

Meeting Minutes
Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, November 4, 2020, 10 AM
Remote Participation Only

Meeting Attendance:

Board Members: Vice Chair Carol Thayer, Joanne Lepore, Ralph Smith, Angelina Raneo Chilaka, and Lieutenant Justin White (alternate)

COA Staff Member: Director Emily Mitchell

Guest: Janice Bernabeo

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Carol Thayer at 10:02 AM

II. Approval of Minutes

Ralph Smith made motion to approve the minutes from the October 7, 2020 COA Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Joanne Lepore. Unanimous vote by members present to approve.

III. Public Comments: None

IV. Chair's Comments: None

V. Director's Remote (E. Mitchell)

A. Overview of current and anticipated COA operations

1. The lunch program is presently serving 65 elders per day. Some of the seniors have opted to reduce the number of lunches needed so others were added onto the list.
2. Transportation is operating under the same COVID capacity restrictions – two passengers per trip are allowed on the larger, 12-passenger van and one passenger per trip is allowed on the smaller, 8-passenger van.
3. Transportation was provided for our seniors to vote early. No one asked to be transported on the day of election so we believe all of the election-related transportation needs were met with early voting.
4. Transportation was also increased to the Family Pantry.

B. Programming Updates – Holiday Events and Storytelling Project

1. Emily worked with the Health Department for authorization and protocols to deliver warm holiday meals for both Thanksgiving and the winter holidays. The Thanksgiving dinner is scheduled for November 24, 2020 and the winter holiday meal is scheduled for December 22, 2020. Town Chef Linda St. Pierre is preparing to make 70 meals to be delivered for each holiday. Emily mentioned that we are in need of additional drivers for these two days since the meals are hot and need to be delivered quickly. Volunteers should contact Emily Mitchell directly. The time need for delivery each day is approximately 90 minutes.

2. Holiday gifts – it is unclear whether certain community-based programs such as Home Instead's Be a Santa to a Senior will take place. COA staff are brainstorming alternative options to distribute small gifts to local seniors. They are planning to solicit gift donations. Carol Thayer asked if Emily would like donations from businesses. Emily responded that they would appreciate those donations. Ralph Smith asked if the COA needs additional driver to assist with holiday meals. Emily indicated that they do need additional drivers, particularly because drivers can take fewer meals at a time than on their ordinary lunch routes due to the need to get the warm meals out quickly.
 3. Emily is working with Captain Leighanne Smith and Lieutenant Justin White of the Harwich Fire Department to perform modified home safety inspections. Due to COVID considerations, only fire department staff are entering the homes. They are performing checks on smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and referring people back to the COA to help identify and address any other unmet needs.
- C. COA Volunteer needs – current needs include lunch drivers, particularly those able to drive on a regular schedule, technologically savvy people to help with Zoom trainings and remote programming, and people with the skills and interest to help update the COA website.
- D. Updates re FY 21 COA Newsletter procurement process and contract
1. The COA now has a fully executed FY 21 COA newsletter contract with vendor Curley Direct
 2. The overall printing cost has decreased from FY 20 to FY 21.
 3. The postage cost has doubled from FY 20 to FY 21. During the procurement process, it came to light that, while the COA had paid the non-profit postage rate in prior years, they would not be eligible to continue to pay this rate. For FY 21 and future years, the COA will be charged the standard postage rate which is approximately two times the non-profit rate.
 4. Because the COA anticipated paying the non-profit rate, Emily had budgeted for that rate during the FY 21 budget cycle. There are not sufficient funds appropriated to the department to cover the higher rate.
 5. At their October meeting, Emily requested \$3,000 from the Friends of the Harwich Council on Aging (FHCOA) to cover the postage difference between what was budgeted and the cost actually to be incurred as a result of the postage rate change. FHCOA approved the request. It is only due to FHCOA support that the COA had the funds to execute the FY 21 contract and print/distribute the newsletter.
 6. Carol Thayer suggested that the COA Board send a formal thank you to the Friends of Harwich COA for their support of this request. Ralph Smith made the motion to send a formal thank you. The motion was seconded by Angelina Chilaka. Unanimous vote among members present send the thank you.

VI. Old Business

A. Recognition of Volunteers of the Year – Janice Bernabeo and Judy O’Brien

1. Janice Bernabeo was present for the meeting. Emily introduced Janice and highlighted her passion and commitment to COA reception service both pre-pandemic and now as one of the few volunteers who is back onsite. Janice spoke briefly to express her gratitude for receiving this recognition and about her volunteering experiences.
2. Judy O’Brien was unable to attend the meeting. Emily spoke about her invaluable assistance in the financial management of the department including reconciling program fees and vendor payments. While this can often be invisible work, the COA wanted to recognize Judy for this invaluable contribution to the department.
3. The Board expressed their gratitude to both Volunteers of the Year and their hard work in service to the department and the seniors in our community. Angelina Chilaka further suggested that the COA write a press release about these volunteers for publication in the Cape Cod Chronicle. Angie- suggested we write an article to the CC Chronicle honoring both ladies.

VII. New Business

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

1. The bidding process for Meals on Wheels is out and the contract for this year is extended until March due to the covid virus.
2. More home visits are being done for the elderly during this pandemic. Ongoing staffing shortages have made it difficult to keep up with service demands.
3. The RMV has set up an outreach program for the elderly.
4. The next meeting is set for Dec. 1st, 2020

VIII. Member Comments: None

IX. Adjournment:

Carol Thayer brought the meeting to a close at 10:23 AM. Joanne Lepore made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Ralph Smith seconded the motion. Unanimous vote amongst members present to adjourn.

Next meeting: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 10 AM, by remote participation only