

Minutes of COA Board Meeting of March 10, 2014

Board Members Present: Ethel Ampey, Elizabeth Cadigan, Miranda Heibel, Kenneth Hebert, Pearl Hines, Benjamin Horner, Ismail Laher and Jeanne Ryde

Absent: Lois Carra, Carole Feeney-Withrow

Staff Present: Lisa Castagna, Alicia Johnson, Vincent McCarthy, Susan Pacheco and Emma Watkins

Meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Secretary, Miranda Heibel.

1. Review/acceptance of minutes of February 10, 2014 meeting

Miranda Heibel requested approval of minutes. Motion to accept and unanimously approved. Susan welcomed Sandy Allert, candidate for the COA Board.

2. Reports

COA Executive Director

- Susan is participating in call-in radio outreach on Boston College Radio WZBC 90.3 FM 4/19.
- COA is planning an evening event on either 4/28 @ 5:30 p.m. In joint collaboration with Homeowners Rehab (HRI). Topic will be: reverse mortgages.
- Transition House is working to de-stigmatize domestic violence in elders and participate in a community wide public health program with SCES.
- The Middlesex Elder Taskforce notes there is increasing Elder abuse and in the number of scams targeting seniors. Contractor fraud with unlicensed workers knocking on doors, grandparent scam and the single greatest source for GDP for Nigeria, the Nigerian Prince scam. Seniors are vulnerable and often embarrassed to admit being scammed.

Citywide Senior Center

- March is International Women's Month. There was a presentation by True Story Theater Friendship knows No Boundaries cosponsored with the Women's Commission on 3/6. The ballroom was filled with new people who had never come in before.
- Senior Center staff is looking at programming to bring new people in, with a series of workshops.
- The City Council presented a commemorative plaque at the unveiling of the Cambridge Public Library's Leroy Cragwell (past board member) African-American History Book Collection on 3/5.
- "The Joy of Living – What Makes Me Happy." Book of Friends workshop on 3/11 and reception on 3/25.
- Other activities for March:
- Healthy Recipes presented by Cambridge Health Alliance 3/11, Taste of Thailand cooking demo 3/17 and our St. Patrick's Day party 3/20.
- There is a new Women's Group starting on Tuesdays.

North Cambridge Senior Center (NCSC)

- Activities for March include:
- WOW GROUP Medication Brown Bag March 5th. Mass School of Pharmacy will be here to privately review your current medications and supplements.
- Alzheimer's Association presents The Basics: Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer's disease March 11th. Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. This program provides information about the disease and related dementias, the benefits of early detection, causes and risk factors, treatment, and services offered by the Alzheimer's Association.
- Birthday Tea Wednesday March 12th
- Safety Awareness Thursday March 13th
- Step In to Spring Luncheon Thursday March 20th Entertainment provided by Art Sullivan
- Money Smart Seminar Monday March 24th Presented by Century Bank of North Cambridge
- Day Trip to IKEA Thursday March 27th

Client Services

- The I&R position closed and we have already received 49 resumes. We will review and set up interviews.
- Shine Volunteer Cathy Cody is in place and very busy.
- Liz Seelman and Vincent met with Transitional Assistance (Food Stamps) staff in Chelsea. They learned recipients have to use their benefits in 6 months or the balance returns to zero -and they have to reapply.
- Client Services will be doing outreach coffees at the Burns and LBJ apartments. Door knocking with DHSP at Walden Sq. apartments.
- The Stronger Together group has grown from 2 to 6 participants.

Old Business none

New Business

- A meeting with Mayor Maher is scheduled at the next board meeting on 4/14.
- Susan has asked the board to submit a letter to the mayor focusing on positives, transportation and housing. Also the letter will address concerns of protective services. Ken will contribute a piece on housing, Elizabeth on health care and Miranda on protective / homecare services.
- Pearl would like to see more local discounts for seniors. Jeanne noted the COA issues Buylines cards.
- Ethel has been named a board member at Just a Start.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 Noon.

Next meeting: Monday, April 14, 2014 @ 11:00 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Castagna.