

Newton Council on Aging & Advisory Board Meeting
September 19, 2017

Present: N. Brown, M. Knapp, N. Krasner, E. Picard, J. Picard, T. Shoemaker, E. Watkins

Community Members: J. Belle Isle, S. Rasala,

Notified: A. Cooper, B. Dugan, C. Gibson, H. Haywood, JE. Heffron, A. Hoffman, E. Lorant, J. Norstrand, S. Paley, CA. Shea

Staff: J. Colino, M. Leipsitz

City: N. Scammon

I. Meeting called to order at 7:35 p.m.

It was noted that this meeting was moved from the regularly scheduled fourth Tuesday of the month due to scheduling conflicts.

II. PLAAN Findings and Prioritization

Margaret Leipsitz reviewed the results of the PLAAN Learning Sessions and Key Interviews to date, including last week's session at the library. She ran through the presentation she has used in these sessions, highlighting the projected demographic changes in the City.

The Group engaged in a Goal Prioritization exercise that revealed that the priorities of COA Members are (1) advocating on senior housing (2) improving Senior Center facilities and (3) addressing social isolation. The priorities of the people who attended the library session were (1) addressing social isolation (2) advocating on senior housing and (3) increasing intergenerational activities.

The COA will use the PLAAN Findings to inform ongoing goals and objectives.

III. Chair/Director's Report

The COA hosted a very successful Mayoral Forum in August; the event received good media coverage.

Jayne is in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) Process and is advocating for a feasibility study and proposed design for a new Senior Center.

City Councilor Candidates who are in contested races in the next election will be invited to the October COA Meeting; questions will be distributed in advance and candidate responses will be posted on the Senior Services website. COA members are advised to look for opportunities to educate candidates about senior issues.

In preparation for the new mayor, Jayne is preparing her input to the Mayoral Transition Plan. Transportation is coming into focus as ride-sharing organizations are impacting both the viability and employment of traditional taxi companies who traditionally provide transportation services to the Department of Senior Services.

Joan Belle Isle provided an update from the Senior Center Group. Emmett Schmarsow presented at the last meeting and highlighted that whereas Newton was one of the first communities to invest significant funds to build a Senior Center, it has been overtaken by others who have built bigger and better centers for their seniors, with many communities dramatically expanding their square footage (from 5000 to 20000 sq ft, for example).

Sue Rasala noted that one significant finding has been that seniors pay 40% of taxes.

IV. Membership Report

Donna Murphy, Julia Nordstrand and Chryse Gibson were appointed COA Commissioners over the summer. Recruitment continues.

V. Springwell Report

Springwell's Annual Meeting will be held November 16 from 4-6pm.

VI. AARP Grant

The Massachusetts Chapter of AARP has funded our Grant Request to create a study group to apply the Housing materials that have been

developed by the Housing Subcommittee (Housing Guide, Safety Checklist and Housing Criteria). Volunteers were requested (N. Krasner, J and E Picard and M. Knapp volunteered.) Donna and Marian will meet Sunday to detail the project/staffing plan. The final report is due Dec. 1.

VII. Food Services

The Food Bank at the VFW has been very well received and plans are to continue it over the winter. The Senior Center is becoming a site for another food program, The CSFP (Commodities Supplemental Food Program). The program provides two bags of shelf stable food to eligible participants. If we get 50 people to enroll, the food will be delivered directly to the Senior Center for distribution. If less than 50 enroll, the food will be delivered to Post 440. The Senior Center is working on ensuring outreach to all eligible participants, and will explore the option of delivery. October 20 will be the first day of the program.

VIII. Meeting Adjourned at 9:30 pm