



**TOWN of LINCOLN**  
**Council on Aging & Human Services**  
*c/o Town Offices*  
*16 Lincoln Road*  
*Lincoln, Massachusetts 01773*  
*Phone (781) 259-8811*

**Board Meeting Draft Minutes**  
**January 10, 2023**

*Virtual Meeting Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order, as extended on July 16, 2022, with the Governor's signing of Senate Bill #2475, Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law.*

**Board Members Present:** Tom Casey, Laura Crosby, Wendy Kusik, Donald Milan, Jane O'Rourke, Peter Von Mertens, Terry Perlmutter, Kathy Ramon.

**Staff:** Abigail Butt (COA&HS Director), Amy Rettig (Assistant Director)

**Other Attendees:** Collette Sizer (Minute-taker)

**Welcome**

Laura Crosby, in Dilla Tingley's absence, called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Laura asked for any changes or additions to the December 13, 2022 minutes. There were none. Don Milan moved that the minutes be approved. Tom Casey seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Announcements/Director's Report** (*Abigail Butt*) - *see the Director's Report January 2023*

***Social Services Update***

DEI (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion) Program

Abigail Butt informed the board that COA&HS continues to see interest in English language tutoring.

- ARPA funds will be used to translate some English at Large (EAL) outreach materials for COA&HS use into Russian, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese. COA&HS will also assist applicants fill out the forms (which are in English and pose a barrier to many).
- EAL program expansion underway. Group tutoring and one-on-one sessions will be offered. COA&HS is looking for Lincoln residents that are interested in being language tutors.
  - Training begins in March. Group classes start in June.
  - The commitment will be about 2 hours/week and 1 hour of prep work.
  - This does not require foreign language skills or prior teaching experience of any kind.

***Community Collaborations***

Some residents are struggling with the special assessment condo fees at Battle Road Farm and Minuteman Commons.

- The Lincoln Foundation has grant applications for those in "affordable deed restricted units." No one else qualifies.
- There are potentially other funds available to all BRF and MC residents who qualify based on income through the Emergency Assistance Fund. COA&HS has been helping residents with both applications.

Codman Community Farms

Codman has been approved for the SNAP HIP program as part of the focus to bring new low-income nutrition programs to Lincoln.



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- People tend to utilize the SNAP benefit outside Lincoln because they don't get proportionally as much for their money. SNAP-HIP works differently and will benefit local farms because SNAP participants do not get the additional money unless it is used at a participating farm stand.
- Codman may need to have staffing to kick-off both the Farmers Market Coupon Program and the SNAP HIP program this summer, likely in July. Volunteers will be needed once a week for a few hours to meet program staffing requirements.

### Conservation Department

Lincoln Academy will offer an intergenerational program during school vacation week on maple tree tapping, sap collection, and maple syrup. Will Leona, the new Land Steward Ranger, will present with assistants from Nancy Bergen of Matlock Farm.

### Other

- Friends of the Lincoln Council on Aging (FLCOA) will provide a kid-friendly ice cream social during school vacation open to all seniors but directed to seniors looking after kids during the school break.
- The girl scouts delivered 24 sand/salt buckets to residents and helped with the collection of items for the holiday gift bags.
- Fuel assistance demand is high this year and application approval is slow due to the increased volume. More people qualify for the benefits. COA&HS staff have been helping rush applications for desperate situations.

### ***Noteworthy Programming***

- A special Asian meal will be offered for Sr Dining on January 27 to honor the Lunar New Year. It follows a similar and well received meal on January 6.
- Free Fitness Assessments will be offered on January 27.

### **Liaison Reports**

#### ***Housing Commission Meetings (Terry Perlmutter)***

Terry Perlmutter informed the board that the Housing Commission continues to focus on repairs to houses and signing leases for tenants while moving forward on integral changes to the Commission.

- They have decided to remain a Housing Commission and not to become a Housing Authority.
- The Commission has asked the Select Board to review whether members may be appointed rather than elected. The goal is to give voting status to appointed members who represent important underrepresented groups (e.g. low income renters, affordable deed restricted condo owners, etc.).
- They recommend that the term be reduced from five years to three years.

#### ***Trip Committee (Donna Rizzo)***

Tom Casey updated on the Trip Committee's recent meeting in Donna's absence.

- The Committee reviewed their finances, and they are economically in good shape.
- The group decided to focus on a smaller number of trips, special in nature, that will attract larger numbers. They are working through a list of trip possibilities and will plan the first trip for Spring.



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***Minuteman Senior Services (MMSS) (Abigail Butt/Wendy Kusik)***

Wendy informed the board that no one was able to attend the meeting, however the Director's report indicated that MMSS is focused on better communication with the Council on Aging. Wendy noted that the board has a new president, and they are trying new things.

***Diversity Initiative (Hope White)***

Hope White was not in attendance. Abigail said that she and Amy Rettig have not found any programs yet for Black History month (February) and will work with Hope.

***Report on Community Center Building Committee (Peter Von Mertens)***

Abigail gave a quick update on a meeting between the Town Legal Counsel, she, and Peter at the end of last year. The conversation addressed board member activities and communications with regard to promotion of the Community Center and fundraising. Very broadly speaking, board members will cross the line if they seek to tell residents how vote.

- The Town has not put the Community Center on a Warrant for a vote, therefore, right now activities and promotions are only sharing information.
  - The Board can promote the mission of COA&HS.
  - They can make people aware of a vote, accommodations for the mobility impaired, etc.
  - They cannot tell people how to vote. They can express opinions as residents, but not as representatives of COA&HS.
  - Letters may be written that say the board supports a community center.
  - FLCOA and the Community Center Fundraising Committee can meet in public spaces until there is a campaign for a vote. After the Community Center is on a Warrant up for a vote, then meetings must be separated from Town resources.
  - Abigail can attend fundraising meetings to provide basic information, but she cannot do any direct fundraising.
- Tom Casey added a few points:
  - Private individuals can do what they want if it is clear that their opinions are not as representatives of the Board.
  - The board can vote for action in support of the community center.
  - Board members can say that the space is inadequate; they can vote to support the idea of a community center and communicate that approval for a community center.
  - Abigail explained that board members must avoid lobbying and cannot use their position on the board to persuade someone to vote in one manner or another.
- The Community Center Communication Subcommittee welcomes anyone that wants to help. Wendy and Laura will both contact Tim Christenfeld.

Tom reminded the group that two state representatives would be at Bemis on January 21, 3:00 p.m. to talk about legislative priorities.

**Adjournment**

Laura called for a motion to adjourn. Terry so moved, and Tom seconded. The motion passed unanimously.



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The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**  
**February 14, 2023, at 1:00 PM**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Collette Sizer, Minute Taker  
January 11, 2023