

Minutes of Cambridge Council on Aging Board Meeting of February 14, 2012

Board Members Present: William Cobham, President; Yaw Adjei-Koranteng; Patricia Burgess; Maureen Harty; Edna Stamp.

Staff Present: Eileen Ginnetty, Emma Watkins, Vincent McCarthy and Susan Pacheco.

Minutes from January 10, 2012 meeting were accepted.

COA Executive Director's Report; Eileen started the conversation about the MBTA's plan of proposed rate increases and service reductions. The MBTA will be holding a public hearing in Cambridge on the evening of February 29th and people are encouraged to attend to voice any concerns. The COA Board will send a letter to the Cambridge City Council expressing concern for the proposed rate increases, especially for the Senior Charlie card and the The RIDE, which could increase over 100 %.

Vincent is also working with Councillor Simmons on having an MBTA meeting at the North Cambridge Senior Center. This meeting had already been planned before the fare hike public hearings started, and will be an opportunity for people to talk about any issues related to the MBTA.

North Cambridge Senior Center: Vincent updated the group that the recent special senior lunch at 2050, catered by Victor's Deli of Somerville, was great. Also, the Wegman's trip was very well received and a lot of fun for the seniors. Yoga class will be restarting at 2050 on Thursday afternoons. Our previous yoga instructor left, and Vincent has found someone to replace her.

Vincent is starting a new group at 2050: The Chronicle Discussion group. People are encouraged to watch the Chronicle television show the evening before and then join in a group discussion the next day at the Senior Center.

A few other upcoming events: Mario Valdez, a researcher, will do a presentation on Black History and the 2050 Center will again be a part of the NOCA (North Cambridge Arts Association) open art studios this year (on Saturday May 19th.)

Citywide Senior Center: Emma reported that Councillor Simmons will present a slide show on Prince Hall for the 806 Black History event this month. Also, Emma is looking to line up a ballroom dancing demonstration and to restart the Tufts Osher Lifelong Learning classes.

On March 21, almost all COA and Senior Centers staff will be going to a one hour basic training in dealing with people with challenging behaviors. Senior Staff will cover the Centers so everyone else can attend as a group.

Emma and Vincent presented on the status of the survey from the Bicycle Committee. Last month the COA Board had requested hearing more about the survey when we got it. Emma has received the draft survey from them and it does look pretty comprehensive. We will look to include this survey in an upcoming newsletter. Emma will first have a small focus group of seniors review the instrument before we send it out more widely.

Client Services: In April Corey Pilz from the Cambridge Consumer Council will do a Wireless session for seniors. Corey has been great in responding to varied needs of seniors. As an example, a senior with dementia had stopped paying on her security system and the company is taking her to court to recoup \$3,000. Corey is working on this to try and mitigate the fees due to the woman's dementia.

Other notes:

Yaw updated the group regarding some upcoming changes with HUD Section 8 certificates.

Eileen mentioned that interviews will be starting in a few weeks for applicants for the COA Administrative Assistant position.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday March 13, 2012