



Town of Harwich
COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY March 3, 2021 10:00AM
Remote Participation Only

Council on Aging Board of Directors
Wednesday, March 3, 2021 10:00 AM

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I. Call to Order

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order.

II. Approval of Minutes

- A. Approval of Minutes from the February 3, 2021 COA Board of Directors Meetings **
(VOTE REQUIRED)

III. Public Comment

IV. Chair's Comments (*R. Waystack*)

- A. Check in with Members
B. Reminder regarding mandatory State Ethics Training

V. Director's Report (*E. Mitchell*)**

- A. COVID-19 Vaccine – COA Role and Current Information
B. Overview of current and anticipated COA Operations
C. Programming Updates
D. COA Volunteer needs, recruitment, and training
E. Joint Budget Hearings with Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee

VI. Old Business

VII. New Business

- A. Update from Elder Services Board Liaison (*J. Lepore*)

VIII. Member Comments

IX. Adjournment

***Supporting information available at the Harwich Council on Aging*

REMINDER: **Next HCOA Board Meeting – April 7, 2021 at 10 AM**

Authorized Posting Officer:

Posted by: _____
Town Clerk

Emily Mitchell

Date: **February 25, 2021**

Signature

Meeting Minutes – DRAFT
Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors
Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 10 AM
Remote Participation Only

Meeting Attendance:

Board Members: Vice Chair Carol Thayer, Angelina Raneo Chilaka, Joanne Lepore, James Mangan, Ralph Smith, Justin White

COA Staff: Director Emily Mitchell

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Carol Thayer at 10:03 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Ralph Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 6, 2021 COA Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Joanne Lepore. Unanimous roll call vote among members present to approve.

III. Public Comment: None

IV. Chair's Comments (C. Thayer): None

V. Director's Report (E. Mitchell)**

- A. COVID-19 Vaccine – COA Role and Current Information – The state is currently in Phase 2, Stage 1 of the vaccine rollout plan. Older adults age 75+ are the only members within this group. Registration for Phase 2, Stage 1 began on January 27th and appointments officially began on February 1st. Barnstable County is receiving approximately 1,000 doses of vaccine per week, which is shared across the whole region. The vaccine appointment registration process is entirely online. People are having the most success registering at mass vaccination sites – the closest is located at Gillette Stadium, with others in Danvers, Boston, and Springfield. The lack of available doses on Cape Cod is creating a significant barrier for people who want or need to stay closer to home for their appointment.

At the COA, working on plans to assist people with the process. Staff is hoping to assist people in completing the online registration process by phone. While they may not be able to help immediately due to the lack of available appointments locally, they are preparing to scale up the assistance operation quickly. The department is inundated with a high volume of vaccine-related calls. Staff and volunteers are trying to answer questions and clarify expectations and timelines. Also working to assess people's needs and access, screening callers into several groups – people with access to internet/technology but need additional information and resources to use the registration platform, people without access to internet/technology who would need someone to complete the registration process on their behalf, folks who are homebound, and a group of people looking for general information as updates become available.

- B. Overview of current and anticipated COA Operations – Onsite program cancelations extended through the first two weeks of February due to local COVID case counts. Emily does anticipate resuming onsite programs the third week of the month. Van capacity will return to 2 passengers/trip on the same timeline; capacity has been temporarily reduced to 1 rider/trip during the post-holiday COVID surge in conjunction with the onsite programming cancelations.
- C. Programming Updates – Working to bring the AARP Tax Aide Program onboard in a modified format. Emily is working with the Chatham COA and the area AARP Tax Program liaison to implement the modified program which is tentatively scheduled to begin the first week of March. The program will take place using a document exchange model rather than an extended sit down appointment. The program will be held at the Harwich Community Center, whereas it had been held at the Chatham Community Center in prior years.
- D. COA Volunteer needs, recruitment, and training – Emily thanked the Board for sharing information about volunteer needs so widely after the January meeting. The department fully met their need for remote Friendly Visitors with support from Board outreach efforts. Still looking for SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) volunteers. Currently, there are no dedicated Harwich volunteers, so all SHINE needs are referred to the regional Barnstable County office. The department is also looking to recruit volunteers who may be able to assist people with online vaccine appointment registration by phone.

VI. Old Business: None

VII. New Business

- A. Update from Elder Services Board Liaison (*J. Lepore*) – Reported on the January Elder Services meeting, including levels of participation in each of the programs and services offered through the agency. Elder Services is considering options to keep some staff working remotely post-COVID which would cost and office space savings. Next meeting is scheduled for February 23, 2021.

VIII. Member Comments

Carol asked Emily about whether there were plans for holding a local vaccine clinic at the COA, like the Town has held for flu clinics in the past. Emily responded that she, Health Director Meggan Eldredge, and Town Nurse Sue Jusell had discussed this. The Town is interested in holding a local clinic, but cannot meaningfully organize one until we know more about a local supply. There will likely be a County-organized regional site located close to Harwich before the Town is able to operate a local site.

IX. Adjournment

Ralph Smith made the motion to adjourn at 10:27 AM. Motion was seconded by Joanne Lepore. Unanimous roll call vote by members present to adjourn

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 10 AM by remote participation only.

Emily Mitchell

From: Anita Doucette
Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 10:40 AM
To: Emily Mitchell
Subject: FW: State Ethics
Attachments: Notice to Municipal Employees (003).pdf; Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees (2021) (003).pdf; SIGNATURE PAGE-2021 - COA.doc; EMPLOYEES SIGNATURE PAGE-2021 -COA.doc

TO: All Town Employees, Board/Committee Members
FROM: Anita N. Doucette, Town Clerk
SUBJECT: Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees
DATE: January 20, 2021

This is the annual notice about the conflict of interest law education requirements that we must complete each year.

The summary of the conflict of interest law for municipal employees along with the Notice to All Municipal Employees - Conflict of Interest Law Education Requirements, are attached please distribute these documents to all employees, committee/commission members. Please note the following:

1. Receipt of acknowledgement signature pages are to be received within **30 days**
2. For your convenience I have attached a signature page for every employee, board/ committee - commission members.
3. All employees must complete the online training program **by April 9, 2021**.

Summary of the conflict of interest law

The conflict of interest law [summaries](#) are also available on the Commission's website.

Online training program for municipal employees

All municipal employees should complete the Online Training Program for Municipal Employees and provide a completion certificate to their municipal employer. The program can be found at www.muniprogram.state.ma.us.

If you have questions, please review the [Education and Training Guidelines](#) available on the Commission's website at www.mass.gov/ethics.

Please let me know if you need any additional information. Thank you very much for your time and attention to this important matter.

Notice to All Municipal Employees Conflict of Interest Law Education Requirements

The following information from the State Ethics Commission describes the conflict of interest law education requirements for municipal employees. You are a municipal employee required to acknowledge receipt of the summary of the conflict of interest law and complete the online training program if any of the following is true:

- You hold any elected office, whether paid or unpaid
- You hold any appointed position, including membership on a board or committee, whether paid or unpaid
- You hold a part-time, seasonal, or intermittent position
- You hold an elected or appointed position with an independent municipal agency or district, such as a municipal utility or fire district, or a regional municipal district, such as a regional utility or school district

If you do not know whether these requirements apply to you, please contact your agency or the State Ethics Commission. **Please DO NOT send your summary acknowledgment receipt or online training program completion certificate to the Commission.**

I. Summary of the conflict of interest law for municipal employees

Your municipal employer will provide you with the summary of the conflict of interest law. You are required to return to your employer an acknowledgment that you received the summary, which your employer will maintain on file. The last page of the summary has an acknowledgment form for you to use. Alternatively, your employer may ask that you acknowledge receipt of the summary by replying to an e-mail or by completing an online form. Please follow the instructions provided by your employer.

II. Conflict of interest law online training program for municipal employees

Your employer will direct you to complete an online training program on the conflict of interest law. Please follow your employer's instructions on how to access the training program. If you are directed to the program on the Commission website, you may access it at www.muniprogram.eth.state.ma.us. Before you begin the program, please note the following to ensure that you can obtain the completion certificate to provide to your employer:

- You can now use a mobile device to complete the program. **However, the audio and video will not auto-start until you either click the Slide button or the audio controller on each page to begin the audio and video segments.** To save a completion certificate using a smartphone, you can take a screenshot of it by pressing the power and Home buttons simultaneously on an iPhone or the power

and volume down buttons on an Android device. You can then attach the completion certificate to an e-mail.

- If you need to print a completion certificate, please make sure your computer is connected to a printer. **Please note that if the certificate appears cut-off on the print page, depending on which browser you are using, you may need to either change the page layout from portrait to landscape or adjust the scale to a smaller size.**
- If your employer asks you to submit your certificate electronically, you can do so using one of the following methods:
 - Click 'Print Certificate' and select 'Save as PDF' or 'Microsoft Print to PDF' to save the certificate as a PDF document
 - Click 'Print Certificate,' select your printer, and scan the printed certificate
 - Press the print screen button on your keyboard, paste the screenshot into a word processing software, and save it as a PDF document
 - Take a picture of the certificate with your mobile device
- **Please retain a copy of your completion certificate.** The online training program does not store completion records, so the Commission will not have any record that you completed the program.
- **Please do not click the 'Course Credit' button instead of the 'Print Certificate' button unless you have been directed to do so by your employer.** The 'Course Credit' button is only to be used in connection with a learning management system (LMS) used by some public agencies. If your agency is not using an LMS, the Course Credit button functions as a link to the Commission's website and your employer will not be notified that you have completed the online training program.

If you are directed to an alternative site to access the training program, such as the municipality's website or a learning management application site, please follow the instructions provided by your employer.

Notice for charter school employees only: Charter school employees are state employees for the purposes of the conflict of interest law. Charter school employees should complete the state/county online training program and acknowledge receipt of the summary of the conflict of interest law for state employees.

