

WESTON COUNCIL ON AGING
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes – May 3, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am on the Weston COA Zoom application.

Present: Marge Ackerman, Kristen Frady, Vida Goldstein, John McCahan, Mignonne Murray, Shirley Small-Rougeau, Dianne Sullivan Susan Wagner,.

Absent: Frank Hillery, Peter Mitsakos, Prather Palmer, 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 April 5, 2021 were approved as written.

3. There were no residents’ comments.

4. Old Business

4a. John noted that the agenda items 4a. and 4c., ‘common health issues’ and ‘common ailments of the elderly series’, were the same and would be combined. Susan began the discussion by sharing a list of topics and dates of programs that had been completed and those that are scheduled to be aired. The latter include Dr. Mihir Kandar later this month, Dr. Joanne Borg-Stein in July and Dr. Andrew Budson in September. Susan noted that we had 2 names of podiatrists that had been recommended, but we are uncertain of their skills at speaking to an audience. In the absence of further information, we will try one. John will make the contact.

For additional speakers in other specialties, Dianne suggested consulting the speaker’s bureau at Newton Wellesley Hospital. Shirley will be in touch with them to find a physician who can address acid reflux and other digestive tract subjects.

Discussion ensued on the value of addressing issues of mental health, sexuality and intimacy. Kristen noted that programs of that nature are usually not well attended but, if recorded, are later accessed by a significant number of constituents anonymously. Susan will pursue inquiries for suitable presenters.

John suggested that a different slant on this subject matter might be useful by engaging a geriatrician to talk about the medical issues that a geriatrician will want to address with an older adult including the rationale for various vaccinations and other preventive tests and behaviors. The committee supported this approach, and John will search for an experienced presenter.

4b. Social Justice follow up. Shirley described the organizational meeting on April 5th and the selection of Jane Donnelly as chair of the Social Justice Working Group. (Jane had been invited to this meeting but was unable to attend.) The Working Group is starting with a process of self-assessment

and education among the working group members to learn and understand our own biases and predilections. In addition, the Working Group is learning about other initiatives in the area. Shirley has prepared a list of local and regional organizations that have been active in social justice issues. This list will be more widely circulated with the request to add any organizations that are not already listed. She will be working with Jane and Colm McGarry to consider approaches to self-examination such as the viewing and discussing of short videos that are designed to evoke a thoughtful discussion of one's own attitudes about race. They will also examine the work of other groups such as the School Committee as it looks into issues of equity. Shirley noted that they are in contact with the local Race Amity group. The Working Group will be meeting on June 7th to consider their next steps.

5. Scheduling and administrative matters.

Vida inquired about the changes in the status of committee changes being considered by the Board that had resulted in a rewrite of this committee's mission statement (Item 4a. in the minutes of April 5th). Marge responded that the Awareness Group would probably not be formed but a group focused on branding of the COA would be appointed.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for 10:00 am on Tuesday June 8, 2021 by Zoom. Since this is a change from the usual Monday slot, John will consult the absent members before locking it in.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Submitted by John McCahan