

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

COA Minutes

Call to Order: Cynthia Langley called the meeting to order @ 3:34 pm

Present: Cynthia Langley, Jeanne Henry Hoose, Marie Westburg, Janet Yurko, Nancy Yesu, Laura Scott, Bob Dionne, Gerriann Butler, Aurea Domenech, Michael Ford, Ben Capistrant, & Anne “Val” Romano

Public Session: No public attended

Review and Approval of Minutes: A motion was made to accept the July minutes by Robert Dionne and 2nd Michael Ford

Announcements: Jeanne Henry Hoose spoke about the in-person art exhibit and Arts Night Out to be held on September 10th. Due to Covid concerns, there will be no catering at this event.

Director’s Report: Marie spoke on the issues surrounding reopening and the variant. Masks are currently mandated along with social distancing and smaller gatherings. We have hired 2 new staff assistants and a principal clerk. We are still in need of one more staff assistant. Renewal appointments are going really well especially when patrons realize that it is for their safety that we are holding them. It’s been nice to have a short amount of time to reconnect with each one. Because we are a city entity, we are not required to ask for a vaccination record. It is up to each of us to ensure our own personal safety. Our small team is working hard to bring all our systems up to speed. Payments will now be computerized and we have added credit card machines for the Coffee Shop & Bistro. Online registration and payments are being encouraged through the MyActiveCenter.com site as well. Bids were due August 11th for the work on upgrades to the lobby to be completed at the Center. Painting may be done in September and flooring in October but no definite dates as of now. The Friends group had a very successful shredding event to help raise funds for new lobby furniture. Another shredding event will be held in November. No programs will be held 9/21-24 due to our building being a site for early voting. The Bistro will start meals up again in September with a slight increase in price. Financial aid is available to those who cannot afford this price increase and qualify for this support. We have

added a curbside meal for patrons not yet comfortable with entering our building. Meals will be delivered directly to their car. Cindy Langley reminded the other council members that we all need to remain flexible while changes are being made.

Assistant Director's Report: Janet said she is feeling a lot more settled especially after taking part in the renewal appointments. She is confident that we have a strong support staff coming on board. The volunteers are coming back slow and steady. The ambassador roles are looking good as well as Coffee Shop & Bistro. We are hoping the Coffee Shop can reopen in September on Mondays-Wednesdays-Fridays to offset the Bistro hours. We have a new POS system for the Coffee Shop that will be taught to the staff first and then to the volunteers. Christa is leaving her contractor position as our Tech instructor after September. We are currently looking to hire another tech instructor as well as finding volunteers to help in this very important program.

Old Business: Cindy Langley said she was so impressed with the flooring choices. Bob Dionne mentioned the paint & accent wall colors and how good it will look when it's completed. The front desk renovations are wonderful and welcoming. They agreed that the lobby will be lighter & brighter once the work is completed. It was suggested that there be a donation box for the new furniture placed in the lobby for early voting. Also a bake sale will again be held during that time. The Center has been utilized several times this summer as a cooling center for the community.

New Business: Cindy Langley asked how many people have been reoriented since August 2nd. The answer is roughly 200 patrons. Bob Dionne asked how many people had signed up to use the Fitness Center. Janet answered that we have a very thick folder with renewal paperwork. Marie reminded board members that they need to sign up for their appointments as well. We have had individuals signing the Code of Conduct & Participation Waiver electronically and it's working very well. Online payments and new options are meant to make it easier and safer for patrons. The Center will continue to offer online programming for those who don't feel safe entering the building yet. Y trainers are working with our members to reorient them to the Fitness Center with a half hour appointment for returning members (45 min for new members). We are hoping to eventually be able to offer sessions with a personal trainer. Gerriann Butler asked who the staff includes now and what they do. Marie explained the staff positions and the important work the staff assistants will do to help things run smoothly. The positions of van drivers were eliminated as Cosmic Cab and PVTA are working with us to provide transportation. Bob Dionne asked about the donated solar panels and if they help the Senior Center. Marie explained that it goes into a grid for the city. The question was raised about the limited time for members to use the Fitness Center. There will be sign ups to use the Fitness Center to allow everyone to have a safe opportunity to use it.

Next Meeting: September 9th, 2021, 3:30 pm, Northampton Senior Center (via Zoom)

Adjournment : Motion to adjourn was made by Bob Dionne, 2nd by Michael Ford

Meeting adjourned @ 4:10 pm