

**Belmont Council on Aging - Approved
Minutes From January 8, 2024**

Meeting Called to order 7:00 PM

Present: Karen Donelan (Chair), Jane Shapiro (Vice-Chair), Pierce Ellenwood (ex officio), Brandon Fitts (ex officio), Ellen Sullivan, Joel Semuels, Andrea Paschal, Jane Shapiro, Maryann Scali, Ted Dukas, Tomi Olson, Judy Morrison, Chao Qiang Lai, Peg Callanan, Aimee LeBrun, Janet Amdur, Rich Burger

Not Present:

1. Secretary/Minute taker position: will continue to rotate; as for filing, will be done by
Brandon Fitts
January – Andrea
February – Maryann
March – Ellen
April – Chao
May – Joel
June – Tomi
July – Peg

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: April 25, 2024
TIME: 2:25 PM

2. Community Input (aka Senior Citizen Concerns) – Maryann Scali
Concerns about space at Beech St Center now that the library co-location has happened. Making reservations is an issue; may need some re-education for seniors trying to use. Accidents in the parking lot – why? Pierce knew of 2. Not sure if related to increased traffic at Center.
Library parking vs. senior center employee – any way to differentiate? Pierce is looking into it.
There is a Library/COA working group; next meeting is on 11th. Maryann, Joel, and Tomi are on it.
Concerns about safety and security of Beech St. Center: health, disability/accessibility issues, kitchen repairs.

Proposal: COA supports the health of the community using the Beech Street Center, and therefore strongly suggests the repairs and improvements to the center's kitchen be repaired or remedied as soon as possible. Approved unanimously; will be passed on to Brendan.

3. December COA meeting minutes – approved as written
4. Introductions of Council on Aging members and Beech Street Center/COA Staff
5. Programs Report – Assistant Director (Pierce Ellinwood):
Number of diverse events in December, safe driving session, smartphone help session, concerts, gingerbread contest, and others.
January activities: Q&A from Congressman Katherine Clark, history of Boston Celtics, Interim Director meet & greet, presentation by photojournalist, Charlie Card workshop, Senator Brownsberger session, senior law, supper club, craft workshop, multi-generational events in partner with the library, and others in the future.

6. Interim Director Report – Brandon Fitts [not presented due to conflict with Select Board attendance]
7. New Business:
 - a. Library Updates – re: MOU – is it being honored. Library took more space than anticipated. Bookcase placement, technology space conflicts, use of computer room, understanding of how many are using the building. Asked subcommittee to address and report back.
 - b. Staffing and Communications – Town Administrator advised Interim Director to communicate that if override doesn't pass, people will lose jobs. The COA needs to know details of the \$400K budget. Proposal/motion to invite a member of Warrant Committee or the Town Administrator to next meeting to discuss budget issues. Approved with one abstain.
8. Working Groups: Discuss report frequency/agenda
 - a. Friends of the COA – Tomi Olson
Next meeting on January 10th; will have more to report next month.
 - b. Springwell – Jane Shapiro (did not report)
 - c. Transportation – Ellen Sullivan
2023 recap: 240 medical rides, 145 volunteer driver rides. Serviced 1400 seniors for transport/general.
Talking to Watertown about its use of GoGoGrandparent
Cab rides for medical are only 1-way, limited hours
Question about whether unfulfilled rides are documented; Ellen did not know, will check.
Question whether ride service to center is well known; weekly and monthly newsletter, fliers, on monitors in center. There is a broader communications issues, hopeful new Belmont Voice will help. Ideas about getting information in more hands.
 - d. Age Friendly – Judy Morrison
Focus to get in front of Selectboard to get approval on recommended outdoor space guidelines. Public meeting on Dec 15th on walkability with wide representation. Need to get Beech St. Center on public map for walkability. Sidewalks around center and safety of sidewalks. Need to set priorities for the Belmont DPW. Partner with Safe Paths to School.
9. Next Meeting (Date & Time): Monday, February 5, 2024, at 7PM – on Zoom. Zoom meetings approved until March. Discussion about if Monday night for COA meetings is an issue. Historically, meeting dates are adjusted as needed if there is a conflict (for example, town meeting, holidays). Karen will review dates with Brandon and provide at next meeting. Right now, March 4 and April 1 are dates that can work for COA Monday meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Paschal