

Scituate Council on Aging Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 15, 2015

SCOA Senior Center, 27 Brook St, Scituate, MA 02066

In Attendance: Dr. Gordon Price, Chairman; Audrey Reidy, Vice-Chair; Dale Balog; Beth McCabe; John Miller; Lucille Sorrentino; Linda Hayes, SCOA Director; Marty O'Toole, Board of Selectmen Liaison; and Joan Powers, SSEE Liaison. Absent: Pat Conway; Debby Young, Secretary.

Each Board Member and Mr. O'Toole, received a packet of information before the meeting, prepared by Ms. Hayes: A copy of this meeting's agenda, SCOA reports, the Scituate Mariner *Maturity Matters* column written by Ms. Hayes on 1/8/15, the 2014-2015 Town of Scituate SCOA Fiscal Budget, and the Scituate Public Facilities Master Plan Report, Assessments and Recommendations, presented to the Board of Selectmen 11-18-14 by the SPFMP Committee.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Price at 5:46 pm. Board Members introduced themselves for the eventual viewing audience's benefit. The Minutes from December's Board meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved after a motion by Dr. Price. He suggested to Ms. Hayes that she try to get the Minutes from the previous month's meeting e-mailed to Board Members within a few days of each monthly meeting instead of reading them for the first time, during the meeting. It would save time if members could review them prior to the meeting. Ms. Hayes apologized. After stating that Debby Young, our Secretary, had completed the Minutes well in advance, Ms. Hayes agreed with Dr. Price. She assured the Board that she would make efforts for a more timely delivery of future Minutes.

Mrs. Reidy informed us that she would be out of town and unable to attend Board meetings from 2/9 to 4/1/15. Dr. Price told us that he had finally been officially sworn in by the Town Clerk, making his SCOA Board Appointment official. Mrs. McCabe expressed total surprise, and said that she had no knowledge of having to do that, but would get it done. The Board will need to make sure that Mrs. Conway, another recently appointed Board Member, will also be sworn in, unless she has done so already.

Director's Report by Ms. Hayes - She reviewed the monthly statistics which she compiles as accurately as possible by the number of seniors who sign in on the My Senior Center computer system when they attend any activities or programs. The total duplicated number of participants for 12/14, a busy holiday month, was 462, only 17 fewer than 11/14. Mr. Miller and other Board members commented that this number is a positive indicator of participation. Ms. Hayes reiterated that the AMP (Aging Mastery Program) will begin in the Fall 2015, because the Grant was approved by the Tufts Health Plan. It will be held consecutively for 12 weeks and all seniors are eligible to apply, not just Scituate residents.

In her Notes section, Ms. Hayes listed some of the programs and projects which took up some of her time in 12/15. She said that the 25 hr./wk. position just of Volunteers/Activities Coordinator, which has not been "filled" since Melanie Schneider's resignation in the Fall 2014, is open and posted on the Town's website. Part of the Formula Grant funds pays the salary for this position.

Ms. Hayes discussed the individual activities and programs and the attendance numbers. She brought up the showing of the film "Beyond Belief," on Fri. 1/9 at the Senior Ctr. It had been loaned to the Center by the Rotary Club. They had had a large turnout when they showed the movie at Mill Wharf Cinema during the summer. The SCOA has not previously shown films. Ms. Hayes said that only 4 people attended. She plans to show this film again, perhaps in a different time slot if it can be fit into the Center's schedule, and will try advertising more for it.

Dr. Price inquired about the status of the Needs Assessment Study. The results and analysis are not yet fully completed by the UMASS Gerontology Dept. The final report will first be presented to the Board of Selectmen, most likely not until sometime in March.

Manager of SCOA Social Services Report - Written by Laura Minier, presented by Ms. Hayes -- She listed her many meetings and activities involved with helping the SCOA and seniors for the month of Dec. 2014. Besides her regularly scheduled commitments, she has been involved with the Community Connectedness Campaign, generated through the Scituate-Marshfield Suicide Coalition. Many volunteers from Scituate, including the SCOA staff, and Marshfield, assisted with the "random acts of kindness" campaign by passing out almost 200 *Altoids* tins with "*You are Stronger than You Think.*" Ms. Minier is currently serving on the SSE Advisory Committee, the Hoarding Task Force, and the Community Christmas Program for 2015. She continues to meet weekly with the SCOA Outreach Coordinator, Jenny Gerbis, and the Director, Linda Hayes.

