MEETING MINUTES

Harwich Council on Aging Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday March 7, 2018

Held at the Harwich Community Center

**MEETING ATTENDANCE**

**Board Members:** Richard Waystack, Lee Culver, Jim Mangan, Joanne Lepore, Angie  
Chilaka, Joan Felahi, Carol Thayer and Ralph Smith

**COA Staff:** Judi Wilson, COA Director; Marie Carlson, Recording Secretary; Kevin   
 Grunwald, Social Services; and Sue Jusell, Town Nurse

**Other Attendees**: Jon Chorey, Finance Committee member

**CALL TO ORDER**: A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chairman Richard Waystack.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Richard Waystack asked for a motion to approve minutes from the January 10, 2018 meeting. The motion to approve and accept the minutes as presented was unanimously approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Mr. Chorey** introduced himself as a member of Finance Committee.

**CHAIRS REPORT:**

**Chairman, Richard Waystack** announced that the Housing Assistance Cooperation were taking

Applications for the “Big Fix”, a program to help with various home repairs for seniors and disabled vets. He stated they were looking for volunteers to assist with ramps or other improvements. Applications are online.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

A lengthy discussion took place on emergency policies and responsibilities of Police, Fire, and such departments as Council on Aging, due to the recent severe storms and power outages.

Lee Culver pointed out there is a responsibility of the townspeople as well to practice storm readiness, and to prepare to the best of their ability. When a State of Emergency has been invoked, emergency personnel take over the operations of the town. There is a need to establish a relationship with them. There exists a need to establish policies. Council on Aging should check on its most vulnerable seniors, check status with nursing facilities and reestablish a relationship with them. There is a need to establish how to manage communication. Lee stressed the need for people to take responsibility for their protection such as getting on the list of Eversource for any 02 emergency needs and to be aware of the shelter openings. People are given to tools.

Richard Waystack: offered during these storms, police did go knocking on doors. Pine Oaks manager has offered information for resources to independent living tenants. He gave an update on meeting with fail communities.

Kevin Grunwald: explained the need for someone to coordinate and facilitate communication during and after such emergencies. He stated the people have the wrong message and need a well-coordinated plan.

Further discussion included the need for all stakeholders to have clear expectations and the need to convene with Fire and Police for defined roles. The Board agreed to meet with Lee Culver in the near future to further discuss and update policies to address defining roles and to meet the needs of our 5 700 senior population in emergency situations. Topics such as education, communication, resources, preparation, and defined roles, particularly COA will be addressed.

**DIRECTORS REPORT:**

**Director, Judi Wilson** explained the new software will be an important tool for tracking who we are interacting with and who we are not, noting the distribution of the newsletter is a source for our seniors to receive information to facilitate any programs in place. Judi gave an update on the various new programs being offered at the COA being well attended and appreciated. By May more classes will be offered, as efforts have been made to obtain additional instructors as some classes in large demand and well attended are full with a waiting list. Some changes to programming will be made based on low attendance and cost effectiveness to the department, such as Supper Club in winter. This will be eliminated next year and be replaced by a themed dinner once a month, which has been very successful.

There have been changes with the Brown Bag program in that there is a need for volunteers.

A suggestion was made that perhaps the program could be outsourced. Ideas were exchanged.

Also discussed was COA budget request, the goals of the department with a newly presented organizational chart. “Friends” have agreed to help with funds allowing the department to offer computer training for staff in preparation for the soft roll-out of the new Sr. Center software program. Further training will be completed by the end of May.

The comprehensive transition plan is in progress. Capital plans to update computers are being addressed with challenges. Judi was in attendance at a recent MCOA conference that addressed dementia issues and possible grant monies to the Cape, taking a regional approach offering tools and resources.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Richard Waystack**: revisited the need to discuss the COA Mission Statement and the possibility of a sub-committee, and asked that more feedback with goal be brought back to the next meeting.

**Jack Brown** stressed the need for more drivers for the Friend bus.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ralph Smith and seconded by Carol Thayer, all in favor, vote carries.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

The next Harwich COA Board meeting will be April 4, 2018 at 10:00 A.M.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Marie Carlson*

*Executive Assistant, HCOA*

***Approved by vote at the 4/4/2018 meeting of the HCOA Board***