Overview of COA COVID Operations and Programming - February 2020 Update

Since the onset of COVID-19, the COA has developed or modified the following programs to respond to the needs and interests of Harwich seniors, family, and caregivers. We have prioritized this set of core services which are designed to meet essential needs. These services have evolved and expanded since they were first implemented in March. We will continue to expand upon these services - and continue to work towards introducing new services and programs - in the weeks and months to come.

Community Lunch Distribution

- All meals are cold, nutritionally balanced, and safe to be packed and transported
- Implemented distribution of hot meals (served cold with reheating directions) once/week.
- Delivered by a combination of staff and volunteers
- Capacity: 70 meals/day. We are at capacity, **but do not currently have a waitlist.**
- Currently serving 90 unique individuals (possible because many recipients do not receive meals all 5 days/week)
- Policy for recipients who repeatedly are not home during scheduled deliveries: after third time not home, with no call to cancel, will be temporarily suspended from service. Emergency situations exempted

Transportation

- Strict safety, sanitation, and capacity protocols remain in place
- **Current capacity: 2 riders/trip – increased capacity from 1 rider/trip in third week of February in conjunction with resumption of 1:1 onsite services.**
- Locations: grocery stores, pharmacies, bank, Post Office, essential medical appointments
Volunteer Medical Driver program remains suspended
- Strict screening for passengers – pre-screening questions re recent travel, symptoms, participation in gatherings with people outside the household - before booking ride.

Grocery/Pharmacy Support

- Transportation to grocery stores/pharmacies
- Arranging for volunteers to pick up groceries and/or medications (under certain circumstances) and delivering them, contact free, to seniors
- Placing, picking up, and delivering orders from the Family Pantry
- Brown Bag program has continued unabated (with a transition to increased staff, rather than volunteer, support in packing and distributing groceries)

Social Support Phone Calls

- Coordinated a social support phone tree where seniors place calls to each other several times per week to check in, build relationships, and reduce isolation

Programming

- At home programming – still distributing Activity Kits and Home Exercise Kits
- Remote programming opportunities via Zoom
 - **Regional effort of Cape COAs through COAST (Councils on Aging Serving Together) began in January and has been enormously successful. Programs have had upwards of 70 participants. Harwich residents have participated in every program that has been part of this collaborative thus far.**
 - **New for March/April: Harwich COA has planned to host two remote programs as part of the COAST collaborative.**
- Community Storytelling Project – Making plans for next steps in preparing, publishing, and distributing final booklet.
- **NEW: AARP Tax Aide Program – Continuing regional collaboration with Chatham, this service will be offered in a modified format using a document exchange model. Full details on page 1 of March/April newsletter. Program will begin on March 2 and extend through April 14, with possibility to continue if the tax filing deadline is extended.**

Mask Distribution

- Free washable masks (1/person) available for Harwich seniors (60+), caregivers to seniors, or family members living with seniors

Onsite Services

- Continued 1:1 appointments with COA staff, for DME donation/distribution
- Continued (resumed third week in February) 1:1 professional services: Elder Law Attorney appointments, podiatry care, Wellness/Blood Pressure Clinic with Town Nurse, Mobile Dental Hygiene Clinic

Outreach Services

- Fuel Assistance application season
- Expanded Caleb Chase Fund program
- Assistance with other benefits applications

COVID-19 Vaccine – Current Information and COA Role

Current Information

- Currently in Phase 2, Stage 2 of Massachusetts vaccine rollout schedule (effective 2/18/21).
People currently eligible:
 - People age 65+
 - People age 16+ with two or more comorbidities (the state has a defined list of qualifying medical conditions)
 - Staff and residents of affordable senior housing facilities
 - Caregivers accompanying an eligible older adult to their appointment
 - Groups eligible within Phase 1 remain eligible (including health care workers, staff and residents of long term care facilities, first responders, people in congregate settings, and home based health care workers)
- Vaccine appointment registration
 - Registration occurs primarily online (state, county, and local clinics: vaxfinder.mass.gov; health care providers and retail pharmacies often use their own websites)
 - The state has activated phone-based registration assistance utilizing the 2-1-1 line. Callers using this phone line are still picking from the same pool of available appointment; no appointments are set aside specifically for phone registration.
 - Some local health care providers have been able to coordinate phone-based registration (examples include Cape Cod Health Care, Outer Cape Health, and Care Well).
- Transportation
 - CCRTA is offering free transportation to older adults to vaccine appointments within Barnstable County. Schedule ride using Dial-A-Ride phone number – 800-352-7155
- Vaccine Supply
 - Governor Baker announced that the state will no longer allocate doses to individual municipalities; they will allocate second dose shots so residents who received their first dose can complete their vaccination process at the same site.
 - Regional collaboratives remain eligible to request and receive supplies
 - Barnstable County is eligible to receive supplies. There are five regional sites within Barnstable County that are equipped to hold standing or recurring vaccine sites, contingent on adequate supply. Current allocation to the County remains at approximately 1,000 doses/week.
 - There is an emerging mid-lower-outer cape vaccine collaborative, planning to operate in partnership with Outer Cape Health Services and Cape Cod Health Care to order additional doses for the region. This collaborative is pending state approval.
 - The transition to Stage 2 of Phase 2 (opening eligibility to folks age 65-74 and all adults with 2+ comorbidities) expanded the number of eligible Massachusetts residents by 1 million. While supply at the Barnstable County level has been severely limited throughout the rollout process, it has become nearly impossible to secure an appointment anywhere in the state – including at the high volume mass vaccination sites – since this transition.

Council on Aging Role

- Homebound Individuals
 - Working with Outer Cape Health Services (OCHS), as well as Harwich Health and Public Safety, to plan and implement in home vaccination for homebound residents and their caregivers.
 - OCHS is serving as the provider agency. They will order, store, and provide administration and protective equipment. OCHS is operating under a broader definition of homebound that that provided by the state (the state restricted “homebound” categorization to people who cannot leave their home without two person assist or ambulance transport, OCHS is defining homebound more broadly to better capture vulnerable and at-risk residents who leave the home only for essential appointments or commitments).
 - COA is working to identify, contact, and screen residents who fall within this category.
- Affordable Senior Housing
 - COA is working with Pine Oaks and Outer Cape Health Services to coordinate onsite vaccine clinics at these facilities.
- Registration Assistance
 - COA Director is in ongoing conversations with Administration regarding potential phone-based registration assistance for older adult residents who do not have access to internet/technology to complete the online registration. There are liability concerns about COA staff and volunteers assisting in this function. Director has formally requested a Harwich-specific legal opinion – request pending in Administration
 - COA has implemented protocols to provide this service quickly, once/if approved
 - Trained volunteers to assist and is coordinating efforts with other Town Departments who have offered available staff/volunteer time to support registration assistance.
 - COA has also created a printed step-by-step guide and a recorded video tutorial of the online registration process to assist people who do have internet/technology access in completing the online registration process independently.
 - COA staff/volunteers are actively screening callers seeking vaccine registration assistance into different groups for appropriate follow up (people who need guidance regarding online registration but are able to complete the process themselves, people who would require phone-based assistance to register for an appointment, and people who are homebound).
- Information and Referral
 - Residents can opt in to a COA robo-call group – we are sending calls any time there are substantive vaccine rollout policy updates or when vaccine clinics within Barnstable County are announced.
 - Sharing the printed and recorded registration assistance materials.
 - Clarifying expectations about the rollout process, vaccine availability, and anticipated timelines.

Town of Harwich COUNCIL ON AGING NEWS



Harwich Community Center ~ 100 Oak Street ~ Harwich, MA 02645

Tel: 508-430-7550 ~ Fax: 508-430-7530

March/April 2021

*The mission of the Harwich Council on Aging is
to support and advocate for older adults, their families, and caregivers.*

AARP TAX AIDE PROGRAM

The Harwich COA is once again partnering with AARP Tax Aide volunteers to provide assistance with preparing your federal and state tax returns. The process will look quite a bit different this year, but the quality and value of the service remains unchanged.

To ensure the wellbeing of staff, volunteers, and participants, we've modified the process and implemented heightened safety protocols.

- All appointments will take place at the Harwich Community Center (100 Oak Street, Harwich, MA 02645).
- Harwich residents should call the Harwich COA at 508-430-7550 to schedule their appointments (appointments are required).
- Appointments for Harwich residents will take place on Wednesdays from March 3 through April 7. There will be 18 available appointments each Wednesday.
- After you schedule your appointment, you'll need to pick up your packet of AARP tax forms. We will schedule a pick up time at the COA or we can mail them to you at home.
- You must complete all forms **before** your appointment. An AARP Tax volunteer will contact you by phone before your appointment to discuss the forms and process.
- Your appointment is for exchanging documents only. You must bring your completed forms to this appointment. If your forms are not completed, the tax counselor will not be able to process your return and we will not be able to offer you an alternate appointment.
- Appointments will be 10 minutes long and will take place outside under the covered COA-side walkway at a designated 6-foot table with plexiglass tabletop divider.
- You must wear a mask properly covering your nose and mouth at all times during the appointment - no exceptions.
- All materials including table, chairs, divider, and pens will be sanitized by the onsite volunteer between each appointment.
- Once you drop off your materials with the onsite tax volunteer, they will be assigned to a preparer working remotely. Once the preparer completes the return, they will be assigned to another volunteer for review. Once complete, the documents will be returned to you at a second appointment, typically one week after your drop off appointment.
- Both appointments – for the initial document drop off and the subsequent document return will be scheduled at the same time by COA staff.
- COA staff will call the day before each appointment to confirm details and ask you a series of health screening questions.

We appreciate your compliance and flexibility with these new protocols. All of us at the COA – as well as the dedicated Tax Aide volunteers – recognize how important this service is to our community and are committed to offering it safely and to as many people as we can!

