**Town of Boylston**

**Council on Aging**

**Meeting Minutes**

**October 7, 2020**

Date of Meeting: Wednesday, October 7, 2020 at 6pm

Location: Zoom (Virtual)

Time: 6:20 pm

Members Present: Dennis Goguen, Chairperson; Warren Leach, Member; Kathy Lohnes, COA Assistant; Ed MacDonald, Member; Deborah Goodrich, Member

Absent: David Wheeler, Member; Ozzie Sauer

Guests: Brittany Blaney-Anderson

Minutes Approval: March 2020 minutes approved

Announcements: The Wachusett Rotary Club will be donating turkeys and hams to Boylston seniors during the holiday season. Board members must check with the Town Clerk to get sworn in and to finish necessary paperwork and trainings. Dennis and Warren: need OML and COIL documentation and to complete COIL training. Deb: all set. Ed, Ozzie and David: need to be sworn in, complete OML and COIL documentation and COIL training.

New Business:

Staffing – Laura spoke about her availability and average hours (15-19/week) for the COA. She is not able to commit to going in the office regularly at this time and acknowledged that the board can decide if her current remote work situation fits their needs. Kathy states that she is more available now for the COA and that she is able to go in the office as needed. Dennis and Deb verbalized that they feel that current work situation with COA staff is working fine during COVID-19 and recommend keeping things as is. Ed expressed appreciation for work and questioned whether COA Coordinator candidates from March need to be followed-up with for closure. The COA is down on van drivers – currently have 2 who are flexible and helping as much as they can. Board agrees that there is a need for more van drivers and supports advertising for per diem drivers.

Program updates – fitness classes are held over Zoom (4 currently offered). Participants are from in town as well as from out of town. Number of participants range from 3 to 20. The instructors are charging the same price for classes. Board agrees to keep current format and to offer Zoom classes to both Boylston residents and out of town residents. Laura mentions that some COAs have offered outdoor fitness classes. Due to colder weather coming, board feels that timing is not right for this option. Laura is looking into liability waivers for online Zoom fitness classes; she has contacted April Steward who has checked with the town counsel. Laura will follow-up with board on this issue. Laura states she is working on improving the outreach program for COVID and non-COVID times. Focus is on vulnerable seniors. Laura would like to have outreach to this group and have volunteers available for resident needs (ie grocery shopping, outdoor yard work, etc.). Laura is working on getting resource information to seniors and has added useful information to the COA website. Laura encourages board members to look at the website and offer input and suggestions.

Van: The Boylston COA van has new safety protocols in place d/t the COVID pandemic. Only 2 passengers are allowed on the van at a time; masks must be worn (unless medically unable). Van is sanitized between passengers and at the end of the day. Laura is developing guidelines based on MCOA recommendations. Right now the van is only doing essential rides (pharmacy, grocery, MD appts). Board agrees to continue just with essential appointments during COVID as of now. Van had recent issue not starting – towed to Sunnyside Ford and found issues with throttle due to nest of rodents in area. Work was not covered under warranty due to the nest. Cost of towing was $130 and cost of van work was $858. The highway department will put winter tires on the van and handle the inspection due this month.

Budget: Laura reviewed COA expenses to date – Payroll, fitness classes, COVID supplies, van (gas/towing/repair), MCOA conference fee, and myseniorcenter.com membership. The Annual report for FY20 needs to be completed by the end of the month. Dennis asks Laura to forward to him. The COA has an extension on the Cultural Council Grant of $350 until next August 2021. MCOA fee was waived this year.

Comments: Dennis states that he is glad Kathy’s family is doing well and that both Kathy and Laura are back and helping at the COA. Warren states that the events for the Senior Citizen Society have been postponed and they hope to have some in the New Year. He asks Laura when next newsletter will be out – Laura states aiming for November and Warren states he would like to put something in regarding the SCS.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 4, 2020 (via Zoom)

Adjournment: 7:02pm