

Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday – May 18th, 2022 – 10 am

Harwich Community Center – Channel 18 Studio

100 Oak St. – Harwich, MA 02645

Meeting Attendance:

Board Members: - Chair Richard Waystack, Joanne Lepore, John Bathelt, Carol Thayer, Ralph Smith, Justin White, Angelina Raneo Chilaka

COA Staff: Director Emily Mitchell

1. Call to Order

Richard Waystack called the meeting to order at 10 am.

2. Approval of Minutes:

Carol Thayer made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 20th, 2022 meeting of the Council on Aging Board of Directors meeting. The motion was seconded by Joanne Lepore. Unanimous vote by members present to approve.

3. Public Comment: None

4. Chair's Comments: Richard Waystack

1. Welcome the new member: John Bathelt
2. Congratulations to Emily Mitchell on being elected as our new Town Clerk. Her new official start date as town clerk is Monday – May 23, 2022. Emily has been with the COA for four years and has made many wonderful improvements such as the policy and procedure development, increased activities and services for our seniors, and worked well in developing a smoothly running dept. There is high praise and respect for her work as the COA Director.
3. Richard Waystack will be in contact with the Town Administrator to work on finding the next well qualified COA Director. In the meantime, the Town Administrator or his designee will help run the COA until a new director is appointed.
4. Richard Waystack is recommending to the Town Administrator that he set up a search committee in hiring the new COA.

5 Director's Report: Emily Mitchell

1. Emily Mitchell thanked the COA Board and her staff for their hard work and support.
2. MA General Laws state that the newly elected clerk may take office seven days after they are elected. Monday, May 23rd is her start date at Town Hall Clerk's Office.

3. Emily stated that she has taken steps to ensure that the COA will continue to provide all of its services and run smoothly until the new hire is in place. Communication between all staff, COA Board, and the Town Administrator is crucial for a smooth transition.
4. More seniors are participating in various programs. Some programs have capacity restrictions but walk-ins are still welcome based on availability. It is recommended that the seniors call the COA office to sign up for the various programs.
5. Transportation is still at 50% capacity, and it is recommended that the seniors wear masks.
6. The lunch program is still serving 45 meals per day both on site and grab and go. Usually no more than 25 meals are served on site. It is recommended that the seniors call ahead to reserve their meal.
7. Program Planning: The Senior Fit fitness program in the gym will be on break during July and August to accommodate the summer youth recreation programs. All other programs are still running.
8. There will be a new sign language class that will be offered soon.
9. Town Meeting: The voters voted in favor of the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2023 including two Enhancement of Services provisions – one funding a Program Specialist II position, and one funding supplemental funding for our Nutrition program (Senior Dining program).
10. Ralph Smith was inquiring about when the Men's and Women's Breakfast will return. The new Director will have to address this issue.
11. Newsletter: Emily sent out to get quotes from six vendors – two responded back. Both vendors were higher in cost than what we are now paying. The Sept./Oct. newsletter will be the first edition under new contract.
12. Volunteer Needs: We still need 2 or 3 more volunteers to help with the check in for the daily lunches. The time needed will run between 1 and 1 ½ hours per day.

6: New Business: None

7. Comments by each Board Member: All members thanked Emily for her outstanding service of four years to the COA. High praise was given by all even though it was bittersweet.

Emily thanked each of us and was proud and grateful to serve as the COA Director.

8. Adjournment: Justin White made the motion to adjourn at 10:28 am. The motion was seconded by Carol Thayer. Unanimous vote by member present to adjourn.

Next meeting is scheduled for: Wednesday – June 15th, 2022 at the Harwich Community Center - Channel 18 Room at 10 am.