Outreach Monthly Report (12/14) - Written by Jenny Gerbis; presented by Ms. Hayes -- She listed the total number of duplicated services provided, 91, and 41 unduplicated. Her report lists the breakdown of each separate service: financial hardship, fuel assistance, Part D drug plans, Mass Health, Snap/food assistance, and SSEE/homecare. Their Database currently has a problem with the tracking of all provided services. Efforts are being made to correct it. She met with Ms. Minier during Dec., visited home bound seniors, did scheduled Outreach hours at the 3 Housing Authority locations, helped to deliver Comm. Christmas baskets, and distributed Discount Prescription cards to seniors.

Transportation Report - Written by Ms. Quincy Cutler, Reported by Ms. Hayes -- Daily rides for Dec. were 462, only 8 more than for Nov. Ms. Cutler attributes this to the good weather. Out of town medical rides remain busy, and she is also receiving calls from new people. The vans drove a total of 1254 miles. Her report lists a breakdown of the rides, including the 8 Volunteer Drivers, with a total of 24 Volunteer hours.

SSEE Liason Report - Presented by Joan Powers, Board Liason --

Ms. Powers is a member of their Advisory Board, as is Ms. Beth McCabe, an SCOA Board member, and a third Advisory Board member is a Scituate resident. She gave the Board updates. In spite of Gov't budget cuts, So. Shore Seniors are still receiving all of their services. She again praised the efforts of the SSEE Director, Sandra Lindsay, for her trips to Wash. DC etc. on behalf of the SSEE to make gains for them, and their focus on helping Veterans. She pointed out again how many advances the SSEE has made with the use of all facets of technology, and its benefits for the SSEE. All of the SCOA Board Members are invited to an SSEE Legislative

Breakfast, to be held on 2/13. Ms. Hayes said she would try to attend. She emphasized, after this report, that the Scituate Seniors have the benefit of great SSEE representation because of those 3 people from Scituate who volunteer to be Advisory Board Members.

2016 SCOA Budget Submitted to Board of Selectmen by Director, Linda Hayes and Financial Review/Explanations and Clarifications by Ms. Hayes, Questions and Concerns from Board Members -Each Board Member received a copy of the submitted budget to the Board of Selectmen for Fiscal Year 2016, and a sample copy of a typical monthly budget from 1/15. \$340,867.00 was requested by Hayes. \$314,239.00 was recommended by the Town Administrator. The Budget has not yet been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Hayes will be presenting it to them in the near future. She explained each line item of the budget and answered questions from Board Members. She noted that many of the monthly/yearly expenses, such as staff salaries and raises, utilities etc. remain fairly consistent.

The Gift and Donations accounts needed the most clarification.(2201) Ms. Balog expressed concern regarding a \$10,000 donation for a new Senior Center only, given to honor a Scituate Senior, Gerard ("Red") McDonald by his friend Jay Cashman. Prior to this Board meeting, Ms. Hayes had been informed about this large donation because it was given long before she became the Director. Ms. Balog was an SCOA Volunteer at the time of this generous donation and had recently confirmed with the previous Director, Florence Choate, that Mr. Cashman had designated on the check itself, that he intended it to be spent for a new Sen. Ctr. only. Ms. Balog questioned what had happened to this very generous donation. Prior to this Board meeting, Ms. Hayes had researched it and told us that this donation was given in 2011. Since that was approx. 4 yrs. ago, the Town's Financial Depts. only have a record of the donation, but not a copy of the actual check written by Mr. Cashman. So that \$10,00 is in our Gifts and Donations account.(2201). There were some questions about the differences and usages of this account and the Revolving Seniors Programs account. (2218) Ms. Hayes explained that most of the donations made are earmarked by donors. Those which are not, automatically go into the G&D account. Mr. Miller talked about the importance of equipping the S.C. with WIFI, using \$\$ from the Revolving Programs account. Dr. Price made a Motion for Ms. Hayes to use this \$\$ from this RP account (2218) to install the wifi, to research it and have it completed. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Miller and agreed to by all of the Board Members. Ms. Reidy questioned why the Newsletter, which is currently published bi-monthly because of the postage costs, could not return to being published monthly. Before Ms. Hayes took the Director's position, a couple of years ago, the monthly publishing of the Newsletter was changed to save \$\$. Ms. Reidy suggested using \$\$ from the RP account to cover the cost of returning to mailing the Newsletter monthly. Ms. Hayes said that currently there is a contract with LPI, the publisher, for a bi-monthly printing. She said that she would contact them about making a change to publish the Newsletter monthly again. Then, the cost of funding monthly mailing could be discussed.

