

**Northampton Council on Aging Meeting**  
**Thursday, May 13th, 2021, 3:30 pm, Due to the Covid-19 emergency, this meeting was conducted via Zoom Video Conferencing**

**DRAFT COA Minutes**

**Call to Order:** Cynthia Langley called the meeting to order @ 3:30 pm

**Present:** Cynthia Langley, Jeanne Henry Hoose, Marie Westburg, Laura Scott, Bob Dionne, Gerriann Butler, Dennis Helmus, Kathie Bredin & Aurea Domenech

**Excused:** Michael Ford & Ben Capistrant

**Public Session:** No public attended

**Review and Approval of Minutes:** Dennis asked that the election month be corrected from June to July. Motion to approve April Minutes with correction-Dennis Helmus 2nd-Michael Ford

**Announcements:** Jeanne Henry Hoose asked that any information on area artists be sent to her email as they are continuing to search for new exhibitors for the Chronicle & Senior Center upon reopening. Kathie Bredin reached out to Police Chief Jody Kasper after a letter received from a local resident stated that the BLM statement appears to be anti-police. Chief Kasper reported that she sees no police bias and is looking forward to more positive conversations with the Senior Center. Cindy Langley thanked Kathie for reaching out to Chief Kasper on behalf of the council. Bob Dionne asked about the lack of information on the city's website under Senior Center volunteer opportunities. Marie explained that she is currently updating the website and will post opportunities once the reopening begins although there is no specific date as to when that will happen.

**Director's Report:** A new Assistant Director, Janet Yurko, has been hired. Janet comes to us with an extensive elder care background and will start July 6th. Kevin Martin, Nutrition Program Coordinator, will start July 1st. We are excited to have him back full time. A principal clerk & 3 staff assistants will be hired in July. The \$6300 incentive grant to reach 600 isolated older adults (721 isolated older adults have been identified) is moving forward with help from Highland Valley Elder Services, Northampton Neighbors, Grow Food Northampton and The Northampton Housing Authority. We received lots of information and help from multiple

agency partners (Forbes Library, DA's Office, BOH, etc.) to fill the bags with coupons, a birding guide, hand sanitizer, masks, etc...Our community partners will be delivering most of these bags for us. Marie is working on new grant applications for transportation and tech programs. Work continues on the Age & Dementia Friendly Initiative including a recent review of the draft report by Pioneer Valley Planning Commission on the work completed to date to inform action plans for implementation over the next five years. Upgrades will happen at the Senior Center post vaccine clinic use: new furniture/new flooring, painting and possibly some modifications to the reception area will be completed partially by using Covid Care Act or FEMA relief funds and fund raising efforts by The Friends of Northampton Senior Center.. There is no funding for an Interior Design consultant so Marie is hoping to find someone to work pro bono. Marie suggested a sub committee be formed to help with this work with a consultant, to decide interior colors, pick furnishings and engage the members in the final decisions so that people feel involved and feel good about the changes that are made. Marie cited the feedback from the Spring Focus Group as one source of input on the desire for changes to the atmosphere of the lobby area. Interior Upgrades Planning Sub-Committee formed: : Bob Dionne, Jeanne Henry Hoose, Marie Westburg, Cindy Langley & Gerriann Butler. Cindy also mentioned soliciting a couple Senior Center or Focus Group members who would like to contribute to the discussion on color choices etc. . Dennis suggested submitting a proposal for funds from Friends of Northampton Senior Center. Marie asked if additional funds, if needed, could also be raised by the Friends Group through Valley Gives or a Go Fund Me campaign.

**New Business:** The Council needs more members. Interested parties need to apply directly to the Mayor. Since time is running short it was suggested that Nancy include an article from the COA with the information about how to apply and what COA members do in the next Constant Contact eblast,. Dennis mentioned that Friends of Northampton Senior Center is also looking for new members-both full time or those interested in working on special projects. A nominating committee consisting of Jeanne Henry Hoose & Kathie Bredin will present office candidates at the June meeting. Both Cindy Langley and Bob Dionne have offered to continue in their roles if desired.

**Next Meeting:** June 10th, 2021, 3:30 pm, Northampton Senior Center (via Zoom)

**Adjournment :** Motion to adjourn was made by Bob Dionne, 2nd by Dennis Helmus

Meeting adjourned @ 4:36 pm