DIRECTOR'S DIALOGUE



Hello! Spring is right around the corner, days are getting longer, COVID case counts are dropping, and the vaccine rollout process is underway. In so many ways, things are looking up!

Still, we know many in our community are feeling frustrated, overwhelmed, and anxious. Vaccines are available and older adults are eligible now (75 years and older) or soon (65 years and older or 2+ comorbidities), but appointments are difficult or impossible to come by. The registration process relies heavily on technology and there's a severe lack of vaccine supply in our area. We're just about a year into this pandemic and its attendant disruption, fear, and loss in our lives, and all of us are ready to get back to normal – or as close to normal as possible.

While the vaccine rollout has been slow and often inaccessible, many stakeholders at the local, county, and state levels are working diligently to improve the process. We look forward to seeing these positive changes in the days and weeks ahead. Read more on the next page for vaccine information and resources!

At the COA, we're happy to announce that limited 1:1 onsite services are resuming following the 6 week hiatus after the December holidays. We're also welcoming a new podiatry provider (pg. 4), coordinating a modified tax assistance service (left column), and offering 19 remote programs covering a wide range of topics through our regional COAST collaborative (pgs. 7-9)! Our core lunch, transportation, grocery/pharmacy, and outreach services continue in full force. Get in touch with us any time to check in or for more information!

Sincerely,
Emily Mitchell

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COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES

COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout

There's no two ways about it—the last few weeks have been overwhelming and frustrating for a lot of folks in our community. On February 1st, the state of Massachusetts officially moved into Phase 2, Stage 1 of the vaccine rollout schedule. Though many of you are now eligible, we know the vaccine has remained inaccessible—both due to a shortage of available appointments in our area and because so many vaccine sites rely exclusively on an online registration platform. Continue reading for updates on local, regional, and state resources, as well as anticipated changes and improvements as the rollout process progresses.

Timing

As I write this update, we are in the second week of February. We are about 10 days into Phase 2, Stage 1 where all residents age 75+ are eligible to receive the vaccine. We do not know when the state will transition to Phase 2, Stage 2. When we do transition, all residents age 65+ or with two or more COVID comorbidities will be eligible for the vaccine.

Right now, only the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines have received FDA approval. Johnson and Johnson has submitted a third vaccine—which only requires one dose—to the FDA seeking emergency authorization.

The state is currently prioritizing mass sites to receive the largest volume of doses. The closest mass site to us is located at Gillette Stadium. They are receiving tens of thousands of doses each week. More locally, the state is allocating approximately 1,000 doses per week to Barnstable County. Those are then distributed to pop up regional clinics or individual towns. There are no standing regional or local clinics at this time.

How to Make an Appointment

You can register for a vaccine at a variety of different site types. First, there are the mass sites—these are high volume, standing sites, with many appointments available every day. Second, there are general sites at pharmacies and grocery stores. Third, there are local and regional sites organized at the county or town level—these often have residency restrictions. Finally, there are sites at various healthcare locations.

The primary method for registering for your appointment is online using the www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine website. This website will show you all the vaccine sites in Massachusetts. You can search by zip code or look at a map of the whole state. You can see site type, appointment availability, as well as site-specific restrictions and protocols. When you find a site with appointments available, you'll click on it, enter your personal information, and confirm your appointment. You'll receive confirmation of your appointment by email.

More recently, the state has expanded their 2-1-1 line to offer phone based registration assistance. Please note, the person helping you by phone is looking at the same pool of available appointments that are posted on the website; there are not separate appointments reserved for people who call by phone.

Council on Aging Assistance

Here at the COA, we're able to help in a number of ways. Our staff and volunteers are well-versed in the vaccine process. We can give you information about local vaccine sites and the registration process. We've created a dedicated list in our My Senior Center software system to send robocalls out to any time we learn new updates or about a new local site—anyone may opt in to be on this list. We have also created a step-by-step guide to the online registration process. This is posted to our website and we're happy to share it directly via email or to send you a hard copy. We've also recorded a live walk through of the registration process so you can see firsthand how to get from the mass.gov homepage all the way through to your appointment confirmation (this video is also on the town website).

In the coming weeks—hopefully before this newsletter reaches your mailbox—we will have implemented our own phone based registration assistance service. We are finalizing the logistics and scheduling, but intend to provide a more local and accessible resource for you as you navigate appointment registration within Harwich and Barnstable County.

Barnstable County Resources

Barnstable County has a dedicated COVID-19 hotline. Call 774-330-3001 for information. The County also has an email alert system to notify you about new regional vaccine sites. Sign up at <https://www.barnstablecountyhealth.org/community-tips/sign-up-for-county-covid-19-vaccine-clinic-notification>.

Transportation

CCRTA is offering free transportation for folks age 75+ to vaccine appointments within Barnstable County. Schedule your ride by calling the Dial-a-Ride phone number—800-352-7155.

Second Doses

The Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are highly effective—both are approximately 95% effective at preventing infection and 100% effective at preventing severe illness and death. They reach this efficacy level a few weeks after the second dose. It is critically important that you get both doses and that you schedule your appointments within the appropriate time frames (Pfizer—21 days between doses, Moderna—28 days between doses). **To reap the full benefit of the vaccine, plan to schedule both doses at the same vaccine site, make sure both doses are the same brand, and adhere strictly to the appropriate scheduling timeframe.**

A Note About Scams

Be wary of vaccine-related scams. The COVID-19 vaccine is free for everyone, including people without insurance and people who are undocumented. You will never be asked for a credit card or bank account details when registering for an appointment. You also cannot pay to receive a vaccine sooner than you would otherwise be eligible. If you believe someone is trying to scam you, call your local police department or report it to the Senior Medicare Patrol Program Report-A-Scam line at 978-946-1243.

CURRENT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

The programs described on pages 2 & 3 are available as of this writing in mid-February.

LUNCH DISTRIBUTION

Monday—Friday **NO COST**

We are offering a daily lunch distribution to support seniors who are self-isolating at home. See page 4 for details!



PHARMACY ASSISTANCE

Monday—Friday **NO COST**

COA staff or volunteer will pick up your prescription medication and bring it to your home if the following conditions are met: (1) Rx is filled at CVS, Shaws, or Stop & Shop in Harwich, and (2) No copay is due (we cannot pay for medication on your behalf, even if you are willing to reimburse). To make a request, call Julie at 508-430-7550.



Visiting the COA

Like most town offices, the COA is open by appointment only for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, we cannot provide walk-in service at this time. We have learned that a lot can be accomplished from a distance! When a visit to the COA is needed, we ask that you follow these procedures:



- ◆ Please wait outside or in your car until your appointment time. If the person you are meeting with is able to see you early, they will call your cell phone (we will ask for that number when you schedule the appointment).
- ◆ Please wear a mask/face covering inside the building and on the pathways outside, especially if you cannot maintain 6 feet of distance between yourself and others.
- ◆ If you come into the COA offices, please sign in for the purpose of contact tracing.

GROCERY ASSISTANCE

Call to schedule **NO COST**

If you are trying to avoid the grocery store, we can help! Read this section for details, then contact the COA: **508-430-7550** or jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us.



The COA can pick up and deliver groceries from the Family Pantry at no cost. The Family Pantry offers a full range of groceries, including perishables such as milk, eggs, meats, bread, and produce. The Pantry provides a “Shopping List” of their available items, and your selections are made from this list.

How to Order:

1. Call or email the COA to request a copy of the current Family Pantry Shopping List.
2. When you have your selections ready, call the COA to give your order over the phone. (We accept orders every day of the week, and hold them to be filled on the next scheduled delivery day.)
3. We submit orders to the Family Pantry, where a volunteer will gather and bag up the groceries for each order.
4. COA staff or volunteer picks up the groceries from the Pantry and delivers them to your home. We will leave the bags right outside your front door. (You must be home at the time of delivery.)

More details:

- ⇒ Currently, all deliveries are made on Tuesdays, approximately 1pm-3pm.
- ⇒ You must place your order no later than Monday 3pm for Tuesday delivery (Friday if Monday is a holiday).
- ⇒ The Family Pantry allows you to shop every two weeks.
- ⇒ There is no charge for the groceries or the delivery. Donations to The Family Pantry are gratefully accepted to offset food costs, but there is no obligation to donate.
- ⇒ Service availability is dependent on Pantry capacity and COA volunteer or staff availability. Please give as much notice as possible when placing your order.



The COA also keeps a small supply of non-perishable basics on site for urgent needs. If you know someone who needs help *today*, please call us! 508-430-7550.

WELLNESS & BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC

Town Nurse Susan Jusell, RN NO COST

Thursdays 9:30am—12:00pm, *by appointment*

Meet with the nurse to have your blood pressure taken, ask health related questions, or discuss your health needs. Visits occur in the COA's "Glass Room". All visitors to the Council on Aging must wait outside or in their cars until their appointment time. To schedule an appointment, call the COA at 508-430-7550.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE—In Person

Attorney Michael Lavender NO COST

Wednesdays March 24 & April 28

Do you have a legal question? Schedule a free half-hour consultation with attorney Michael Lavender, who specializes in elder law. In-person appointments are now being scheduled. Call the COA at 508-430-7550.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE—Remote

Attorney Raymond Yox NO COST

Monday March 1

Schedule a free half-hour consultation with Raymond Yox, Managing Attorney for South Coastal Counties Legal Services. Raymond's appointments will be fully remote. You will schedule your appointment with the COA, and then at your appointment time, Raymond will call for a telephonic consultation. Call the COA at 508-430-7550.

MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC

Fridays March 26 & April 23

Preventative dental services are available again at the Community Center! Mobile Dental Hygiene Services offers dental cleanings, exams, fluoride treatments, denture care, and education. Services are free to anyone with MassHealth Standard/Medicaid. They offer affordable rates for individuals without dental insurance.

