

Northampton Council on Aging Meeting
Thursday, September 9th, 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 @ 3:33 pm

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

Excused: Ben Capistrant

Public Session: No public attended

Review and Approval of Minutes: A motion was made to accept the August minutes by Gerriann Butler and 2nd Jeanne Henry Hoose

Announcements: Jeanne Henry Hoose spoke about the in-person art exhibit and Arts Night Out to be held on September 10th.

Director’s Report: Marie will be speaking with the Department of Health again about building use due to increased Covid concerns. We are already taking a higher level of precautions than other city buildings to keep our population safe. Painting begins on 9/10 using a Zero VOC paint. Building upgrades including a new granite countertop and flooring will be installed in the near future. The Friends Group will have a donations and bake sale table to help with fundraising for the new lobby furniture during early voting Sept 21st-24th. The attendance at bistro lunches are slowly increasing along with our new curbside lunch pickup option. We have a donation page on the city website for city employees and the public to purchase \$7-\$10 lunch options to go as well. There are donation options for the Senior Center including one time & recurring payments on a new Donations Page. Fitness Center orientations have been going well with our new YMCA trainers. The 2 new staff assistants and principle clerk are rounding out our team nicely. We will be posting again for the final staff assistant position opening. Customer service is high on our priority list for staff and volunteers. Gerriann Butler asked if there were any positions for the tax write off program. That program hasn’t started back up due to

Covid but will resume in Jan 2022. It was mentioned that the Focus Group, which met just before the Center's closure, was instrumental in confirming our assessments, and also guiding us to make some of the changes to our systems that will drastically improve our customers' experiences at the center..

Assistant Director's Report: Janet is confident that we have a strong support staff in place. The volunteers are being placed where their skills can best be used. The ambassador roles have so far been filled with 8 volunteers. They have been learning how to use our iPads and MyActiveCenter.com site so they will be able to answer questions. The Bistro volunteers have already been at work during our lunches. They are working out really well. The Coffee Shop is still a work in progress. The POS system has not yet been installed. In the interim, coffee and tea are available in the Bistro to patrons. We are excited to have a bilingual volunteer waiting to join our team. It was noted that it would be good to have Spanish materials for patrons whose first language isn't English. Aurea Domenech offered her help with this as well. We are happy to have a Smith College student volunteering her time for a drawing class. We are continuing to establish a tech program. Youth Works development through Community Action has Hampshire & Franklin county young people who are willing to help us. Hampshire county would offer a couple hours per week in person. Franklin county will set up a hotline for patrons. They will also have My Active Center tutorials in person.

Old Business: Jeanne Henry Hoose listened to a story on WHMP about dementia. They had wonderful things to say about the Senior Center.

New Business: Marie spoke on the Community Compact funding to establish best practices for an age friendly city. The funds would be used to educate city departments in addressing age friendly/dementia friendly goals including terminology used by the city. The Governor is on board to make MA an age friendly state. Gerriann Butler asked that ambassadors encourage patrons to enter the Senior Center in the Florence Savings Bank scholarship contest. A question was raised about the Board of Health using the facility for the booster shots. Marie said that it would not be a good idea if we're at full speed. Another question pertaining to the limited parking once events begin again was asked. Marie shared that the Cheese Factory (at the old WWII club) has given staff permission to park in their lot.

Next Meeting: October 14th, 2021, 3:30 pm, Northampton Senior Center (via Zoom)

Adjournment : Motion to adjourn was made by Gerriann Butler, 2nd by Bob Dionne

Meeting adjourned @ 4:20 pm