

## **Minutes of COA Board Meeting of May 12, 2014**

**Board Members Present:** Ethel Ampey, Elizabeth Cadigan, Carole Feeney-Withrow, Kenneth Hebert, Miranda Heibel, Pearl Hines, Benjamin Horner, Ismail Laher, Lily Owyang and Jeanne Ryde

**Absent:** Lois Carra

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

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

- Miranda welcomed Mayor David P. Maher.
- Ethel and Pearl expressed concern about bikes. Mayor Maher (MM) responded when planning construction bikes lanes are considered. Police are holding bikers accountable as well. Over the past 20 years construction has increased in Kendall square but traffic is still the same due to commuters on bikes. Registration of bikes would have to be state law to be effective.
- Elizabeth advocated strategic planning for healthcare, social service delivery and mental health issues. Raising the profile for the need for geriatric services. MM is the primary caregiver for his 89 year old mother. She fell, broke her ankle, and did rehab at Neville. People do not want to be in rehab but it is necessary to get the desired level of services. Keeping people in homes is a good investment.
- Lily has had trouble finding information for long-term care. She was looking into day-care for her husband. There is not enough information about services for high-functioning individuals. The resources and information could be available at the Mayor's office.
- Susan said that the senior community is under-treated for mental health issues. At the senior center we try to de-escalate situations at the receptionist level and to call 911. Cambridge has police trained in mental health issues now.
- Miranda responded that there are very few geriatric practitioners of outpatient mental health services.
- Carol said there should be more information for seniors within the city services just as there is for women and children.
- Mayor Maher said Harvard and MIT are good community partners; the economic success of Cambridge is driven by these universities. Cambridge is a bastion of life sciences. Cook Center for cancer research was given as an example. Cambridge Health Alliance is in dire straits and may not survive in its present form. Senator Warren and Representative Clark are Cambridge residents. We need them to be our advocates on the state level.
- Mayor Maher stated that the role of city councils in zoning lies in providing incentives for the continuing care community as well as senior housing. The senior housing of today is too small (350 sq ft). It's time for a conversation. The last senior housing built was 2050 Massachusetts Avenue (note added built in the 1970s). Family housing would be a better choice than senior housing.
- Elizabeth said day care with assisted living built for seniors rather than with seniors. Co-housing is a good option but there are only two developments in Cambridge and they are rather expensive to buy into. MM replied there are no easy solutions. Cambridge should care about continuation of residency and he will continue this conversation with the city council.

### **Review/acceptance of minutes of May 12, 2014 meeting**

Miranda Heibel requested approval of minutes. Motion to accept and unanimously approved.

## **Reports**

### COA Executive Director

- Domestic Violence 101 was well-received. This was training presented by Transition House. The COA staff has viewed the associated video "Domestic Violence Grows Old" at the all-staff meeting in May. The additional approved grant of \$5000 will make the training available to the participants in the fall.
- The Cambridge-Somerville Mental Health Panel is on June 24 2014 at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Catherine at COA will lead a meditation session there.

## Citywide Senior Center

- Emma says cooking is in vogue.
  - “The Taste of African Heritage” instructor provided healthy recipes.
  - Jeff and Miguel celebrated 5 May with a Cinco de Mayo dinner.
  - Sanaa made “Falafel and Hummus” in a class.
  - DHSP Richard Slater will be cooking for “Men’s Breakfast”.
- Lily’s “Poetry Workshop” continues to attract participants.
- The Senior Pool League is bringing in more active male participants.
- The second-grade girls from Amigos School came to the Mothers’ Day Lunch, passed out Mothers’ Day cards and danced.
- “Dealing with Loss” is presented this month by Roberta Robinson.
- Health and Wellness programs “Oral Health” and “Five Simple Exercises” were presented.
- Trips this month include: a field trip to Gateway Center, with lunch at Kelly’s and a bird-watching trip to Mount Auburn Cemetery.

## North Cambridge Senior Center (NCSC)

- Alicia says the Air Planters and Terrariums that were created during the Earth Day program are thriving.
- The attendance at the open forum to guess the mystery trip riddle was 35.
- “Cambridge in Motion” is presenting a six-week belly-dancing class.
- “Falls Prevention” was presented on May 20. Coffee and bagels were served.

## Client Services

- The Cambridge Council on Aging and The Cambridge Police Department are collaborating to hold two “Senior Prescription Drug Take-Back Days” in June. North Cambridge Senior Center on June 5, from 11am – 1pm and at Cambridge Citywide Senior Center, Tuesday, June 10, from 11am -1pm.
- I & R position – An offer has been made and accepted by Nikisha Glasgow. Nikisha is a Cambridge resident who has most recently worked at the Department of Transitional Assistance as a Benefits Eligibility and Referral specialist and has worked closely with many senior clients.

## Old Business Chinese language class

## New Business none

Meeting adjourned at 12:20pm

**Next meeting: Monday, June 9, 2014 @ 11:00 a.m.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Castagna.