To schedule an appointment, contact Mobile Dental Hygiene Services directly at 508-827-6725 or smiles@mobiledentalhygiene.com



FOOTCARE CLINIC

With Autumn Knight— March 3 & 17, April 7 & 14

With Dr. Cecilia Moore—March 9, April 13

Certified podiatry providers offer a general assessment of your feet and will trim, file, clean, and reduce thickening of nails, smooth corns & calluses, and massage your feet. Appointments are available 9:00am-3:00pm at the COA for \$45. Please call the COA at 508-430-7550 to schedule your appointment. March will mark Dr. Moore's first time providing podiatry services at the Harwich COA—please give her a warm welcome when you meet her!



MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOANS

Durable medical equipment is available for loan to Harwich residents (canes, walkers, commodes, shower seats, wheelchairs, etc.). Loans to non-Harwich residents are limited to items that we have in abundance.

We "quarantine" all returned equipment for 24 hours before giving it out to a new recipient and spray it with disinfecting spray. However, we are not able to guarantee that it is fully sanitized.

Call to see if we have the equipment you need. We will place it outside the building's South entrance at a designated time for you to pick up at your convenience.



Equipment can also be *returned* to this same location, without notice, Monday-Friday 1-3 pm.

Please only donate or return equipment that is clean and in good condition. Further, we cannot accept equipment that requires power or non-durable medical supplies (bandages, medications, ointments, opened packages of briefs, etc.) For more info or to request equipment, call 508-430-7550.

UPDATE ON SOCIAL SECURITY APPTS

The Hyannis Social Security office remains closed to the public, and their staff continues to work remotely. SSA is offering their full range of services by phone. To speak to the SSA, call 866-467-0440. You can also access helpful information from their website: ssa.gov.

LUNCH & PROGRAM DETAILS

LUNCH DISTRIBUTION

Monday—Friday, 11am-1pm, NO COST



We are offering a daily lunch distribution to support seniors who are self-isolating at home. Our talented chef, Linda St. Pierre, prepares hearty sandwiches and salads fresh every day, and our friendly volunteers deliver to your home! To sign up or learn more, call the COA at 508-430-7550.

Program details:

- ◆ Schedule: Sandwiches on M & Th/Hot meals on T/ Salads on W & F. Each meal also includes a side and/or dessert.
- ◆ Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate most dietary restrictions at this time (call for details).
- ◆ Eligibility criteria applies—call the COA to discuss.
- ◆ We have capacity to serve 70 meals per day. At the time of this printing, you can sign up to receive lunch up to 4 days per week. Talk to Julie to set up a schedule.

Delivery Procedures

To protect everyone's health, all deliveries are now "contactless."

- ◆ COA staff & volunteers are not permitted to enter anyone's home, nor the common areas of congregate housing such as condo buildings.
- ◆ Delivery drivers will wear a face covering/mask and apply hand sanitizer between houses.
- ◆ Driver will set the items down near the door, and step back at least 6 feet after they knock. Place a small table or chair outside your door if you do not want items touching the ground or cannot bend over. *Keep in mind we are not supposed to hand you things directly!*
- ◆ If you wish to speak to the driver, please wear a mask. Don't forget to maintain distance.
- ◆ For food deliveries, **YOU MUST BE HOME**. Board of Health Regulations prohibit us from leaving food outside an empty home.
- ◆ Help us decrease waste! Please call us to cancel as soon as possible if you will not be home.

UPDATES

Lunch Policy Reminder: Board of Health regulations prevent us from leaving a meal if you are not home. You must notify us, preferably at least 24 hours in advance, if you will not be home at the time of delivery. Our goal is not to waste food and to respect the time of our chef and drivers. Further, if you are scheduled to receive a meal but do not answer the door, the driver's phone call, or the follow up call from our office, it is COA protocol to ask the police to do a wellness check. This is an invaluable service and safety precaution our police offer in support of our community. We don't want to abuse their time by asking for this service unnecessarily.

Therefore, if you are not home to receive your lunch, you will receive two warnings. The third time you are not home at the time of delivery, we will have to suspend you from this service. *Please note, we understand that emergencies happen! If you are not home due to emergency, that will not be counted against your lunch eligibility.*

Holiday note—we are not able to provide lunches when the building is closed. Therefore, there will be no lunch distribution on Patriots Day (Monday, April 19th)

Don't forget! Elder Services of Cape Cod & The Islands offers a Meals on Wheels program. See pg. 10 for details.

COA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Council on Aging Board of Directors meets monthly on the first Wednesday of every month at **10 AM**.

At this time, all meetings are held by remote participation only using GoToMeeting. Meeting credentials/call in information will be included on the publicly posted meeting agenda. If you would like to attend any of these meetings and need assistance, please contact Emily Mitchell (508-430-7550 or emitchell@town.harwich.ma.us) at least 24 hours before the meeting and she will guide you through the participation process.

Next meetings:

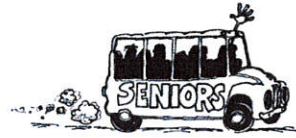
Wednesday, March 3, 2021, 10 AM
Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 10 AM

All agendas will be available on the town website, via the Town Clerk, or by contacting the COA.

TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

CRANBERRY COACH

Transportation on our handi-capped accessible van is still available for essential trips to grocery stores and pharmacies. **To schedule, call 508-430-7550.**



- ◆ Passengers are limited to maintain social distancing: At the time of printing, we are taking two passengers at a time on the van.
- ◆ You must make a reservation **at least one day ahead**. The more notice, the better!
- ◆ Most trips are scheduled for 9:00 am or 1:00 pm. Your flexibility is appreciated.
- ◆ Passengers must wear a face covering/mask on the COA van and be free of COVID-19 symptoms.
- ◆ **Reminder: rides are to scheduled locations only. Drivers cannot bring you to any location not scheduled through the COA office in advance.**

Cranberry Coach Weekly Schedule

Mondays	Market Basket and Hyannis shopping
Tuesdays	AM—Local shopping PM—Family Pantry deliveries
Wednesdays	AM—Local shopping PM—Local shopping
Thursdays	AM—Local shopping PM—Local shopping
Fridays:	AM—Local shopping PM—Local shopping

**Local shopping = Shaw's or Stop & Shop. Call the COA for the current schedule. Stops at CVS, the Post Office, and local banks allowed, only until the Friends' bus resumes service. We continue to transport people to onsite COA programs, Brooks Free Library, and Town Hall.*

Monday Trip Schedule

Hyannis shopping: Mar 1, Mar 15, Mar 29, Apr 12, Apr 26
Market Basket: Mar 8, Mar 22, Apr 5, Apr 19

RIDES TO MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Our ability to provide rides to medical appointments is *extremely* limited right now. We will do our best to accommodate your request, but **ride availability is not guaranteed.**

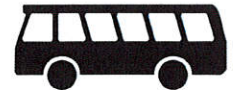
Requests must be made **AT LEAST 4 BUSINESS DAYS in advance.** The more notice, the better! Call 508-430-7550.

Guidelines:

- Travel between Wellfleet and Hyannis only.
- No extra riders are permitted unless required due to disability (must be your household member).
- We are unable to provide ongoing rides for medical therapies (e.g., physical therapy, chemotherapy).
- A stop to a pharmacy after your medical appt. is allowed; please request at the time of scheduling.
- NEW: Limit of 2 medical rides per month.
- NEW: We can no longer offer rides for routine dental visits.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION

CCRTA continues to run services on a reduced schedule. Call the numbers listed for details.



DART

Low cost public transportation is provided by the CCRTA DART bus, by reservation from curb to curb. You must register by calling 1-800-352-7155 weekdays, 8am-5pm.

H2O

Fixed route public transportation provided on CCRTA buses between Orleans and Hyannis, with stops in Harwich Port and at Shaws in Harwich. Call 1-800-352-7155 for information. Exact change needed.

Boston Hospital Transportation

Transportation is provided for medical appointments at Boston hospitals daily by the CCRTA. There is a pick-up in Harwich. Call 1-800-352-7155 to reserve by 11am the day before. Cost is \$30 round trip, \$15 one way.

**Call the COA to schedule ALL rides!
508-430-7550**

Please give us as much notice as possible—call at least 24 hours in advance for Cranberry Coach rides, and at least 4 business days for medical rides.

Councils on Aging Serving Together

COASTAL CONNECTIONS

Cape COAST (Councils On Aging Serving Together) has been collaborating to strengthen our partnerships and leverage our collective resources to offer older adults on Cape Cod enhanced options for virtual programming. Join us as we connect visually through Zoom, widen our circles and take advantage of greater opportunities for engagement, enrichment, and education. Below is a list of virtual programs open to you in March and April 2021! Each event is hosted by a particular Cape COA and is open to residents of all Cape towns—including Harwich! The sponsoring COA and registration information is included with each event description. **Registration for these programs will begin immediately**

“SONGBIRDS OF THE NORTHEAST” WITH JOHN ROOT

Wednesday March 3, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)



This is an hour long presentation that includes recordings and images of our region's songbirds. Supported by a MA Cultural Council grant. **To register call the Bourne COA at 508-759-0600 ext. 5300.**

Cape COAST



Councils On Aging
Serving Together

“BUILDING OUR CONNECTIONS WITH PLANTS” Monday, March 15, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

This class is designed to celebrate and support many ways we can learn and grow from connecting with plants. For anyone who's noticed they live among plants, for novice or seasoned gardeners, or even armchair naturalists, this class offers ideas to think about how you pay attention to plants and why it might matter to you! We will discuss seeds, flowers, trees, shrubs growing outside your door, both native and non-native. In these isolating and challenging times, creativity and curiosity is a pre-requisite to a more peaceful existence. Join in the discussion and share your plant stories. Herbalist and Mental Health Counselor, Alyssa Doolittle, MS, shares some of her thoughts and ideas in hopes to spark your curiosity and creativity towards building or deepening your own connection with plants. Alyssa is an avid plant lover and has spent countless hours collecting data in forests of the pacific northwest, farming in Vermont, wild-crafting, making medicine, and enjoying time with plants. **To register call the Truro COA at 508-487-2462 or email cmicks@truro-ma.gov**

