

## **Weston COA Governance Committee Meeting Minutes, 8 March 2022**

The Zoom meeting was called to order at 9:00am by chair Linda Johnson. She read the extension of Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law and then took attendance.

**Present:** Sue Ruskin Friend, Joan Heilbronner, Linda M. Johnson, Mignonne Murray, Tom Nicholson and Prather Palmer

**Absent:** Marge Ackerman

**Resident Concerns and Comments:** None.

### **Review Minutes of Meeting on 8 February 2022**

There were no comments, questions, or corrections and the minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Director's Report**

The part-time social worker position was posted last week and there has been one response so far. It is a tough social service hiring market right now. Linda mentioned that the job description is posted on the town website and encouraged every one to review it.

Weston vaccination rates from the state website were reviewed and Mignonne will send the chart out to everyone. The group observed that the town's booster rates for older adults seem low.

There are still board members who have not completed the LGBTQ+ training program. The state has approved group training and Mignonne will set one up if necessary.

The MCOA board training task force is about to wrap up. Mignonne anticipates that there will be one more meeting for a final review of the work product.

### **Budget Report**

Mignonne's presentation to Finance Committee is scheduled for 3/17. Linda and Sue plan to attend. The proposed FY2023 budget was discussed. Mignonne noted that it doesn't represent the COA's true need because we receive gifts and grants that are not shown along with the town funding. The committee agreed that it is important to figure out a way to show this information. There is nothing controversial in the proposed budget. The staffing table is always confusing due to the way the part-time office assistant and van drivers FTEs are shown.

Tom asked if Mignonne is comfortable with the 1.7% increase in staff salaries given the inflationary economy. She said the town sets that figure and it may be amended later. They anticipate a COLA and set aside a merit pool for summer distribution. These funds are then added to department budgets. A pay comparison is done about every 5 years. Mignonne feels COA staff is fairly paid compared to other communities.

The formula grant contract was finally sent out. There were many changes to the contract with no prior notice which caused a lot of confusion. Our contract has been submitted. No funds have been distributed yet and there has been no word on when that might happen.

There is no up-date on when the 2020 census data will be available.

## **Up-dates**

Board candidates; Linda reported that we have 4 solid candidates for our 3 vacancies and we may have more before the application deadline on April 1. Tom suggested we work hard to keep anyone who is not appointed engaged so they will consider applying again next year when we will have 3 more vacancies. We could also invite someone to be a committee member as a way to be involved without being on the board. Prather asked if we could add associate member(s). Sue responded that we're at our limit of 5 now. She is in the process of talking to current associates and so far everyone wants to continue. Sue noted that we just increased our limit last year and asked if the committee would like to consider increasing the number of associates again. Linda reminded the group that we already have one of the largest boards in town so she is not in favor of continuing to expand.

Joan asked if our current candidates have the qualities and experience that we noted on the wish list we developed in the fall. There are two candidates with extensive marketing expertise which was high on our priority list, but no one with a legal background. The candidate group has gender and age diversity. Sue said that while we have a wish list, we are not wedded to it. The most important qualities in a candidate are the desire to contribute and a strong interest in supporting the COA.

Board documents: Linda has reviewed a stack of policies and documents from Mignonne's files. They are mostly old and irrelevant. Up-dating documents has taken a back seat to recruitment lately.

Board Bios: Only 4 board members have submitted brief bios so far so Linda will send out another reminder.

Town committees: 14 board members are either already serving or have volunteered to cover one of the committees/boards identified by Mignonne as needing priority attention. Linda brought up Jean's question about the COA having "seats" on certain groups. Mignonne says the first step is for our board to be more involved. Then other committees will recognize the value of having COA involvement and input and perhaps will want to establish a COA liaison seat.

## **Other Business**

Board Survey: Mignonne hasn't had chance to work on up-dating the survey tool we reviewed in February. There is no rush on this as the board is working on lots of other projects right now.

The 2022/2023 officer slate will be presented at the April board meeting and will be voted on in May. The secretary position is an issue as no one has volunteered to take on this important job.

The Town is lifting its mask mandate in municipal buildings on Thursday. At the COA, Mignonne will keep the change low key. The center will continue to be mask friendly. Some people will want to continue to wear masks and others who have stayed away because they didn't want to wear a mask may now return. Kristen is checking in with her program participants to make sure they know about the change.

The board meeting next week will be on Zoom and Sue explained that it seems best to wait and see what happens as masks come off. Also, several board members are away in March and would not be able to attend an in-person meeting. Prather sounded a cautionary note, observing that we were in the same place last spring, thinking that COVID was easing up. Joan said some people will continue to want to be masked in person and then it's hard to hear each other. Small groups in a large room with windows open might make it more feasible to meet without masks.

Each COA committee chair will make the decision about whether to continue meeting on Zoom or go to in-person or hybrid meetings. Linda asked for the group's preference for the April Governance Committee meeting. Tom said he finds GovCom works well on Zoom, but the personal interaction that takes place at an in-person meeting seems important for a board meeting especially if there's an outside speaker.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, April 12 at 9:00am. Linda will let everyone know if it will be on Zoom or in-person at the COA.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 am.

*Respectfully submitted by Linda M. Johnson*  
04.04.22