



Board Meeting Minutes of 9/26/2023 (in person/hybrid)

Respectfully Submitted by Lori Howe

Voting Members Attending:

Pete Hoagland, Gerri Hawn, Ken Adams, Pam Sampson, Jim Campbell, Lori Howe

Voting Members Absent: Sally Tipton

Non-Voting Associate Members Attending: Carole Marple

Non-Voting Associate Members Absent: Pat Gray

Staff Attending: Sue Kelliher, Kristina Gallant, Melinda Morle

Community Members Attending: 0

Voting Members Absent: 1

Quorum? Yes

Call to Order by Chair Pete Hoagland at 9:37 a.m.

Minutes. Pete asked for a motion on the August 29, 2023 Board meeting minutes. Jim noted a small correction. Pam motioned to approve with the correction, Gerri seconded. There being no further discussion, the minutes were approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Treasurer Report by Gerri Hawn (see attached reports)

Gerri said that we are in fine shape. It is still early in the fiscal year. Money is coming in from Lifetime Learning and we're trying to keep track of it by class. Kristina offered that she has an Excel spreadsheet she maintains for this and that she'll be happy to share it with Gerri.

Director's Report – by Sue Kelliher (see attached reports).

Sue said that Melissa did a presentation on Medicare last Thursday at the Library, which hit people new to COA. There were about 13 people attending plus follow-up calls. Open enrollment starts soon, running from October 15 to December 7.

Sue had a wrap up meeting with Springwell regarding the Men's Group. There were extra dollars that paid for today's lunch which was attended by five police who were treated to lunch as a thank you on behalf of COA. Gerri asked how we will pay for the Men's Lunch going forward. Sue responded that we have a pool of donations we've collected over time, about \$900, which will be used to supplement the \$10 charge will be reinstating in October. We have been having 23-24 men each month; yesterday there were 20. Paul Surface spoke on prostate cancer in men. He has written a book and copies are available. Lori suggested doing an article on this for the LINK. Gerri mentioned that Tim Greene had prostate cancer and was very active in the national association. Jim added that it was a very successful lunch, due in large part to Melinda's efforts to make the luncheon run on time and efficiently.

Sue went on to announce that the MCOA Conference will be held October 11-13. She will attend for three days;-Kristina and Melinda each for one day. The fees will be paid for by the Friends.

Sue also said that we did not get the MetroWest Community Foundation grant or the Middlesex Bank grant. We did get the Cultural Council grant which will fund a watercolor class. Also, the State Formula grant increased its award from \$12 to \$14 per person. Ken offered that there is a man who comes every month to the Men's Lunch who taught at Clark University and was on the Board of MetroWest Health that gave some funding for the Men's Luncheon Program. Carole asked why we don't have a Women's Lunch Program as well, to which Sue responded that she has been trying to get a grant to cover one.

Sue moved on the Lifetime Learning and reported that staff have been trained on a new scanner that we will use with key cards to track participation in all LL classes. Then staff can plug it into an office computer and transfer that data right into My Senior. Carole added that the Weston/Wellesley COA only charges a \$25 fee for their Lifetime Learning classes; Sue responded that WWCOA doesn't pay their instructors so they can keep their fees lower.

Pete thanked Sue and turned the meeting over to Jim Campbell for an update on the **Senior Drop-In Center**. Jim told the Board that Pete submitted our counter-offer to the Community Center, to which Jim Byrnes responded by accepting our terms; however, they now want to impose a cleaning fee. At Jim's committee's September 19th meeting they discussed this and decided to accept \$40 per month starting at our first use in November. Pete sent an email saying we accept that item and Jim is still waiting to hear from Doug who is travelling. Ken asked whether the terms have to go back to Board for approval to which Carole responded that it is in Jim's purview to sign off. It is expected that we will have a signed contract sometime in the coming week.

Ken asked how we know what amount to budget for the next fiscal year? Gerri replied that it's tough – if the Community Center sees lots of people showing up each month, their \$200/month fee is affordable for us; however they may want more money. We have to weigh how many people in town we're impacting. Jim suggested that we allocate more dollars in next year's budget.

Jim said the last item he has on the Drop-In Center is the layout. Kristina has helped create one, which was distributed to and positively received by members. Carole stated that it's important to get the word out and asked what the cost is of doing a townwide mailing. Gerri replied about \$400. Carole suggested possibly doing both a mailing and a banner at the split. Melinda responded that mailers usually work, however she doesn't think we get a big bang for banners. Ken said that we have gotten permission to put a sandwich board out front of Town Hall. This would be temporary, for 6 months or so, to give us time to determine how much interest we're getting. Gerri responded that she is opposed to this idea as it gets Sean off the hook and takes away any sense of urgency to get permanent signage added outside Town Hall. Also, she expects we'd get complaints that the sandwich boards are a safety hazard. Jim thinks there needs to be a COA sign at the Community Center and Pam added that this would just be put out the two mornings that drop-in is open.