“BURIALS AT SEA”

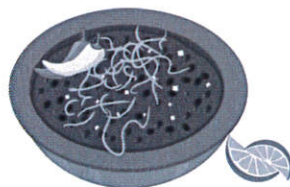
Wednesday, March 3, 2021, at 6:30pm (via Zoom)

Thinking of burial at sea? This may be a more viable option than you think! Join Capt. Brad White and Funeral Director, sea burial certified Christopher P. Goulet, Sr. for this highly informative presentation. Time will be available at the end for questions for questions. **To register, call Susan at the Barnstable COA at 508-862-4761 or email: susan.griffin@town.barnstable.ma.us**

“COOKING WITH ALLY”

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at 11am (via Zoom)

Learn how to make easy crock pot Turkey Chili. Ingredients include 1-2 lbs of ground turkey, garlic (chopped) or garlic powder, olive oil, red and green pepper (chopped), 1 zucchini (optional), 1 onion (chopped), 2 cups of chicken broth, 1 can of beans, rinsed well. You can use kidney, white, or garbanzo beans. 1 can of stewed tomatoes or can of tomato paste, and 1 bag of frozen corn or canned. I like to add half a cup of quinoa for its fiber and many health benefits. **To register call the Dennis Senior Center at 508-385-5067.**



“VOYAGE OF THE PILGRIMS” WITH RICHARD NICHOLS Tuesday, March 16, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)

Join us for an engaging discussion on the Pilgrims Journey to America. **To register call the Bourne COA at 508-759-0600 ext. 5300.**

“CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK’S DAY”

Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 1pm (via Zoom)

Dave Hickey and Sean Brennan will be singing all your favorite Irish songs to celebrate St Patrick's Day in style. Join in the fun to hear Dublin Balladeer Dave Hickey and his Irish American partner Sean as they belt out the Irish hits from the Wild Rover to Finnegan's Wake for a Happy St Patrick's Day! This program is sponsored by Friends of Yarmouth Council on Aging. **To register call the Yarmouth Senior Center at 508-394-7606 x 1333.**



If you are interested in participating in any of these COAST remote programs, you must call the sponsoring COA directly to sign up. Registration is required for all programs. Contact information is included in the descriptions.

Join me in thanking our Cape-wide COA partners in organizing these events and making them so widely available!

COAST PROGRAMS Cont.

“COGNITIVE HEALTH”

Monday, March 22, 2021, at 11am (via Zoom)

Dr. Molly Perdue, Co-founder and Executive Director of Alzheimer’s Family Support Center of Cape Cod, will discuss the impact of loneliness and isolation on cognitive health, especially during the pandemic. This conversation is open to all and will be particularly important for people living with Alzheimer’s Disease or dementia and their caregivers. **To register call the Provincetown Senior Center at 508-487-7080.**

“BIRDS, BEES, BUTTERFLIES & POLLINATORS”

Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

Presented by Fran Raleigh

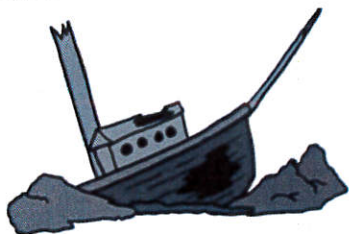
Fran Raleigh will explain why we should care about these creatures that share our ecosystem, what threats they face, and how we can support them in our own yards and neighborhoods with beautiful plants. Fran grew up watching birds and bugs in her backyard. She majored in Biology at Marietta College in Ohio, then earned her Ph.D. in Plant Science (Ecology) from the State University of New York College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry in Syracuse. After teaching ecology and other college biology courses for more than 30 years, she retired in 2018 and moved to Cape Cod. A member of the Master Gardener class of 2019, she is eager to share her knowledge and enthusiasm for nature and gardening. Her primary focus in gardening is to celebrate native plants and create habitat. **To register call the Orleans Senior Center at 508-255-6333.**



“MARITIME GHOSTS AND SEAFARING SPIRITS”

Wednesday, March 24, 2021 at 1pm (via Zoom)

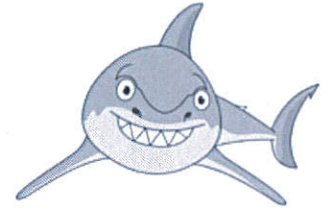
Some of the most dramatic legends and ghosts come from New England’s seafaring history and maritime past. This presentation takes guests on a voyage all along the scenic New England Coast, from points in Rhode Island to the beaches of Cape Cod and north to the rockbound landscape of New Hampshire and Maine. Tales of incredible shipwrecks and pirates from Colonial days are also included, as well as dramatic accounts of haunted lighthouse, fierce storms, lonely ghost ships and mysterious forgotten islands are told on this virtual tour. Set sail with this presentation for a ghostly adventure! Presented by Roxie Zwicker and New England Curiosities. **To register call the Sandwich COA at 508-888-4737.**



“AWARENESS INSPIRES CONSERVATION”

Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 2pm (via Zoom)

Join Kristen Kibblehouse to learn about the work of the Atlantic White Shark Conservancy. She’ll talk about the public perception of sharks, the role sharks play in our marine ecosystem, and the ongoing research and conservation efforts taking place right here on Cape Cod. The program wraps up with a discussion on how the presence of white sharks close to the shore has specifically affected the Cape community. There will also be time for Q&A! **To register call the Harwich COA at 508-430-7550.**



“LEARN THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SEPSIS”

Tuesday, March 30, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)

This information session is presented by Gerry Bedard from the Sepsis Awareness Alliance. Gerry lost his wife to Sepsis several years ago. Gerry has dedicated his time to educating folks on this subject. Sepsis is the body’s overwhelming response to infection, which can lead to tissue damage, organ failure, amputation, and death. Sepsis is a medical emergency that requires urgent attention and rapid treatment for survival. **To register call the Dennis Senior Center at 508-385-5067.**

“BASICS OF ESTATE PLANNING” WITH ATTORNEY

MICHAEL L. LAVENDER

Tuesday, March 30, 2021, 10am (via Zoom)

This presentation covers the basics of estate planning; powers of attorney, healthcare proxy, wills and trusts, probate of estates, estate taxation, asset protection, and nursing home concerns. Conversation will include what the Covid-19 crisis has taught us about timely estate planning. **To register call the Yarmouth Senior Center at 508-394-7606 x 1333.**

“HOW TO HELP YOUR LOVED ONE IN THE HOSPITAL”

Monday, April 12, 2021, at 10am (via Zoom)

When a family member is in the hospital, it’s overwhelming but you can make a big difference. Beth Suereth, Certified Caregiving Consultant and Founder and CEO of Caregiving Pathways will share what to expect during a family member’s hospital stay. Get practical tips and tricks for managing the hospital experience, and hear the care-giving story of a Certified Care-Giving Consultant. You’ll learn how to: keep track of all the details, prevent common hospital mistakes, and plan for care at home after the hospital stay. **To register call the Brewster Senior Center at 508-896-2737.**

COAST PROGRAMS Cont.

"SOUND DUNES SWING COMBO"

Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

Join us for a mix of sing, Dixieland, Country, Latin, Jazz, and Rock n Roll music for your listening, singing and dancing pleasure. Brought to you in the comfort of your home (where no one can hear you sing or watch you dance!). **To register call the Yarmouth Senior Center at (508)394-7606 x 1333.**



"EARTH RHYTHMS: SONGS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT" WITH ROGER TINCKNELL

Tuesday, April 13, 2021, at 1:30pm (via Zoom)

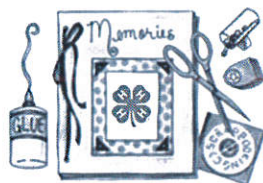
From rain forests to recycling, conservation to compost, Earth Rhythms travels from our backyard to around the world celebrating and teaching environmental awareness and responsibility. Captivating songs, stories, legends and facts are accompanied by the Native American rainstick, Incan Charango and flute, Russian balalaika, African Achika drum, as well as guitar, mandolin, banjo and harmonica. Older adults, school-aged children and everyone in between are welcome! **To register call the Chatham Senior Center at 508-945-5190.**

"CREATIVE JOURNALING CLASS"

WITH ALEXANDRIA TYBER

Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

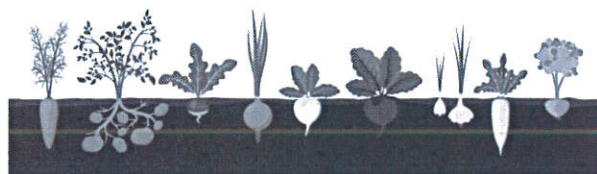
Creative Journaling is a wonderful way for you to express your thoughts, wish lists, gratitude and all of your creative ideas using words, pictures or simple sketches can help to clarify your feelings and ideas. Expressing the things you truly desire, as well as, what you appreciate really gets the positive energy flowing and can help shift your vibe from dark to light. We begin this class with a simple guided mindful meditation technique to help us relax, focus and feel centered. Then we CREATE! Using paint, collage, markers and other materials you'll express yourself on the front & back covers of these hard covered journals creating a work of art that's "YOU!" Supplies you will need: hardcover journal. You can purchase or use supplies lying around your house such as: pens, pencils and colored markers, all-purpose glue, scissors, old magazines/cards/wrapping paper/napkins/tissue paper or fabric to cut up for collage, watercolor paint and a brush or can paints, glitter, stickers, stamps and ribbon. **To register call the Yarmouth Senior Center at 508-394-7606 x 1333.**



"GET YOUR GARDEN READY"

