

Harvard Council on Aging
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, February 16, 2021
Via Zoom Conference

Present: Beth Williams, Chet Hooper, Guy Oliva, Kim Schwarz, Carl Sciple, Cathy Walker, Nancy Webber, COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder/alternate Connie Larrabee
FCOA member Sharon Briggs, Select Board liaison Lucy Wallace
Press reporter Joan Eliyesil
Absent: Fran Maiore, Lynne Musto-Pesa

The meeting was convened at 4:01 p.m.

The minutes of the January 16, 2021 board meeting were approved as written.

Treasurer's Report

Account balances as of 2/02/2021 – per MUNIS report

COA Salary	\$88,073	(Annual Budget: \$163,019)
COA Expense	9,630	(Annual Budget: 10,547)
MART Salary	21,460	(Annual Budget: 35,108)
MART Expense	610	(Annual Budget 1,000)
Gift account	88,160	(\$7,000 reserved for kitchen)
Formula Grant	9,710	
Revolving Funds	7,176	

* The new Formula grant amount will be level-funded at \$13,368.
The town still hasn't received the funds.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, spending continues to be much lower than normal. Any town appropriation left over at the end of the fiscal year June 30 will go into next year's free cash.

Director's Report – Debbie Thompson Outreach:

The outreach team supported and contacted 113 residents, either by phone, email, or home visits. This month, outreach work has included helping schedule COVID-19 vaccine appointments for those who are most elderly and frail.

The staff has had many calls from seniors looking for information about where they can get the vaccine. Harvard Help drivers are willing to drive people to sites at Gillette Stadium or in Worcester but many seniors are unable or reluctant to go that far.

COA directors in this area have written a letter to MCOA and Gov. Baker's office urging the creation of a large vaccine center in a more convenient location.

Programs

The Valentine card art program went very well and participants clearly enjoyed it. Heidi Siegrist has agreed to do more art programs in the future and Jen is planning more art/craft programs as well.

Emergency Rental and Mortgage Assistance

No inquiries have been received about the new emergency rental/mortgage assistance program, which is intended for residents who need financial help due to loss of income during the pandemic. Application forms are posted on the town website; the program is open to all town residents, regardless of age.

COMING EVENTS (On Zoom unless otherwise noted)

Wed. Feb. 17 Grab & Go with RiverCourt 1 p.m.

Wed. Feb.17 Stress reduction yoga with Barbara Rich 4 p.m.

Fri., Feb 19 Cybersecurity computer class 11:30 a.m.

Wed. Feb. 24 Preparing for Medicare by BC/BS 4 p.m.

Phase 2 alternative

Beth and Guy toured the former medical office building at 16 Lancaster County Road again and Beth prepared a list of the COA's requirements

for a new senior center, which will be incorporated into a request for proposals to start the required procurement process to purchase or lease a building. In addition to a large multipurpose room and code-compliant kitchen and bathrooms, the RFP will require office space for 8 staff members, accessible entrances, parking for 30+ cars, and a pitched roof. It will also stipulate that the building must be in Harvard's commercial district, to take advantage of a proposed sidewalk along the west side of Ayer Road.

At Lucy's suggestion, the RFP will contain a provision that the COA can inspect the building(s) before making a decision.

By a unanimous roll-call vote, board members agreed that Lucy should send the list of requirements to Marie Sobalvarro, who will prepare the RFP. Members expressed hope that the RFP process will not be delayed for months as was the case with the COA's previous submission for Phase 2 architectural services.

Lucy said she has submitted a placeholder warrant article request for funding for architectural services.

Friends of the Council on Aging - Sharon Briggs

The FCOA townwide mailing has been sent. The mailing goes only to Harvard residents, but an electronic version is sent to MassDevelopment for distribution to Devens residents. A donation envelope is included in the mailed version, and generally gets a good response.

New Business - Beth Williams

The Planning Board is continuing work on a proposed senior housing bylaw for presentation at Spring Town Meeting. The board hasn't decided whether to propose just one bylaw or to present several options.

Appointments

Beth, Guy, Lynne, and Connie all have appointments expiring in June. Beth has served two terms, so she will go off the board. Guy and Lynne can serve one more term before the COA's two-term limit kicks in. Connie's appointment is annual.

Board members are urged to think about possible candidates for board membership.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:41 p.m.
The next COA Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, 2021
at 4 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee, recorder
