

**Northampton Council on Aging
Meeting Minutes DRAFT
9/12/19**

At the Northampton Senior Center, 67 Conz Street, Northampton

Present: Gerriann Butler, Robert Dionne, Deborah Epstein, Michael Ford, Casey Fowler, Dennis Helmus, Jeanne Henry Hoose, Cynthia Langley, Donna Park, Kathy Pekala Service, Marie Westburg, Jae Casella.

Excused: Ben Capistrant, Kathie Bredin

Absent: None

Call to Order

- Gerriann Butler called the meeting to order at 3:32 PM.

Public Session – No one was present.

Review and approval of minutes from the previous meeting

- A motion was made by Casey Fowler and seconded by Robert Dionne to approve the 8/8/19 minutes as written. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Announcements: None.

Old Business

- Cultural Arts Committee is meeting monthly and could use more participants to work on planning other programming such as music, theater, author readings, dance, etc.. If you know anyone who may be interested, let Nancy Yesu know.
- A council member asked about the partnership with the YMCA and other organizations. The year-long pilot of extended hours and programming offered in the evenings and by the YMCA has been very successful. The pilot is coming to an end and extended hours will continue due to the information gained, which is that there is a need for serving working seniors and providing hours for evening and weekend programs. Currently we are conducting a survey to gather feedback on the fitness program, hours and instructors and fees. The Director stated there is a need for more oversight of the fitness program and to offer classes which are taught by instructors being supervised and trained to work with older adults. We may move to contract with an outside entity to fill this need and will look for expertise in older adult fitness, as well as a place that has instructors who are trained to teach evidence-based programs.
- A request for more information about coming changes, current concerns of patrons etc was posed. The director reminded members that they can learn about changes at the Center through the Director's article in the Conz Street Chronicle and that she shares important information each month in her Director's Report to the Council.
- It is good to be involved in the Center and read the Constant Contact to learn about what is happening.
- The chair reminded members that they can send agenda items to her to put on the Agenda.

New Business

- No new business.

Assistant Director's Report:

- We are still recruiting for volunteers. There are openings in Reception, Bistro, Coffee Shop, writers for the Chronicle, transportation, medical drivers, etc.
- Drivers, dispatch, and bistro workers are critical right now.
- There is also an opening for a part time staff assistant if anyone knows someone who may be interested.
- Our custodian covers building use when we are closed.
- Can we put an ad in the Gazette for volunteers?

Director's Report:

- We have a partnership with the Alzheimer's Association for a community sing onsite for families experiencing dementia.
- LGBTQ Rainbow Luncheon is held the last Wednesday of the month.
- There are many YMCA classes being held here and there has been a good response to these classes and this collaboration.
- On a Saturday in October there will be an intergenerational event in collaboration with the schools' Early Childhood Program and a local artist will hold two activities for older adults and young kids as well as older kids.
- The Age Friendly initiative and the EARN program are in place too. EARN received a grant from MCOA this year for 4K to expand supports for job readiness of older workers and to collaborate with the Age Friendly Initiative to support businesses in being age friendly for consumers as well as encouraging businesses to hire older workers.
- The Director is looking at how to sustain a \$3 meal. She is working on fundraising with Elder Vision to keep

food costs low. We need more people to register and order the \$7 meals. Maybe we could deliver to City Departments?

- There will be the installation of the new pollinator friendly plants in the rain garden. Electric assist bikes will be set up near the Gazette. The outdoor seating is set up. We are looking for people to remove plants that are not pollinator friendly to prepare the site for the new plants.
- The study with the architect is moving forward. The Director will be working on the next capital improvement request and should know more soon about the potential changes to last year's request.
- In October, there will be an Age Friendly event in Florence. The City received money from AARP for an Age Friendly initiative. Forbes Library received a grant for a portable recording studio and this will be used in a public engagement event in Florence to record story around sense of place with community members. Forbes has offered to be a pilot for the first project around our goals for Age Friendly Businesses in Northampton.

Other Business

1. A suggestion was made to put Frances Crowe's photograph out in the lobby as an example of positive aging.
2. Highland Valley is sponsoring "Keys to Aging Well" Expo at the Hadley Farms Meeting House on Tuesday, October 1st from 3:00-4:30pm. It is free and open to the public.

Adjournment:

Cindy Langley made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Robert Dionne seconded it at 4:47 PM. The motion was unanimously approved.

- **Next NCOA Council Meeting:** Thursday, October 10th, 2019, at 3:30 at the Northampton Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted by _____ Linda R. DeMercurio