Friday, April 16, 2021, at 1pm (via Zoom)

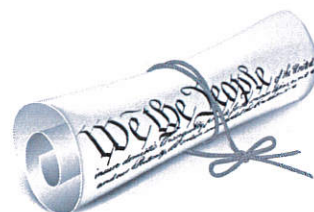
Presented by Donelle Denery, Barnstable Master Gardener, this program will focus on the proper steps to get your garden ready in anticipation of your planting season. Flower, vegetable and container garden preparation will be discussed. Properly preparing your garden in early spring sets you up for a successful growing season! **To register call the Orleans Senior Center at 508-255-6333.**



"A BIOGRAPHY OF THE CONSTITUTION"

Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 10:30 AM (via Zoom)

Join Jane Scarborough for a survey of the United States Constitution. Jane will cover the history and meaning of our nation's founding document, beginning with the intentions of the Framers, exploring its development over the following 230+ years, and culminating in a discussion of the current Roberts' Court. Amidst our current state of political turbulence, there is no more important time to examine this defining document and its articulation of the values and principles we hold in common. Jane holds a B.A. in American History from Rice University, an M.A. in American Studies from Purdue University, a Ph.D. in American Constitutional History from Rice, and a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law. She has served in a myriad of private sector and academic positions, including as a full-time professor of Constitutional Law at Northeastern University School of Law. **To register call the Harwich COA at 508-430-7550.**



"AMAZING ANIMAL AMBASSADORS"

Thursday, April 22, 2021 at 9am (via Zoom)

We'd like to introduce you to Bethany Boucher owner of Amazing Animal Ambassadors. Bethany has a background in Captive Wildlife Care and Education, teaching with animals for over 15-years since beginning her business on Cape Cod in 2013. You will meet and learn educational details about some of her most popular animals including: Milo, the Fennec Fox; Buttercup the Skunk; Cali the Cockatoo; Jasper the Red Tailed Hawk; Shelly the Sulcata Tortoise, and more. Enjoyment for the entire family! This program is sponsored by Friends of Yarmouth Council on Aging. **Please call the Yarmouth Senior Center to Register at 508-394-7606 x 1333.**

NOTES FROM THE OUTREACH OFFICE

Julie Witas, MSW, MPH
Social Services Coordinator



Looking for new ways to pass the time?

The COVID vaccine is now on its way to people, but as we have all learned recently, we still have to be patient—it's going to take some time for the vaccine to reach enough people for the US to achieve "herd immunity" and for life to return to normal. As we've now been living in pandemic-mode for a full year—staying indoors, missing milestone celebrations and holidays with our friends and families—it's understandably hard to wait.

Since many of us will not be protected by the vaccine for several more weeks (or even months, in many cases), we still need to look for safe ways to pass the time. At the very least, Spring is around the corner, and outdoor activities will be more accessible once again. As the weather improves, consider adding a daily walk to your routine.

Walking has incredible benefits. Research has consistently shown that inactivity is associated with worse health outcomes. Doing just 20 minutes of brisk walking every day can reduce the risk of early death by as much as 30% (the benefit is greatest for those who are overweight).¹ Other benefits include improving circulation, easing joint pain, burning calories, and boosting immune function. Walking has even been shown to improve your mood and help you sleep better!² These effects are enhanced if you walk outside—the physical activity itself has benefits, and so does spending time outdoors.

Here are some tips to get you started and improve your experience, so that you can make walking a regular part of your day.

Be safe: Walking is generally a safe activity, but if you have been sedentary for a long time, talk to your doctor first. Remember that brisk is a relative term—you should be able to carry on a conversation, not feel breathless. Always include a warm up and cool down, and try a little gentle stretching at the end. Wear appropriate footwear, dress in layers to stay comfortable, apply sunscreen, and don't forget to hydrate.

Track your progress: Keeping a record of how long and far you walk is a great strategy to keep you motivated. In your log or journal, write down your goal for the week, either by time, distance, or steps if you have a pedometer. Start with attainable goals—even if it's just to the next corner, or once around the block. Meeting them will give you a real sense of achievement and inspire you to set more. Jot down each day's walk details right after you get back home, and also add a sentence about how you feel, physically and/or mentally. Over time, you can look for patterns of what works best for you. Keep your journal in a prominent place where you will see it every day.

Make it a habit: Schedule your walk—set aside a specific time for it, just like you would an appointment. If you find yourself not feeling up for it one day, try to do just 5 minutes or down the block, in order to keep your routine going. You might find that after 5 minutes you want to keep going after all! If not, that's ok—just try again tomorrow.

Aim for variety: Walking is more pleasurable when you vary your route and keep your mind engaged. Try to include as many settings as possible—residential neighborhoods; tracks (such as at the Community Center or high school); and scenic areas (around a pond or along one of the many beautiful walking trails around us). When you do repeat a route, make it interesting—go at different times of day, count the squirrels, identify plants, pay attention to the progress of buds on the trees, and find other ways to be mindful of the sights and sounds around you.

Find a buddy: Maintaining connections with other people is crucial to our emotional and cognitive health. After a year of self-isolation, you may feel ready to prioritize your relationships again. Socializing outdoors is much safer than doing so indoors, so this is the perfect activity if you prefer to talk with your friends in person (versus by phone or email). Of course, you should both wear masks and try to keep a little space between you! Having a partner is also the best way to stay committed to a new walking program. Not only does it make the walk more enjoyable, it keeps you accountable. Can't find anyone to join you? Get in touch with me, and I'll do my best to facilitate connections between people who are looking for walking partners.

1. Ekelund et al. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*; 14 Jan 2015.

2. US Dept of HHS. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition*; 2018.

What about a workout for your mind?

If you're looking for something new to do indoors, I recently found a few great resources that I'm excited to share. These phone-based communities offer a variety of opportunities for social engagement, lifelong learning, peer interaction, and support groups for older adults who wish to get engaged from the comfort of their own home. Go to the websites listed below to browse the course catalogs & schedules and learn how to register. If you need help or want suggestions, just get in touch with me, and I'll help you out!

Covia Well-Connected: Well Connected is a community made up of participants, staff, facilitators, presenters, and other volunteers who care about each other and who value being connected. All groups are accessible by phone from wherever you are at no cost to you. (877) 797-7299

<https://covia.org/services/well-connected/>

DOROT: DOROT's University Without Walls program offers hundreds of teleconference programs, appealing to a wide range of interests—all over the telephone. Class size is limited to encourage discussion. (877) 819-9147

<https://www.dorotusa.org/connect-home-phone-university-without-walls>

Mather Lifeways, Telephone Topics: With Telephone Topics, you simply call a toll-free number or join via Zoom to access a wide range of interesting discussions and programs. (888) 600-2560

<https://www.mather.com/neighborhood-programs/telephone-topics>

Contact Julie at 508-430-7550 ext 12
or jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

Susan Jusell, Town Nurse

FACT: There are brighter & better days ahead!



On March 31 the sun won't set until 7:06
On April 30th it will be a half hour later at 7:39
We have a vaccine and we are working our way out of this pandemic.

Both the medical and science communities around the world are making strides for better antiviral treatments and improved medical management for COVID-positive patients. As all of you know, there are two vaccines being given in our community now, Moderna and Pfizer, and there is a third one showing great promise. The Johnson and Johnson vaccine requires only one shot instead of two and has a current reported global efficacy rate of 57%, and up to 72% in preventing moderate to severe disease. They filed for emergency approval on February 4th, potentially allowing us to vaccinate the community much more quickly if approved. This is just one example that there's a promise of management over this pandemic coming our way.

We are being told to wear two face masks. Have you wondered why?

The second mask can help create a more snug fit around your face, allowing less air exchange from the sides of your mask. Multiple layers of fabric will improve the filtration effectiveness of your mask. When looking for a quality mask, try to find one with three layers of cotton, a bar across the bridge of your nose, adjustable or well fitted elastic behind your ears, and broad coverage across your cheeks.

The vaccine rollout has started off slowly and this has caused great upset and some feelings of hopelessness for many people wanting and waiting to be vaccinated. It might be frustrating waiting for your COVID vaccine while seeing others practice a more "normal" lifestyle before you do. Please remind yourself in those moments that the vaccine can't return us to our pre-pandemic lifestyle right away. We'll see improvements, but we'll still need to keep our masks on for some time to come.

There are some techniques from verywellmind.com that might help you if you're feeling this way. Hopeless feelings fuel hopeless thoughts. A negative cycle can make it hard to

see that there may be more hope than you imagine. When feeling hopeless, you're more likely to think about the reasons why nothing will ever get better. They suggest taking a few minutes and argue the opposite. What might you gain if you become more hopeful? Sometimes you have to change your behavior first and the feelings might follow. There's so much we can't control, so if you're powerless over the problem, you could try to change the way you process and feel about the problem.

It's a good time to reach out to someone trustworthy if you're struggling to identify some possible solutions to your grief, anxiety, or hopelessness. If you're able too, check out verywellmind.com for more on these actions to help or contact NAMI, Cape Cod (phone: 508-778-4277, email: info@namicapecod.org). Give us a call at the COA and let us know if you would like to talk on the phone with a friendly volunteer - it could be a nice distraction by getting to know someone new!

Once you are able to get the vaccine, the CDC reports that you may experience side effects. These are a normal sign that your body is building immunity and they should go away in a few days. Common side effects would be pain and swelling at the injection site, as well as fever, chills, tiredness, or a headache, and they may occur after your first or second shot.

It may be helpful to apply a clean, cool wet washcloth over the injection site and to practice range of motion activity in that arm. Drink plenty of fluids and try to get a good night's rest just before and after your vaccine. If your side effects get worse or become worrisome after 24 hours, then reach out to your primary care provider for direction.

