

WESTON COUNCIL ON AGING
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes – September 14, 2021

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

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

Absent: Frank Hillery, Prather Palmer, Dianne Sullivan, 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 June 8, 2021 were approved as written.

3. There were no residents’ comments.

4. Old Business

4a. Programming for common health issues. Kristen noted that the COA would co-host the Newton Wellesley Hospital (NWH) speaker series podiatrist who is scheduled for November 10 at 10:00 am. The monthly newsletter will also reference a two part presentation by NWH on gastrointestinal disorders that we will not be co-hosting. Shirley said that she had been in touch with two GI practices in the area who would be willing to consider presentations if there were further topics we were interested beyond the NWH content.

John had contacted Dr. Richard Babayan and Dr. Lisa Caruso. Both would be happy to speak in this program. Dr. Babayan is the retired chief of urology at BMC and a past president of the American Urologic Association. Dr. Caruso is a geriatrician at BMC. Dr. Babayan had wondered whether the common urologic problems of both males and females should be addressed. The committee decided that both would be valuable contributions and that two, separate talks would be best. Dr. Caruso will address the geriatrician’s perspective and the common issues that are looked for.

No presenter has been found to address issues of intimacy in older age. Mignonne and Kristen noted that a sex therapist would be speaking at the Mass. COA meeting and that they would see if she had any ideas about presenters for us.

Peter raised the possibility of further attention to osteoarthritis, especially the physical therapeutic and exercise approach to this disorder. Kristen will follow up.

4b. Social Justice Working Group. Shirley reported that the Social Justice Working Group had been meeting regularly and had been focusing on the education and expansion of understanding of the issues among members of the group. She believed that the group would be taking up housing issues and voter suppression in coming months. Active participation in addressing these issues is expected later on. Marge made note of the effective leadership that Jane Donnelly has exercised.

4.c. “No Surprises Act”. This item was passed over until next meeting.

4.d. Further discussion on future programming. The committee recognized ‘cryptocurrency’ as a timely and increasingly frequent topic in the news. In developing a program on the subject, we thought that initial presentations should provide a basic understanding of what cryptocurrency is and how it works. We will continue to consider possible formats and presenters.

The committee felt that a housing fair would be well received at this point. The circumstances of the pandemic might permit such a fair by the spring 2022, or the fall 2022 at the latest. The committee discussed possible approaches to housing including various living arrangements, aging in place, and preparations for moving (decluttering). Were we to plan such an event by spring, we thought an outdoor venue might be considered. Mignonne emphasized the importance of the social benefits of an in-person event. Mignonne and Kristen will think more about details of a fair for our next meeting.

5. Scheduling and administrative matters.

John noted that meetings now could occur in-person rather than by Zoom if we so wished. The advantages of both were discussed. The committee decided that we would stay with a Zoom format but regularly review the decision.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00 am on Tuesday October 12, 2021. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.

Submitted by John McCahan