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Town of Belmont
Human Services Subcommittee of Warrant Committee
Minutes of Human Services Subcommittee of Warrant Committee
March 2, 2020

Present: Chairman Robert E. McLaughlin, Members, Jenny Fallon, Lynn Read

In accordance with the Notice, the Chairman, Robert E. McLaughlin, called the meeting of the Committee to order at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, March 2, 2020, in the conference room at the Beech Street Center. In addition to the members of the subcommittee, the Council on Aging Director Nava Niv-Vogel and members of the Council on Aging were present.

The Director gave a brief background history of the activities of the Council during the past year. She noted that the Beech Street Center had been in operation now for ten years and the Friends of the Council, in recognition of the 10th year anniversary, had given a gift towards funding of the kiosk that houses a second monitor for prior to check in. Also, digitized monitors that serve as the modernized bulletin boards were installed and paid through the COA gift account, which is an account where direct donations are made to the COA.

There followed a discussion of various grants and gifts that augment the Council's appropriated budget and the Director agreed by follow-up communication with the Chairman to detail all of the supplemental sources of revenue that enable the COA to carry out its activities.

In response to a question by the Chairman, the Director responded that approximately 2,000 different people enjoyed the services of the COA this past year. It appears, however, that 40 percent were out-of-town residents but of that group many were former Belmont residents. The Director also pointed out that Belmont residents frequent senior centers in other towns.

Once again, the Director made a compelling case that the COA should have assigned a full-time social worker as the needs of the senior citizens are extensive.

There followed a discussion of the Springwell funded lunch provided at the Beech Street Center and that Springwell had discontinued providing transportation. During the past year the COA had initiated a volunteer driver program, which at that time had 11 volunteers who with their own vehicles transported seniors in need of a ride. It is hoped that the program would expand to 30 volunteer drivers. The Director assured members of the committee that the potential liability of such a program had been vetted with the Town Administrator and Town Counsel.

There followed a discussion that during the past year the Belmont COA had been accorded the status of an "age-friendly community." The Council and the Director were actively working on a three-year action plan consistent with the objectives of being an age-friendly community.

There being no further business, upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

/s/ Robert E. McLaughlin,
Human Services Subcommittee Chair