With any vaccine, there's a potential for severe allergic reactions. That could be immediate or even delayed. Therefore, you'll be asked to stay at the vaccine clinic site for 15- 30 minutes after receiving your shot to monitor for side effects and ensure management in case of an allergic reaction. Call 911 if you experience hives, swelling, wheezing, or shortness of breath after you've left the clinic.

I am hosting wellness clinics on Thursdays by appointment only, to ensure proper disinfection between clients. Please call me to schedule an appointment or just to check in @ 508-430-7505.

Stay well and please maintain your COVID precautions!

VOLUNTEER NEWS



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



This month we're giving a special shout-out to two new teams of volunteers!

In the past month, we have added two entire *teams* of volunteers, each taking on a brand new project at the COA. Say hello (and thanks) if you talk to them!

We decided to reinvigorate our Friendly Visitor program by retooling it into a pandemic-safe phone-call based program. Our new Friendly Callers will reach out to isolated seniors for lengthy chats each week.

This past week, I sent a message to all of our lunch drivers to ask if any of the more computer-savvy among them might be willing to help with register seniors for their COVID Vaccination. Within 48 hours, I had scheduled almost 20 hours/week of additional volunteer time in our office (and this on top of their lunch shifts!). We hope to begin offering vaccine registration help Monday through Friday 9am-11am before the end of February (and hope to expand to offer a few afternoon times each week). We are so grateful for their support!

Friendly Callers:

Carole N
Liz D
Mary Ann R
Ellen M
Joan R
Pamela C
Susan S

Vaccine Helpline:

John B
Jane F
John H
Lee P
Claire W
Kate H
Bob H
Terri A



CURRENT VOLUNTEER NEEDS

Julie Witas



The Harwich Council on Aging is always seeking new volunteers. If you're looking for a way to safely connect with others while we get through these last months of self-isolation, consider joining our team! Email jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us or call our office at 508-430-7550.

Lunch Drivers (1.5-3 hours/week, short or long term): We are always looking for additional volunteers to help with our contact-less lunch deliveries. A great way to meet your neighbors (from a distance)!

Friendly Caller (Remote Friendly Visitor) (1-4 hours/week, at least 4 month commitment): Make regular social phone calls to seniors who live alone and are especially isolated. You would contact the same 1 to 4 people on a regular basis in order to build a relationship (aiming for about an hour of contact per person each week). We can provide support and suggestions for getting the conversation started. This can be done from your home or from our office. Once a month, we will have a team meeting via Zoom for all volunteers to share feedback and ideas.

SHINE Counselor (4-8 hours/week, long-term commitment)

Our COA no longer has a dedicated SHINE counselor. Trainings for new SHINE volunteers are currently on hold due to COVID-19, but we are recruiting now because this role is difficult to fill.

SHINE is one of the only resources that provide free, objective, accurate information to Medicare beneficiaries. If you choose to join, we are sure that you will find SHINE a rewarding, as well as challenging, volunteer experience.

SHINE Volunteer Functions:

- Provide information, counseling and assistance in person or on the phone
- Assist Medicare beneficiaries by completing complex state and federal forms
- Distribute educational and promotional materials in your community
- Educate the community about the program

The Path of being a SHINE Counselor:

To volunteer, the interested person must participate in an 8-10 hour full-day training. During this training you learn the essentials of Medicare, MassHealth and other state and federal programs. In order to become a state-certified SHINE counselor you must successfully complete training and pass a state certification test composed of 100 questions. You are then mentored by an experienced counselor so you are fully trained before public counseling on Medicare benefits. Note that all counselors must be able to use email and have basic comfortability with using computers.

If you would like more information about becoming a SHINE volunteer, you can contact our COA at 508-430-7550 or SHINE at 800-243-4636, option 3.

CAREGIVER & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

SUPPORT & CONNECTION

The Samaritans on Cape Cod and the Islands:
Senior Outreach Program

Free and available to anyone age 55+
Call 508-548-7999

Senior Outreach is a referral program where outgoing calls are made to isolated or at-risk older adults. *Participants are matched with a Samaritan-trained volunteer who calls the senior once or twice each week.* Conversations are confidential, and provide a safe place for older adults to talk about whatever is troubling them most without fear of judgment or repercussion.

If you have been impacted by health problems, retirement, the loss of loved ones, depression, or are struggling with the isolation caused by this pandemic, volunteers are there to listen with compassion and empathy. Or if you know of a senior who might be isolated, lonely, or simply in need of a caring voice, please contact their office to find out more about how we can match that senior with a volunteer.

CALEB CHASE FUND

The Caleb Chase Fund is a Town of Harwich fund designed to help Harwich residents in financial need. The Fund can help with payments for rent, utilities (including phone and internet service), medical bills, car payments, and child care. **If you are interested in learning more about the Caleb Chase Fund, contact Julie Witas (508-430-7550, or jwitas@town.harwich.ma.us) to learn more about the application process.**

FUEL ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS

Our region's Fuel Assistance Program is administered by the South Shore Community Action Council (SSCAC). The program runs November 1st-April 30.

Your application must include:

- Proof of income: e.g., Social Security Award letter; statements for pensions or retirement funds; tax returns
- Proof of residence: eg., Mortgage, Homeowners Insurance, Real Estate Tax or lease
- Complete Electric Bill
- Heating Bill
- Photo ID
- Social Security Cards and Birth Dates for all in household

Call the COA at 508-430-7550 for up to date application information.

NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS

These programs are ongoing. All deliveries are now contact-free.



BROWN BAG PROGRAM

The COA works with the Greater Boston Food Bank and the Family Pantry to distribute brown bags of food for eligible seniors on the 1st Friday of the month. Bags may include fresh fruit or vegetables, meat or frozen food, and shelf stable items. If you have a low income and/or are on MassHealth, SNAP, or Fuel Assistance you will qualify. For more information, call 508-430-7550.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Sponsored by Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands. Meals are delivered to homebound seniors by volunteers. Voluntary donation of \$3 per meal. For more information, call Elder Services at 508-394-4630.

S.N.A.P.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) helps low income individuals and families buy healthy, nutritious food. A SNAP household's monthly benefit depends on household size, income and expenses. For more information, contact the COA at 508-430-7550.

SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)

Do you have questions about Medicare Advantage Plans and the additional benefits advertised as part of these plans on television? Are you both Medicare and MassHealth eligible and interested in learning more about Senior Care Options plans available to you in Barnstable County? SHINE can help you navigate your options and questions regarding these plans. They will help you act as a knowledgeable consumer when it comes to your health plan choices.

Call the Barnstable County Regional SHINE Office at
508-375-6762 for more information.

Alzheimer's Family Support Center

The Alzheimer's Family Support Center currently offers 47 FREE virtual support groups for caregivers, as well as for people experiencing memory loss. Please call 508-896-5170 for more information and to register for the group that best meets your needs and schedule. AFSC also provides step-by-step phone support on how to access these groups using Zoom!

FRIENDS' NEWS



Friends of The Harwich Council on Aging

100 Oak Street, Harwich MA 02645
508-432-5050
FriendsofHarwichCOA@gmail.com

A message from Jack Brown, Friends' President

Dear Friends, Donors, and Members,

March is here and it is time for all to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. **Slainte!** Or our wish to you in English – **Health!** And, hasn't health been the topic of our conversations and of the media for an entire year now? Friends' board hopes those of you eligible have received Covid-19 vaccination.

It's a busy season for the town of Harwich in preparation for Town Meeting and the Local Election. Here are what we hope are helpful dates to mark on your calendar:

- April 13 – last day to register to be eligible to vote at Town Meeting and in the Local Election
- April 16 – Warrant Available
- May 3* – Annual Town Meeting
- May 18 – Local Election

* Tentative—date and location may be revised depending on pandemic conditions

Generous donors made it possible for Friends to purchase \$3,000 in grocery gift cards last month for the Harwich COA to distribute as needed. The Board has been meeting monthly via Zoom (thanks to our clever Secretary, JoAnne Brown) and is working with Emily Mitchell, COA Director, on what are unanticipated projects arising from COVID-19. More will follow in the next issue of the newsletter.

Two Requests for the reader:

- Please renew your membership or join Friends for the first time. The form below can be used for both membership and/or donations.
- Please send Friends your email address at Friendsof-HarwichCOA@gmail.com. We promise not to drown you with emails but to send only info of interest.

Best Regards,

Friends Board: Jack E. Brown, President; Christina Joyce, Treasurer; JoAnne Brown, Secretary; Susan Lellis, Director, and Richard Waystack, Director.

GIFT DEDICATIONS DECMEBER THROUGH FEBRUARY

In Loving Memory Of

Connie Porciello Young
Anonymous

In Honor Of

Joyce Doherty, COA Volunteer
Ann C. Hayes

Our Dedicated Town Employees
Inez Giles & Seth Hudak

In Thanks For

COA Delivered Senior Lunches
Virginia Drury

FY 21 FRIENDS OF HARWICH COA MEMBERSHIP

Annual dues are \$5.00 per person / Life dues are \$40 per person

Name _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Town/Zip _____ Phone _____

Town/Zip _____ Phone _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

ANNUAL: \$5.00____ LIFE : \$40.00____

ANNUAL: \$5.00____ LIFE : \$40.00____

Additional Donation: \$ _____

Additional Donation: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: Friends of the Harwich COA
Mail to: FHCOA, 11 Wheaton Way, Harwich Port, MA 02646

Chicken Francaise

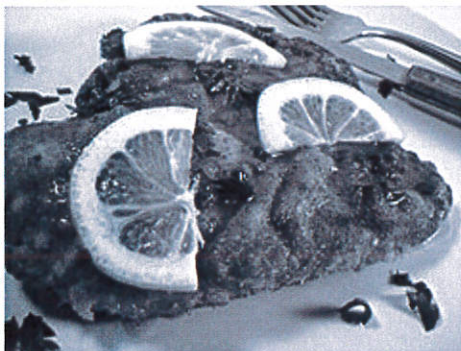
Active: 15 min. / Total time: 35 min.

