**Scituate Council on Aging Meeting by Zoom**

**March 11, 2021, 5:30 p.m.**

In attendance: Board members: Janice Desmond, Chair; Susan Drevitch Kelly, Vice-Chair; J.D. Miller, Chair Emeritus; Leslie James; Janice Lindblom; Marie Fricker; Patricia Carleton; Elaine Schembari; Caitlin Coyle; Laurie Brady; Barbara McFadden, Associate Board Member; Linda Hayes, Senior Center Director, and Joan Powers, Liaison to South Shore Elder Services.

The minutes for the February meeting were approved by the Board with a roll call vote.

The meeting began with Janice Desmond telling the Board that she would be moving out of Scituate, and, therefore, would be stepping down from her position as Chair. She nominated J.D. Miller to assume her post for the remainder of her term. J.D. agreed to do so and the motion was passed unanimously by roll call vote.

**Report from the Director**

Linda Hayes, “broadcasting live” from her new office in the Scituate Senior Center, presented a wealth of information to Board Members about activities within the new center.

Each day, the building is getting more equipment, furniture, lighting, and state-of-the-art technology. Painters, electricians and IT technicians are daily visitors to the new center. Linda said that the old senior center would be used for meetings for a while as the work is being completed at the new site.

**Covid update:** The AARP Tax assistance program, scheduled to be held at the Community Center had to be relocated from the Community Building because the nurse had scheduled the second dose of the Covid 19 vaccine for 80 seniors, aged 75 and older, the same day. The AARP sessions will be held at the former senior center.

Linda reported that only a small fraction of the 300 seniors asking for appointments for vaccinations have received them despite the efforts of herself and other staff to locate sites with openings.

**Tax Assistance:** Seventy-seven appointments were made for the AARP Volunteer Tax-Aide Program tax assistance through the senior center in March. Some appointments are still available in April.

**Job Openings:** The center is seeking candidates for two Activities and Outreach Coordinator positions. The jobs have been posted on the Town website, and resumes will be reviewed before interviews begin. Linda invited members of the Board to participate in the review process if they so desired.

A new van driver, Michael DeGagne has been hired and is already transporting clients to and from medical appointments, local destinations, and grocery shopping. Until an additional driver is hired, some of the out-of-town medical trips are being diverted to the South Shore Community Action Council.

In February, the senior center’s van provided 151 rides to 30 clients. A new van is currently being built for the center, which will include seating for 10 and a wheelchair lift. The vehicle has been procured through a MassDOT Community Transit Grant Award.

**Promotion:** An article about Scituate’s new senior center appeared in the *Patriot Ledger* print editions and online on March 6. Linda did not produce a newsletter in March, but will publish one for April and another edition in mid-April to cover May and June.

**Programs /Activities:** Bob Jackman is hosting a video program for six weeks beginning on March 17 on the topic of “Early Scituate Shipwrecks,” and two new virtual workshops are on the agenda in March. Local Realtor Wendy Oleksiak will present “Organizing, Decluttering, and Downsizing” on March 18, and Physical Therapist Janet Popp will host Finding Balance at Home: Prevent the Shuffle; Improve your Balance, on April 9.

Ongoing virtual programs include: Yoga and Chair Yoga; SCTV fitness videos on a continuous schedule; a Grief Support Group on Zoom and outdoors; Caregiver Support Group; Parkinson’s Support Group; and the 55+ Job Seeker’s Networking Group—all on zoom.

Taking place indoors are balance classes, an expressive writing course at HCB, Tai Chi, strength training and Pickleball.

A recorded February 23rd Zoom session with District Attorney Tim Cruz on Grandparent Scams and other current scams will be aired on SCTV on Monday through Friday at noon and 6 p.m.

**Outreach:** The Senior Center has helped to organize a shredding/dumpster event with Scituate Community Christmas and SANDS on Saturday, March 20, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the former MBTA lot on New Driftway. People will be allowed to bring totes filled with papers and cardboard boxes, empty them into the shredder truck and then receive the bags back. Linda will do a voicemail broadcast and send emails to promote the event, which has already been advertised in the *Mariner* and on Facebook.

Senior to Senior—Words of Wisdom. A Scituate High School senior is working with volunteers at the Senior Center to facilitate a project that allows Scituate senior citizens to share stories and notes with 12th graders. The program has been a great success and will continue for another month.

Playing Ball— Linda reported that the Shore Senior Softball League is in need of more players for its Sunday morning games. The Friday team is full, but substitute players will be accepted.

**Building Updates:**

The furnishings and systems at the new senior center are largely up and running. The pool table, donated by Leslie James on behalf of the Friends of Scituate Seniors (FOSS), was delivered and assembled and is located in the game room with wooden game tables and soft seating, arranged around the TV.

Exercise equipment for the fitness room is pending this month, with delivery date to be determined. The treadmill and elliptical machines have been upgraded to higher models because of shipping delays.

Telephone systems are working, as are two new printer copiers. Card access to the building is also pending, but staff members have manual keys. Audio visual technicians have been on site doing a “rough in,” and will soon begin the installation of the screens, projector and other devices, which will allow the center to show films, stream videos, and mirror from a mobile device.

Staff members at the center were trained on the use of outside and interior lighting systems as well as the new appliances in the kitchen. Food service may be offered at the center with the help of volunteers until a food service manager is hired in June.

Fixtures for the bathrooms are being installed this week, and classes are already going on with Covid safeguards in the gym.

**The Opening**—The center will officially open its doors on April 1, depending on the recommendations of the Health Department.

At the close of Linda’s report, Chairman Janice Desmond called for Liaison updates:

South Shore Elder Services Liaison Joan Powers reported that no zoom meetings of her group had taken place, but members had received a great deal of informational material in the mail. They were able to get the vaccine for their staff and volunteers, and they are working on moving to a new site on Granite Street in Braintree. Mailings to members included updates on home health legislation, the Veteran Wall, and the organization’s Annual Report. Joan was featured in the publication for her longtime volunteer work for the group.

Liaison Elaine Schembari for FOSS reported that the Friends of Scituate Seniors has had no meetings on Zoom. As treasurer of the fundraising group, Elaine has been writing checks for the senior center’s new bookcases and pool table. She notified Board Members that FOSS President Sandy Duffy and Vice-President, Pam Davis are stepping down from their posts after five years of service. The group is now seeking volunteers to fill those leadership roles.

Elaine reported that FOSS generated $170,000 through a “Build-a-Campus” mailing and other fund raising efforts in February. A second mailing will go out in March. The group will purchase a large donation board, as well as donor plaques to be displayed on individual rooms at the senior center to honor those who have contributed significantly to the cause of building the new facility. Elaine said that FOSS has been encouraging veterans to take advantage of the new veteran’s offices at the center. She stressed that veterans don’t have to be senior citizens to go to the senior center. The building is open to people of all ages.

Board Members thanked Janice Desmond for her years of service on the Board and wished her well in her future endeavors.

In her final act as chair, Janice took a roll call vote for adjournment of the meeting at 6:35 p.m.