

Minutes of COA Board Meeting September 14, 2021

Board Members Present: Lois Carra, Jennifer Chisholm, Pearl Hines, Lily Owyang, Eva Paddock and Beverly Sealey

Board Members Absent: JoAnn Haas

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

Call to Order – President Owyang called meeting to order at 9:38 a.m.

Review/Acceptance of minutes: *(the last official meeting held prior to COVID; all subsequent meetings of the Board – were “check ins”).*

Executive Director – Susan Pacheco

- All staff are now fully reporting to the office since 7/19/21. There are no staff currently working remotely.
- Discussed challenges of staffing. Senior Center Director position has been posted. Closing date 8/30/21 but will remain posted until filled. ED is forming an interview committee. Lily Owyang, will serve on the committee in her role as President, as well as participant. Other members to be announced. ED encouraged Board Members to forward questions to be considered in the interview process.
- Vincent McCarthy will report regarding two recent retirements and positions in Client Services.
- Meals resumed at the Cambridge Senior Center on 9/13/21. It is a Grab-and-Go luncheon program - \$3 donation.

Reports regarding both Senior Centers (Cambridge Senior Center and North Cambridge Senior Center) had previously been reported out separately. Alicia Johnson will report on behalf of COA Activity Team until further notice.

Please see attached report or click on link from Alicia Johnson. <H:\COA Board\minutes\NCSC\Board Meeting September 2021.docx>

Client Services – Vincent McCarthy

Please see attached report or click on link from Vincent McCarthy. <H:\COA Board\minutes\Client Svcs\COA Board September 2021.docx>

Old Business

- No old business

New Business

- Board Composition – Terms and new members. There are members whose terms have expired. ED has spoken to members about reappointment. Also, ED working with City Manager's Office and Public Information Office to publicize current vacancies on the COA Board. Notice has been posted with an application deadline date of 10/1/21.
- Board Member Hines inquired about vaccine mandate at the Centers for participants. There is no vaccine mandate. Participants do not need to provide proof of vaccination to attend COA programming.
- President Owyang inquired about the Cambridge Warming Center (CWC). Would it open again in the basement of the Center? Yes, the CWC is scheduled to open for the season on 12/1/21. It will resume as an overnight center.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 @ 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Susan Pacheco.

**Cambridge Council on Aging
Activities Team
Board Meeting Notes
Tuesday September 14, 2021**

- NCSC has re-opened on Mondays from 11:30a.m. to 5:00p.m. and the following classes are now held in-person:
 - Dancing for Balance class 1:00p.m. to 2:00p.m.
 - Gentle Mat Yoga 3:30p.m. to 4:30p.m.
- Also, beginning Friday September 17, 2021, NCSC will re-open from 12:00p.m. to 3:30p.m. for the following program:
 - Whist 1:00p.m. to 3:00p.m.

In-person classes continues to have low attendance numbers, compared to the same Class held virtually.

For Example:

Mondays Dancing for Balance class averages around 4-5 participants.

Whereas Thursday's virtual Dancing for Balance class averages 13-15 participants.

- CSC has re-opened on Mondays 8:30am-8:00pm, Tues-Thur 8:30am-5:00pm, Fri 8:30am-12:00pm
 - More classes and programs have returned to in-person teaching
 - Health and Wellness presentation with Roberta Robinson had 6 participants
- Participants that returned to in-person programming are very happy to be back.
 - Some seniors who were not interested in Zooming into a class or program during the pandemic, and were kept in contact with by telephone, have returned to the senior center for in-person programming.

After discussions with a few of the instructors, they are surprised that more participants aren't attending in-person classes. Although, they are taking into consideration that participants travel during the summer.

Feedback for preferring virtual is that some participants are still concerned with Public transportation.

- Pool/Billiards players have picked up right where they left off pre-pandemic.
- Flamenco Dance instructor was able to successfully conduct her class as a hybrid by bringing on her own laptop. Zoom attendees were unable to see in-person participants.
- Cartoons Connecting Communities was successful. I receive feedback every week regarding the Cambridge Street Upper School Scholar's artwork.

COA Board Meeting – September 2021

Client Services

Vincent gave a brief overview of how Client Services has been during since our last official COA Board meeting in February of 2020.

At beginning of pandemic, much of the COA staff including Client Services, was very focused on assisting with the Food for Free registration. At this time Client Services, with the help of other COA staff members, began the Assurance Program, which provided regular phone calls to isolated Cambridge seniors.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have seen an increase in crisis calls, many involving mental health issues. We continue to collaborate a great deal with local agencies and other City Departments including Inspectional Services, Multi Service Center, CEOC, SCES Protective Services and DeNovo (formerly CLSACC Community Legal Services and Counseling Center)

Upcoming staff changes:

Vincent announced the retirement of COA Bus Driver Laura Habermann and the upcoming retirement of Liz Seelman, Case Manager.

Both Laura and Liz have been with the Council on Aging for many years and they will be greatly missed.

Upcoming Men's Group event:

Men's Group Fall Gathering

Tuesday, October 19th from 10am – 11:30am.