Pam asked Sue whether she's asked the UU Church about parking; Sue replied that she will do that this week. Back to signage, Carole asked whether we should consider putting up a feather sign saying "Ken's Café" or "Sit & Sip". Ken added that he likes calling it "Mike's Place" in honor of Mike Kickham. Jim said that he is against a banner at the split as our focus should be on Sherborn, not MetroWest at large, and we should focus on Seniors. Carole added that if at any point we plan to name this initiative for Mike, we must be sure to tell Nancy. Pam suggested that we vote on a name once we know whether the drop-in will be a go. Pete said he thinks the mailing will really help and Sue said she will prepare it.

Pete moved the meeting on to the next item of business, **Senior Café**.

Pete said he was pleasantly surprised that we had 23 attendees last Thursday. Sue said that was because Melinda called and tracked people down to get participation. Melinda added that everything we do we have to sell, sell, sell. This Thursday will be a Mass. Audubon presentation and they will bring a bird and a snake.

Gerri asked when do we decide about continuing or discontinuing the Café? Pete responded that he thinks it's still too early. Gerri said that she is inclined to wait until after the Holiday Party in December. Melinda added that attendance really dropped off after May and it's hard to find food to make everyone happy every time. TJs is good, accommodating, and very efficient; we don't get complaints anymore. All agreed to make a decision at the November Board meeting.

Walk Audit

Sue reported that she has not gotten to the Tool Kit yet. She needs to contact Sean to see what he's done on the sidewalks and what his schedule is. Carole offered to contact Sean on this as well as the Liveable Streets Grant. Carole also asked whether anyone has asked the town Treasurer; Sue said she will.

The next item of business is the **Strategy Update**.

Sue said she is plugging away on the plan. They have accomplished some items. She has been working with Dorothea and the Sherborn Cultural Council. Sue has also met with Kelly Hodge at Pine Hill and is working on a tour. Sue added that Beth McCoy, the DS Schools Superintendent, is much more engaged and is getting out and connecting with the community at large.

Gerri tied back to Senior Café and suggested the idea of Seniors having lunch once a month at Pine Hill. Sue said she'll check this out.

Pete asked if there was any other business. Jim brought up the **next budget season**, reflecting that the last time we were successful getting increased hours for Staff which was huge. This year, he thinks we'll only have the Drop-In Center requiring more funding. Gerri replied that this will depend on how well Drop-In does. Also, there currently is a line item that covers food for seniors, so we wouldn't be asking for a significant bump up. Jim said it's likely that we'll be in the Community Center for more than six months. Pam thinks that the Community Center wants to increase us up to \$1,000 per month. Gerri said that the town wanted to get the Community Center off their books, so there's a lot of sensitivity here. Jim replied that that is why it's important to get Jeremy involved and up to speed. Gerri said that we

need strong numbers in November and December as budget season starts soon after. Jim said that he's concerned that the Community Center is not showing a great sense of urgency. Ken felt that we need to get well into the first quarter of 2024 to get more data, especially since the first three months of our contract are free. Pam said that we have been ready to go but the Community Center has been slow to respond. Carole said that we need to let go of the past and focus on getting a good turnout for November and December; if we have the numbers, they can translate into the budget required. Carole feels that if we have a successful program and with Jeremy's support, we can get an increase. Gerri said that we have \$250/month covered in our current line item and can go to \$500 but \$1,000 is too high.

Lori said that since we're starting the first Tuesday in November we should be looking at ways to ensure good attendance in November and December. Ken suggested we consider doing a soft opening mid-October once the agreement is signed. Jim said that we should also show the Community Center our layout. Our furnishings include comfortable chairs which Sue said she can procure by mid October. There were many ideas for activities that could be offered.

Jim asked about staffing the Drop-In. Our COA staff can't handle these two big blocks of time. Pam volunteered to take the lead and Lori offered to help. We should also get Volunteers. Jim asked whether a staff person could maintain the coverage schedule, to which Sue responded they could. We should plan on opening at 8:45am and closing at 12:15pm. Carole responded that we definitely need to have someone there continually from opening to closing. Jim reiterated that that is why we need to get Jeremy involved: we should get Town residents to volunteer who want to (1) work off their property taxes or (2) Work through the Vet's program. Gerri asked if there are people who are willing/able to show up each week? The Board seemed happy to cover, especially to start.

Lori suggested that we target October 24 for a soft opening. Melinda offered that that's the day of Jim Dowse's apple presentation. Pete asked whether we need to change the MoU and members felt that we just ask for some lead time to set up the room and do a soft open as a dry run. Carole said that sounds very reasonable and it can't hurt to ask. She emphasized that this is not an adversarial relationship but a collaborative effort.

Kristina added that she and her husband will move furniture in between October 17-24. She also said that Jim Byrnes was thrilled to have us there last week for Line Dancing. It brought life back to the building! Carole said that the Community Center board would like to fill the building every day and is struggling with how to do that. Jim is doing his job well as Executive Director and he really wants us to have the numbers so that this initiative can continue.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Pete asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion to Adjourn: Gerri motioned, Pam seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by a roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:15am.