

WESTON COUNCIL ON AGING
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes – September 13, 2022

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

Present: Kristen Frady, Vida Goldstein, Peter Mitsakos, Mignonne Murray, John McCahan, Prather Palmer, Shirley Small-Rougeau, Dianne Sullivan, Susan Wagner. Guests: Linda Johnson, Paul Foley, Susan Pauker

Absent: Teresa Young.

1. John read the following statement:

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, which includes an extension of Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, this meeting will be held via an online meeting platform. No in-person attendance of members of the public is available but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time including a dial-in option.

Vida introduced the Board chairman Linda Johnson and new Board members Paul Foley and Susan Pauker. Vida briefly described the function of the Community Connections Committee.

2. The minutes of May 31, 2022 were approved as written.

3. There were no residents' comments.

4. Old Business

4a. **Social Justice Working Group.** Shirley reported that she, Jane Donnelly and Colm McGarry had met through the summer following a very successful Race Amity Day celebration on June 12th which 200-250 people attended. A number of activities have been planned for the coming year. They include:

- 1) September 21, 2022: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE. Theme: End Racism. Build Peace. Moderator: Laurie Bent, member of Select Board, Weston, Rev. Alicia Velez Stewart, Pastor, Weston United Methodist Church and Rev. Fr. James M. Hairston, Campus Minister for Multi-Faith Programs, Boston College, Chaplain, U.S.Army and Bridge Priest, Grace Church, Everett. Weston Public Library. Sponsored by SJWG of the CCC of the Weston COA.
- 2) October 26, 2022: BLACK HISTORY TOUR: HIDDEN BROOKLINE. A walking tour of the history, places and events depicting slavery and freedom in the town of Brookline. Details to be announced. Sponsored by the SJWG.
- 3) January 16, 2023, DR.MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. COMMEMORATIVE BREAKFAST, in collaboration with the Weston United Methodist Church and other community partners. Colm, Jane and Shirley representing the SJWG.
- 4) June 11, 2023, RACE AMITY DAY: This event will once again be sponsored by a partnership of community groups including, but not necessarily led by the SJWG. We are hoping to move it to another town this year. Both Natick and Weston have hosted the event. We are shooting for Lincoln this year; maybe the Pierce House.

Also noted were 1) VOICES IN 21st CENTURY CHRISTIANITY occurring on September 18, 2022. A new lecture series highlighting scholars with innovative ideas about the future of faith. First lecture features Rev. Dr. Shively Smith, Boston University; 2) October 16, 2022: MESSAGES OF HOPE IN A FRACTURED WORLD, A discussion on the current state of affairs in the world by a distinguished group of panelists and moderated by Dr. Mohamed Lazzouni, Chief Technology Officer, Aware, Inc. Supporting our partners at the Weston-Wayland Interfaith Action Group.

4.b.1. **Housing and housing finances.** Kristen noted that Arthur Bergeron had listed some possibilities for housing programs, but no topic has been scheduled. Shirley raised the question of Weston affordable housing as a topic of interest to those wanting to stay in Weston. The Baptist church and the Sunrise facility are being considered as affordable housing sites, but both present considerable challenges. We have produced a number of successful programs in the past that could bear repetition. Vida suggested ‘financing options’ as a subject especially in this time of rising mortgage rates. Susan Wagner and Linda discussed a panel discussion on ‘housing decisions’ as another. A vendors’ housing fair had been planned when the pandemic hit and is still considered too risky to run for another 6–12 months. Visiting elderly facilities was also popular. Vida, John, Mignonne and Kristen will meet in an effort to narrow down near term possibilities.

4.b.2. **End-of-life programming.** Kristen referred to the most recent end-of-life programming by Sandra Batra who offered a ‘life transition binder’. This program will continue this fall. Susan Wagner raised the topic of palliative, compassionate and hospice care given the very positive experience that she has had as a volunteer. Vida noted that recent programming of this kind has not been successful. Mignonne thought that putting information in the newsletter from time to time may be helpful. The committee considered aiming an end-of-life decisions program at the adult children of elderly, i.e. those who are faced with care taking responsibilities. Paul noted that wills and their importance could be a useful focus for a program. It was noted that many people have not drawn wills. Susan Pauker added the suggestion that revision of wills in light of changes in the law would also be of value. Mignonne noted that we usually have an elder law speaker at least twice a year. The popularity of a program previously held on obituary writing was mentioned. Vida, John, Mignonne and Kristen will consider a focus on end-of-life issues when they meet about housing issues.

4.b.3. **Health issues.** Kristen noted that we are partnering with Newton Wellesley Hospital on hypertension and stroke programming. Susan Wagner reintroduced the subject of movement disorders. Programs of this specificity have not done well in the past and the committee concluded that a different approach would be needed. Kristen referred to recent survey on which sleep and sleep disorders were frequently mentioned. Balance might be part of a movement disorder presentation. Yet the balance program recently offered was cancelled when 5 of the 8 enrollees dropped out. The topic of balance may be better addressed through current fitness programs. An ‘Ask the Doctor’ series was suggested. Prather referenced a book whose author is a local man with a falling disorder. Scheduling local people who have written about personal experiences with health issues may be a useful way of presenting those issues. Peter wondered if Newton Wellesley would have observations about topics that have been especially popular. The committee will continue to consider ideas for presentations or for people who would be effective presenters.

Because of time limitations, John requested that we postpone items 4.b.4. and 4.b.5. He asked Kristen and Mignonne to at least introduce item 5., **Brainstorming a Retirement Series.** Kristen said that they were aware of a significant sized population who are contemplating retirement and considering what they will want to be doing after retirement. She asked the committee to consider how such a series might be constructed.

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

The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 am on Tuesday October 18, 2022 by Zoom. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.

Submitted by John McCahan