

## **Weston COA Governance Committee Meeting Minutes, September 14, 2021**

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 Open Meeting Law and then took attendance.

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

**Absent:** Prather Palmer

### **Resident Concerns and Comments**

None.

### **Meeting Minutes, June 8, 2021**

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

### **Review meeting schedule for year**

The group agreed to continue meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:00am. With the Covid situation remaining fluid, meetings will continue on Zoom for the time being.

### **Discuss board member recruitment and other governance goals for the year**

#### Board Member Recruitment

Linda noted that there will be 3 board vacancies at the end of June, 2022 as Marge Ackerman, Leslye Fligor and Gerri Scoll finish up their second terms. Recruitment of candidates for up-coming board vacancies should be a priority in the coming months. There was a question about the Select Board's required candidate to vacancy ratio. Mignonne called Lisa Yanakakis, Assistant Town Manager, to ask that question. Lisa replied there is no required ratio, but there would need to be more than 3 candidates for 3 vacancies.

Linda proposed that this would be a good time to review the size of the board. Town by-laws allow 9-13 full board members. As Mignonne pointed out, with 13 board members plus 5 associates, the COA has one of the largest boards in town. Marge said there have been 12-13 members for quite some time.

Tom suggested it would be helpful to review the current committees and chairs to consider what changes might be needed before making decisions about board recruitment and size. Sue noted that some committees are currently led or co-chaired by associate members and asked whether Tom was making a distinction between full and associate board members for committee leadership. Tom clarified that he was not; that associate members should be able to serve as committee chairs. He also said that co-chairs are a big plus in committee leadership, providing continuity if one person has to drop off for some reason. The rest of the group concurred and were in support of a full committee review to inform the recruitment process.

It was agreed that assembling a board with members that are invested and work well together toward common goals in support of the COA matters more than the size of the group.

Linda asked everyone to be thinking about the qualities, experience and expertise we might want to add to the board and to be on the look-out for good candidates. Sue mentioned that every COA program and outreach event, such as the coffee coming up on 9/27, presents an opportunity to create interest in board involvement.

### Committees

In addition to the previously mentioned overall committee review, all current committees will be encouraged to update (or, in the case of Housing and Transportation, develop) their mission statements and goals for the year. Sue will call committee chairs to ask if they want to continue and to suggest they touch base with their members to find out if they want to continue this year.

Mignonne said that it would be very helpful to have board members serve as liaisons to other town committees such as Housing, Zoning, and the Affordable Housing Trust. If the board wants to advocate for the needs and

interests of older residents, it should be heard on issues early in the discussions. Given the large number of committees in town, Mignonne was asked to make a priority list for COA coverage that will be presented to the board.

### On-Boarding Process

Another Governance Committee goal for this year will be to formalize an on-boarding process for new board members. Joan commented that sitting in on committee meetings is helping her become oriented and she will be happy to provide input to the on-boarding effort. Mignonne reported that the MCOA Board Training Task Force is awaiting budget approval from the state office of Elder Affairs and will not meet again until mid-October. Betsey Brew Boyd, Wayne Johnson, and Mignonne are members of the task force and will keep us informed.

### **Review policies/procedures/documents that need revision or updating**

The Committee Assignments chart will be up-dated after Sue has had a chance to talk to chairs and the board has considered any changes to the current committee line-up.

There was discussion about adding street addresses to the board contact list when it is updated. A question was raised about whether this list was available to the general public. Mignonne explained that every document and communication of the board are subject to public information laws so it is possible someone could request the list. It was decided that board members should be given the option of withholding their address from the contact list.

There was discussion about whether Google Docs is a useful tool for the board. Documents currently posted there are quite out of date. Most committee members do not use Google Docs. Some basic information is available on the Town website, but other COA materials are not readily accessible. Copies of the binders that used to be provided to board members are available and Sue and Linda will review this material. While the group generally favored hard-copy information, they agreed that it would be worthwhile to investigate other digital access platforms that are more user-friendly than Google Docs. The goal is to make information as accessible as possible.

Linda suggested that the board should annually review the COA Board *Current Interests* listed on the Town website and the committee agreed.

### **Other Business**

Mignonne mentioned that there would be a meeting of the Board of Health later in the day which hopefully would provide more information about Covid guidelines for town buildings as we head into fall.

It was noted that Kara Fleming in the office of the Town Manager has left her position and has not yet been replaced. Kara was a helpful resource for board members and she will be missed.

**Date of Next Meeting: October 12, 2021 at 9:00am on Zoom.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda M. Johnson  
September 25, 2021