3/4 cup flour, plus 2 tablespoons for sauce
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, plus more for garnish
 2 eggs
 1 lb chicken breast cutlets (or boneless, skinless chicken breasts, quartered and pounded to 1/2 inch thickness)
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 1/3 cup butter
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves
 1.5 cups low sodium chicken broth
 1/4 cup lemon juice
 1 lemon, thinly sliced
 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley

1. Stir together 3/4 cup flour, the salt, 1/4 teaspoon pepper in a shallow dish. Lightly beat eggs in another shallow dish. Dip chicken in flour mixture to coat, shaking off excess. Dip in beaten eggs to coat, then dip again in flour mixture.

2. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Working in batches, cook chicken about 2.5 minutes per side, until golden brown and an instant read thermometer inserted into centers registers 165°F. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate.

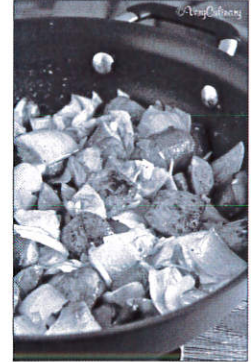
3. Drain oil and carefully wipe skillet using paper towels. Melt butter with mushrooms over medium heat. Add thyme and remaining 2 tablespoons flour; cook, stirring, 2 minutes. Add broth, lemon juice, and lemon slices; cook, stirring, until thickened and bubbly, 2 to 3 minutes. Return chicken to skillet and heat through. Sprinkle with additional pepper and parsley.



Kielbasa and Cabbage

Active: 10 min. / Total time: 30 min.

6 slices bacon
 1 cup chopped onion
 1/4 cup water
 1 tablespoon sugar
 1 tablespoon caraway seeds
 2 teaspoons minced garlic
 1/4 teaspoon crushed red paper
 1/4 teaspoon seasoning salt
 1 to 1.5 lb cabbage, cored and cut into 6 wedges



1 (14 oz) package Polish kielbasa, cut into 1/2 inch slices

1. Cook bacon in a very large skillet over medium heat, turning once, until crisp. Transfer to paper towels, reserving drippings in skillet. Crumble when cool.

2. Stir onion, water, sugar, caraway seeds, garlic, crushed red pepper, and seasoning salt into drippings in skillet. Add cabbage; cook, covered, stirring occasionally, over medium heat 10 minutes.

3. Arrange kielbasa over cabbage in skillet; continue cooking, covered, until cabbage is tender and sausage is heated through, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle with crumbled bacon.

**Recipes selected with love
 by our talented Town
 Chef, Linda St. Pierre!**

Let us know if you try one!

HARWICH COUNCIL ON AGING
100 Oak Street
Harwich, MA 02645

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FOR THOSE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS, A LARGE PRINT VERSION OF THE NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

HARWICH COUNCIL ON AGING

Harwich Council on Aging
100 Oak Street
Harwich, MA 02645
508-430-7550 (COA)
508-430-7505 (Town Nurse)

OFFICE HOURS:
Monday—Friday 8:30 am—4:00 pm

*www.town.harwich.ma.us
click on "Departments" then "Council on Aging"*

Staff Contacts

Director:..... Emily Mitchell
Town Nurse:..... Susan Jusell
Social Services Coord: Julie Witas
Program Specialist: Vacant
Executive Asst:..... Marie Carlson
Chef:..... Linda St Pierre
Van Drivers: Gerry Golia, Kathy Skipper, John Chatham

COA BOARD:

Richard Waystack, Chair
Carol Thayer, Vice Chair
Angelina Chilaka
Joanne Lepore
James Mangan
Ralph Smith
Justin White, Alternate

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with grant funding from the Massachusetts
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by the Town of Harwich.*

COA Disclaimer

The Harwich COA offers many legal, financial, medical, recreational and other services and/or activities by volunteers or nominal cost practitioners. Seniors participating in these services do so with the understanding that the Harwich COA, the Town of Harwich or its employees do not assume any legal or other responsibility for any advice or services rendered by such volunteers or practitioners.

Council on Aging Proposed FY 22 Budget

The proposed FY 2022 Council on Aging budget is offered consistent with the directive to level fund relative to the FY 2021 appropriation. The total FY 21 appropriation was \$475,401.36. The requested FY 22 budget is \$475,338.14 (reduction of \$63.22 or 0.01%).

The mission of the Council on Aging is to support and advocate for older adults, their families, and caregivers. In ordinary circumstances, this includes transportation, nutrition, outreach, education, health and wellness, entertainment, and socialization. The department also allocates significant funding to subsidize the cost for Harwich residents with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia who attend the Orleans Adult Day Health Center. This partnership with the Town of Orleans provides immeasurable benefit for the residents and invaluable respite for their caregivers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, services and resources have been reprioritized and redirected to meet the highest needs. With the onset of the pandemic, the COA overhauled operations switching from an onsite to community-based model and focusing increased staff and financial resources in the areas of transportation, nutrition, grocery/pharmacy assistance, and outreach.

The particular challenge in crafting the COA FY 22 budget request was to balance the competing priorities of ordinary vs. pandemic operations. The difference in COA operations under these varying circumstances is not merely a matter of scale or method of service delivery, but gets to the specific types of services offered.

Under COVID operations, we have dramatically expanded our lunch, grocery/pharmacy support, and transportation programs. Our lunch program, which transitioned from onsite to community delivered meals, has tripled in size. Currently, we are serving 60-70 meals per day and serving 85 unique individuals each week. We have implemented dedicated grocery/pharmacy support beyond transporting people to grocery stores to include COA staff and volunteers picking up and delivering groceries to people at home. Our transportation, while operating at a reduced ridership capacity, has expanded to include many new locations including pharmacies, banks, the Post Office, and essential medical appointments. Outreach services, while modified to eliminate in-home services, have expanded in response to increased health and financial needs and in light of limited access to other community resources. The proposed budget seeks to balance the cost of COVID services while planning for the eventual resumption of ordinary operations.

The primary cost increases from FY 21 to FY 22 are as follows:

- Costs associated with proposed COA staffing reorganization to upgrade Program Specialist I (HEA Grade 4) position to a Program Specialist II (HEA Grade 8) – **increase: \$9,864.19**. The proposed upgrade would provide greater departmental efficiency and significantly increase our programming capacity, utilization and training of volunteers, and our ability to publicize available services and resources without increasing staff hours.
- Negotiated step and longevity increases in salaries and wages - **increase: \$2,887.09**

- Postage – Increase to reflect fact that COA will have to pay standard (rather than non-profit) postage rate for bimonthly newsletter. Prior to FY 21, COA had paid and budgeted for non-profit rate. During procurement process for FY 21 newsletter printing contract, learned that we had been paying that rate in error – **increase: \$2,400.**
- Dues – FY 21 provided a one-time reduction in dues costs with MCOA (Massachusetts Councils on Aging) waiving dues in light of COVID impact on COA budgets. Will resume full dues payment for FY 22 – **Increase: \$1,110**
- Training and professional development – nominal increase to account for ServSafe certification for Town Chef, per diem Town Chef, and Director (must renew every three years) – **increase: \$450**
- Purchased Services – increase to resume funding to vendors for program/event payments in anticipation of resuming onsite services or investing in quality remote programming – **increase: \$400**
- Food/Food Services – we continue to fund food/food services costs at the higher FY 21 level in recognition of the greatly expanded lunch program adopted during COVID. Nominal **increase of \$200.**

The primary cost decreases from FY 21 to FY 22 are as follows:

- Salary difference between former and current Social Services Coordinator – **savings: \$7,691.95**
- Eliminate supplemental 5 hours/week van driver coverage approved in FY 21 to address COVID transportation needs – **savings: \$6,196.94**
- Filling van driver vacancy at lower than FY 21 budgeted step (FY 21 – budget at Step 6, FY 22 – new hire paid at Step 3->4) – **savings: \$1,159.13**
- Copier Maintenance and Service – five year copier lease expires at end of FY 21. Purchase new copier rather than utilizing leasing model. Purchase using grant (Executive Office of Elder Affairs Formula Grant) funds, keep annual service agreement in budget – **savings: \$1,436**

Further, a number of cuts were made during the FY 21 budget process in recognition of the shift in costs/priorities with the onset of COVID. I propose to maintain these cuts for FY 22 to continue to offset other departmental needs. I anticipate needing to resume full pre-COVID funding in these areas once we return to ordinary onsite operations:

- Professional/Tech Services (this line item is utilized solely to fund the subsidy for Harwich residents to attend the Orleans Adult Day Health Center – Decrease from FY 20 to FY 21: \$5,000). The line item is amongst the most impacted by uncertainty surrounding the resumption of ordinary post-COVID operations. The Orleans Adult Day Health Center is currently closed with an anticipated limited reopening this winter. Able to reduce funding by half in light of closures, but this service is heavily utilized when available and will need significantly higher funding in the future.
- Advertising (Decrease from FY 20 to FY 21: \$1,600)
- Computer Networking (Decrease from FY 20 to FY 21: \$600)

- Printing (Decrease from FY 20 to FY 21: \$500)
- In state travel (Decrease from FY 20 to FY 21: \$420)

The proposed budget offers difficult trade offs intended to fund services that meet the most essential community needs under a variety of circumstances while complying with the directive to level fund. The impacts of reductions and offsets will be felt, particularly as we return towards greater levels of pre-COVID operations with few funds available to provide programming, recruit vendors or performers, or to advertise programs and services. The biggest impact may well result from the reduced funding available to subsidize residents looking to attend the Orleans Day program, as this resource provides an unparalleled support for both residents and caregivers. We will continue to evaluate funding priorities as pandemic and societal factors evolve in the coming months to best allocate limited resources. The budget as presented reflects the best and most efficient efforts to serve our mission based on current information.