

Scituate Council On Aging, March 13, 2013

Scituate Council on Aging Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2013

Members in attendance: Pam Davis- Chairman, Jim Harmon- Vice-Chairman, Meg Stillman, Jerry Fierimonte, Joan Powers, Richard Mitchell, Dale Balog, Rocky Carrabes, and Florence Choate- COA Director

Meeting was called to order at 6:00PM followed by the introduction of the board members. The minutes of the January 9th meeting were approved as written.

Staff and Director Reports:

Programs: Mrs. Choate reported on the programs that had to be cancelled due to lack of interest and that had better participation than anticipated. There is some difficulty running programs at the Community Center where we don't have any staff on site. It is easier to manage larger events or forums there, than at the Brook St. location due to parking. The COA continues to see more seniors at these events that they've never seen before. The Valentine Day party sponsored by the Cushing School PTO, was held on Feb. 26th at the Community Center, drew a large crowd of seniors, children and parents, and was a huge success. Both seniors and parents expressed a desire to continue the connection. The memoir class will begin in March, the St. Patrick's Day party is scheduled for Feb. 12th, the Health Fair is on April 26th at the Community Center, the men's breakfast and the Italian class both begin in the spring.

Director's Report: The budget for 2013-2014 was accepted by the Selectmen and Advisory Committee in February with a small reduction in the total of \$1428.00. Mrs. Choate is now reporting to Al Bangert due to a change made by the Selectmen. The problem with the repayment system with GATRA has been resolved and the town will recover \$93,000. this year.

There will be a tax forum on March 5th to advise seniors on ways they can save money on their taxes: CPA reduction, rebates and tax deferrals for those who qualify. The program will be presented by the town assessor, Steve Jarzembowski. The Scituate cable channel will tape the forum and play it on a regular basis for those unable to attend. There will be 26 vendors at the April 26th Health Fair. The staff at the COA is reviewing the upcoming changes in the new health care bill that will have a significant effect on the seniors and their insurance coverage.

Social Services: In February there were 5 home visits, 25 office visits, and one meeting attended by staff regarding the health fair. There were 79 phone calls, 12 referrals made, 117 duplicated numbers (previously helped), and 43 unduplicated numbers (seen for the 1st time).

Transportation: There were 382 daily rides provided, and 46 rides on the LINK. No volunteer rides, and a total of 1012 van miles driven.

Old Business: Reminder of the April 26th health fair at the Scituate Harbor Community Building .

New Business: A \$2000. donation was made by the Reidy Foundation to fund fuel assistance, prescription assistance, and emergencies encountered by seniors. The Rotary Club donated \$1000.00 that was earmarked for emergency services. Those in need of assistance are required to complete an application. Mrs. Choate recognized the Cushing School PTO and Vicki Carr's Girl Scout troop who held a cookie sale at the COA, which was enjoyed by the seniors and passersby who stopped out front to buy cookies. The intergenerational programs between the senior citizens and school children is growing and benefitting both generations. The Junior Class at the high school, under the leadership of the Social Studies teacher, is pairing up students and seniors who share their life history, discussing the differences in how life was when they were young in comparison to life today. The students learn so much from them and everyone enjoys the exchange. Mrs. Choate was very impressed with the students presentations. The principal at Jenkins elementary school has approached Mrs. Choate about instituting an intergenerational program with their students.

Reports: Joan Powers reported that SSES raised \$7000. At their Dancing With The Stars event. They now have 281 people who volunteer for meals on wheels. Jerry Fierimonte didn't have a Commission on Disabilities meeting to attend this month. Richard Mitchell discussed the situation with the Public Facilities

Master Plan committee he is a member of. They have had 3 meetings, sent email notifications to the wrong address, but never notified or questioned why he wasn't attending the meetings. He was provided with copies of notes from their January 29th and February 26th meetings. They have apparently already drawn up preliminary plans that incorporate the COA into the Gates school footprint without his input. He expects to participate in the tours planned for the committee of Gates, the COA and public safety buildings. To date he has not been advised of when they will take place.

A discussion was had regarding the condition of Gates and how students who have physical disabilities have a very difficult time getting around because of antiquated chair lifts that don't always work properly. Meg Stillman's daughter is encountering these issues presently and while it is a temporary situation for her, it is eye-opening and distressful at best. It is a discouraging and sometimes impossible for students to get from class to class. While ADA regulations have not been incorporated into Gates they will be mandatory if and when the Gates building is rehabbed as a junior high or turned into a new town hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Davis

ADDENDUM TO THE MINUTES OF THE COA BOARD MEETING OF MARCH 13, 2013

Agenda and minutes of the January 9th meeting are available at the Town Clerk's office.
Staff and Director Reports are available at the COA, 27 Brook St., Scituate.
Information from the Public Facilities Master Plan committee are available at the Town Hall.