

WESTON COUNCIL ON AGING
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes – April 5, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am on the Weston COA Zoom application.

Present: Marge Ackerman, Kristen Frady, Vida Goldstein, Peter Mitsakos, John McCahan, Mignonne Murray, Prather Palmer, Shirley Small-Rougeau, Dianne Sullivan.

Absent: Frank Hillery, Susan Wagner, Teresa Young

1. John read the following statement:

“Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Weston will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. We will strive to provide access to such meetings via a link to call in, or other similar option. In the event we are unable to accommodate the same, despite best efforts, we will post recorded sessions of the meeting as soon as possible following the same. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings.”

2. The minutes of March 8, 2021 were approved as written.

3. There were no residents’ comments.

4. Old Business

4a. Update of mission statement. (A draft of a current mission statement, goals and objectives had been distributed five days before the meeting by email.) John explained that this rewrite had occurred as a consequence of the Board’s review of its committees and the formation of the ‘Awareness Group’. The mission statement has remained a draft document, reviewed periodically, as the committee either taken on or relinquished roles. Discussion centered on objective 4: “Compile a list with bios of members of our community who have expertise of value to our clientele and find opportunities to engage them.” This objective, carried forward from the 2017 draft, has never been pursued. The committee agreed that the objective was worthwhile and also recognized that citizens with desirable expertise may also have commercial interests that are no consonant with COA policies. Vida and Kristen will consider the wording for the recruitment of appropriate volunteers through the monthly newsletter.

4b. Shirley, Vida and John reviewed the outcome from the March 24th meeting of this committee along with the members of the Board, the Friends of the COA and the staff. Eighteen people expressed interest in continuing to participate in a Social Justice Working Group. The group is being convened on April 5 to begin the development of goals and objectives and to elect a chairperson.

4c. Health care and insurance hazards programming. Prather reviewed the material that he had gathered from Rep. Clark’s office. He noted that with the new law an emergency room patient who is held for ‘observation’ must sign a waiver acknowledging the lack of insurance coverage for this designation. He also reviewed the ‘Surprise Billing’ act, due to take effect on 01/01/2022, in so far as it addresses billing by out-of-network providers and transportation. Providers would receive the usual in-network compensation. Any additional payments would be negotiated between the provider and the insurance company. A similar provision would govern payment for air transport. At the moment, the cost of ground transport is not addressed. The bill is still being negotiated. Prather suggested we continue to

monitor its progress. He will also find out if a knowledgeable person from Rep. Clark's office would speak at the COA. Definitive information will also be included in the monthly newsletter.

5. Scheduling and administrative matters. There was no business under this item.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 am on Monday May 3, 2021 by Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Submitted by John McCahan