised awareness of the impact on those without the means to use technology, either from lack of training or from lack of tools (e.g. devices). Mental health issues were highlighted, as depression is a risk, and those who fall into depression may have difficulty reconnecting. The importance of having structure (e.g. a schedule) was emphasized, as well as the need for reliable and trustworthy information.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15PM.