

Meeting Minutes
Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors
Harwich Community Center
100 Oak Street
Harwich, MA 02645
Channel 18 Studio
Wednesday, July 7th, 2021, 10 AM

Meeting Attendance:

Board Members: Chair Richard Waystack, Vice Chair Carol Thayer, Angelina Raneo Chilaka, Joanne Lepore, Ralph Smith

COA Staff: Director Emily Mitchell

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Waystack at 10:00 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Carol Thayer made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2021 COA Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded Joanne Lepore. Unanimous vote to approve by members present.

III. Public Comment: None

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

Chair Richard Waystack discussed the meeting he attended, as a panelist, organized by the Elder Services including the entire Cape Cod legislative delegation, noting gaps in services to prevent homelessness in the elderly population and how he believes Harwich is performing compared to other communities.

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

A. Overview of current operations and Scaling up of onsite operations

In consultation with Administration and the Health Department, the COA resumed "low-risk" small group activities and continued one-to-one professional services. The COA will continue the community lunch distribution program, in lieu of in-person meals. The COA has been working closely with the Finance Director to ensure this program's continuance and how the difference between FEMA and municipal funding may impact its future. A large portion of group leaders are no longer available, so that is a factor in delaying certain programs from returning. The COA is actively looking for new instructors and different programs to add to the schedule.

The Board discussed the importance of larger in-person meetings, such as the men's and women's breakfast. Emily Mitchell states the COA is aiming to resume larger programs in October.

Emily Mitchell gave an update on mask-wearing guidelines, transportation capacity and an overview of how other towns are resuming their Council of Aging programs.

B. Staffing Updates

The COA has filled a volunteer position to aide a legally blind resident, and three SHINE volunteers who have gone through training. The COA is still looking for volunteers at the reception desk. The Board suggested using social media to recruit new volunteers.

C. Community Compilation Project

The final project has been published featuring about 50 contributions from older adult Harwich residents, who captured their pandemic experience in some way, with a variety of different content. The COA would like to organize an event to distribute copies to the community.

D. New CCRTA Leased Vehicle

The COA received the new 14-passenger vehicle in the first week of March. Town Counsel and CCRTA are still working on lease agreement language. The COA cannot operate the vehicle until the agreement is finalized and signed.

VI. Old Business

- A. Discussion ensued regarding the farmer's market coupons by Elder Services, how to make those available to Harwich residents, and The Family Pantry has fresh produce, which is an alternative.

VII. New Business: None

VIII. Member Comments: None

IX. Adjournment

Carol Thayer made the motion to adjourn at 10:35 AM. Motion was seconded by Angelina Chilaka. Unanimous vote by members present to adjourn.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 4, 2021, 10 AM.