

Council on Aging Board Meeting  
Ludlow Senior Center  
228 State Street  
Wednesday, August 16, 2023

Present: J. Zepke, D. Peacey, K. Martin, R. Forti, F. Barroso, B. Mishol, B. Radowski, H. Grabowski, D. Johnson, J. DaCruz  
Excused: F. Krzanik Absent: K. Ribeiro

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**I. Roll Call** – The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairperson D. Peacey

**II. Secretary's Report**

- a. Minutes from the July 19, 2023 meeting were reviewed and no changes were made. M/S: B. Mishol/F. Barroso. All in favor.

**III. Treasurers Report**

a. FY 24 Budget Status: The Formula Grant has been signed by Gov. Healey, increasing the rate per senior (age 60+) from \$12 to \$14. This goes into effect for the current FY. The front desk receptionist and morning receptionist are paid through the Formula Grant. Zepke explained the Incentive line item on the financial report is for employees who don't call in sick for four months and are eligible for an incentive day off. Three days are budgeted for everyone. The Longevity line item is for employees who have been at the COA for a certain number of years.

**IV. Director's Report**

- a. Grant Updates: Final report was completed for \$31,000 Behavioral Health Grant. Participation exceeded expectations. Over 50 people participated; the goal was 20. The twice a month group session will continue through the Formula Grant until another grant can be secured. MCOA just received \$1.54 million for Service and Incentive Grants for COA hybrid programs. COAs may apply for up to \$100,000 for technology and training to offer online programming. While J. Zepke may attend the bidders conference, she reported online activities have not been very popular among participants and there have been no requests for this type of programming.

WestMass Elder Care has received a Respite Innovation Grant and is offering the Center \$2,000 for marketing and educational programming for people who are caring for an older family member or friend. The requirements include hosting a minimum of two to four "lunch and learn" programs related to caregiver self-care over a two-year period. The Center would be responsible for securing speakers, program promotion, providing catered lunches for up to 30 people, gift bags for every participant containing self-care items, and raffles. The Board acknowledged the importance of supporting the efforts of informal caregivers. J. Zepke reported that historically, most caregivers are reluctant to self-identify. When they do, they seek information and resources to help with their caregiving responsibilities i.e., help identifying what is needed, the services that might help, how to pay for services, help with medication management. For those reasons, and because \$2,000 would not be enough to cover expenses, the Board agreed to pass on this opportunity for this grant at this time.

b. Center Numbers: Attendance for meals and activities are much higher than when the Center was in the old building. While every effort is made to obtain accurate counts, participants entering the Center don't always select all the activities they plan to participate in for the day when they use their scan card. Signup sheets are used to

supplement data that is not entered on the screen. The Annual Report will be coming up soon with additional information.

Lunch numbers:

	Total Meals	Unduplicated People	Daily Average
March	3,005	440	131
April	2,636	433	139
May	2,990	434	136
June	2,818	436	128

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c. Fall Classes and Activities: A meditation class will be offered in October. JGS Both Healthy Bones and Balance classes continually have 10 people on waiting lists. Efforts are being made to add a third class. Belly dancing ends in August and recruitment efforts are underway for an instructor.

d. Dispatcher Vacancy: There are seven applicants; interviews are scheduled for August 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### V. Chairman's Report

- a. Policy Manual: B. Mishol said the work group is making steady progress and the work group meets every two weeks. He is optimistic it will be completed by the end of 2023. The Longmeadow COA's manual is being used as a guide and being tailored for Ludlow. While J. Zepke's knowledge of operations is essential to the process, the work group offered to help her as much as possible and lessen some of her work. D. Peacy and F. Barroso had a very informative meeting with the Fire Dept. about fire safety and evacuation plans, which D. Peacey incorporated into the manual. She offered to write an article about fire safety in an upcoming Senior Scene newsletter. The full Board will review the final draft and it will be sent to Town Administrator Marc Strange as well for review once approved by COA..
- b. COA Goals/Strategic Plan Discussion: The advantages of having a 1, 3, 5-year plan and a process for developing it were discussed. K. Green said she was involved with strategic planning at Mass Mutual and recommended the full Board initially conduct a brainstorming session. She offered her expertise to help facilitate the process. D. Peacey will follow up with her to set this up at a future meeting.

#### VI. Visitation

- a. K. Green from the Friends of the Senior Center reported the proposed scholarship fund for Ludlow residents seeking to pursue a career enhancing the lives of older adults was approved by the Friends and the bylaws were changed to include it. A subcommittee is working on an application.
- b. Update was provided by K. Green on fundraising project to occur during FESTA (parking at senior center).

#### VII. Adjournment: 5:30 p.m. M/S: d. Johnson/B.Mishol. All in favor.

*The next Board Meeting will be at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 20, 2023.*

Respectfully submitted,

K. Martin, Secretary, COA