Old Business / PFMP Report -- Ms. Reidy inquired about the Policemen's Annual Lunch for the Seniors. Ms. Hayes advised her that 60 people had signed up through the SC, and

transportation was provided for those who needed it. Ms. Balog confirmed with Ms. Hayes that the location of our Board Meetings will continue to be held at the Senior Center, 27 Brook St.

The Friendly Visitor Program was discussed as a valuable way to help homebound, lonely Seniors. Ms. Balog explained that she had been a Friendly Visitor for 3 years. She began visiting with the woman when she was 90 and the relationship turned into a friendship which lasted until the woman passed away at 93. Ms. Balog stressed the meaningfulness and importance of that relationship. She emphatically suggested that the SCOA re-vitalize the FV Program. Mr. Miller agreed that there is a place and need for it in our community. Ms. Hayes said she would look at it etc. A discussion then began about the Town of Scituate's Public Facilities Master Plan which now, with the results of the recent Election, states that there will be a Senior Center at the renovated Gates School. Unless changes are made to the original plan, the SC would share the building with the Town Hall, and the Recreation Dept. Ms. Balog was an SCOA Board Member during that time period also. She pointed out that when this plan was first made public, prior to the formal SPFMP's Final Report to the Board of Selectmen, the former Director and former group of Board Members had toured that building and other possible sites to build a new "stand- alone" SC. The Members of that Board, during that time period toured the Gates School together. Each of them evaluated many unsatisfactory aspects with its interior designs for use of space and pragmatic daily needs of Seniors.

Ms. Balog, also a Board Member during that time period, told this Board about, Richard Mitchell, now a former Board Member, who represented the SCOA on that Committee. He attended some of those meetings and always gave that Board monthly reports. He had copies of the interior architectural plans done at that time. Ms. Balog inquired about what had happened to them. Ms. Hayes said that she still had access to them. Ms. Sorrentino said that she is a fairly new Board Member and needs much more background information on this entire issue.

Discussion Continued into New Business -- Dr. Price discussed that there are other options besides the Gates School for a Senior Center. He said that other voices needed to be heard, like those of the Seniors. Ms. Hayes said that the Town Administrator would be willing to speak at a Board meeting about the Gates School renovation etc. Instead, Dr. Price made a MOTION to have Karen Pritchard, the Chairperson of the SPFMP Committee speak to the Board. It was seconded and passed with a unanimous vote. Ms. Hayes will contact Karen Pritchard to try to arrange it. He said that the Needs Assessment results will be a key tool in this decision-making process. He brought up the possibilities of fund raising as an option to build a new SC. He suggested that eventually the Board could have a key fund raiser from the Library Project be a guest speaker. He has met with Kim Ryan from the Friends of the Scituate Seniors. Like the Friends of the Scituate Library who helped them raise \$\$, Dr. Price thought that the Friends of the SS might be very helpful at some point. Ms. Hayes thought that a separate Friends of the SCOA group would be needed to do that fund raising, if that were the option the Board chose. Ms. Balog disagreed. That issue will need clarification in the near future. The general discussion of a future Senior Center continued. It concluded with Dr. Price's opinions and

agreement with him by Board Members. He stated that we need to explore other options beyond just accepting the Town's plan to use part of the renovated Gates School for a new SC. A valuable tool to help with decision-making, the results of the Needs Assessment study are not even available yet. Dr. Price said that it is early enough in the planning stages for us (SCOA Board) to have a voice and have our opinions heard, and to be proactive with research, to make the best decision for our Seniors and a new Senior Center.

Ms. Minier and Ms. Gerbis will not be guest speakers in the near future.

Meeting adjourned: 7:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by: Dale J. Balog