

## Minutes of COA Board Meeting January 11, 2022

**Board Members Present:** James Bennett, Stephanie Becker-Stone, Lois Carra, Kathy Dalton, Pearl Hines, Lily Owyang, Eva Paddock and Beverly Sealey

**Absent:** Jennifer Chisholm and Mary DeCoursey

**Staff Present:** Lisa Castagna, Alicia Johnson, and Susan Pacheco

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

**Review/Acceptance of minutes:** Motion made by Jim Bennett, seconded by Kathy Dalton. Minutes unanimously approved.

### Executive Director – Susan Pacheco

1. ED updated Board on operations of COA offices and Senior due to Omicron surge.

Effective Friday, January 7<sup>th</sup> through Friday, January 28<sup>th</sup>:

- All Cambridge Senior Center and North Cambridge Senior Center classes will be held online via Zoom (including those previously held in-person)
- All other in-person activities (Billiards; Bingo; Cards; Games; etc.) are cancelled.
- The Cambridge Senior Center located, at 806 Massachusetts Avenue, will be open for Drop In; Computer Lab; and Grab-&-Go Lunches only. Masks are required at all times inside the building.
- The North Cambridge Senior Center, located at 2050 Massachusetts Avenue, will be closed and its “in-person” offerings will be offered via Zoom.

The Council on Aging staff continues to be available during regular business hours via phone, email and by appointment. For more information regarding our virtual offerings, please call 617-349-6220 or visit [www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/COA](http://www.cambridgema.gov/DHSP/COA).

2. Baker-Polito Administration launches tool for residents to access COVID-19 digital vaccine card. Access the new tool at [www.MyVaxRecords.Mass.Gov](http://www.MyVaxRecords.Mass.Gov).
3. Biden-Harris Administration requires insurance companies and group health plans to cover the cost of at-home COVID-19 tests, starting January 15<sup>th</sup>. Companies will either require the consumer to purchase upfront and then be reimbursed or have it fully paid at time of purchase.
4. Rapid test kits are still available at the Cambridge Senior Center.
5. Scheduled 1/13/22 Senior SCAM Presentation w/Police has been cancelled due to high increase of COVID surge.
6. Cambridge Warming Center has been operating well. Twice per week stakeholder calls has increased communication, therefore addressing possible issues prior to happening.

### COA Activities Team – Alicia Johnson

COA classes and activities have returned to virtual, effective 1/7/22 thru 1/28/22.

Concern was increasing from an instructor about continuing with in-person classes.

There was a sense of relief among instructors to move back to virtual classes once the announcement was made. The transition back to virtual was seamless for exercise classes.

Staff outreached to participants that attended in-person classes to advise classes would be virtual.

- Café 806 continues to be successful with expanded lunch items.  
Such as: chili; soups; cheeseburgers; chicken salad sandwiches; pot roast all for the cost of \$4.00. All lunch items are prepared fresh.  
Café 806 is not offered during the meals program lunch hours.
- Our last virtual tour of the Gardner Museum was on Monday 1/10/22.  
The COA worked closely with the Gardner Museum to offer monthly virtual tours on artist collections and themes. For example, “hidden gems” focused on art pieces that often get overlooked in the museum.
- COA Watercolor instructors, Sally and Janet have worked with their students to create a third virtual art exhibit. This is another successful art exhibit showcasing the many talents of the artists.
- Tech Help has moved back to virtual appointment.

- Virtual Gentle Morning Jive Dance class has moved to Monday mornings, due to a schedule change with the instructor.
- Due to low participation, Guided Meditation instructor has opted to discontinue Tuesday's virtual class. The instructor gaged participants interest for an alternate time, but there was low interest.

**Client Services – Vincent McCarthy (was not in attendance but forwarded report)**

- Programming is now currently virtual. The Men's Group meeting for January is cancelled. The group prefers not to meet virtually, and we hope that we will be able to meet in-person in February.
- Update – Student Shoveler List: Thank you to COA staff member Adam Leith for all his assistance with the Student Shoveler List this year. He has been a big help in transferring the "Student Shoveler List" as they come into the google application form. We currently have 33 names on the list and have received many requests for the "Student Shoveler List".

Questions posed by Board: - Q: Are students paid or is this voluntary?

A: Students are paid. Students are told to agree upon price prior to shoveling begins.

Recommendation is between \$10-\$35, depending on amount of snow and property to be shoveled.

Q: Are students transported to the shoveling site?

A: No. Students are responsible for getting to and from job site. Students will sign up for areas close to home.

**Old Business:** There was no new business to be discussed.

**New Business:**

- Pearl Hines suggested that a mirror be purchased for the Senior Center Ballroom. ED acknowledged the suggestion but advised that such facility-based requests were not appropriate to bring forth to the Board. In the future, could be brought to ED or Senior Center Director.

Jim Bennett and Eva Paddock motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 8, 2022 @ 9:30 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa Castagna and Susan Pacheco.