

MINUTES  
**COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD MEETING -**  
**DATE March 10, 2020**

**Present:** Carolyn Bottum, Dan Boynton, Sally Kindleberger, Wendy Kusik, Don Milan, Florence Montgomery, Kathy Ramon, Donna Rizzo, Dot Taylor, Dilla Tingley, Diana Chirita - liaison from Housing Commission  
Jennifer Glass – Select Person, Terry Perlmutter

**Minutes:** The Minutes for the February 11, 2020 meeting were approved.

**Calendar:** Carolyn reviewed the highlights for the April calendar.

**Director's Report:**

Carolyn announced that because of **COVID19** many **COA activities** have been cancelled for two weeks. The Selects are facing the difficult decision about whether to hold **Town Meeting** on March 28. The Board discussed the issue of more \$'s for the school (to be decided at Special Town Meeting) to cover important aspects of the construction that had to be cut because the construction bids came in well over what was anticipated and how this might impact the Community Center project. It was decided that because the effect on our project was only indirect and not direct that it would not be appropriate to take a stand as a Board. No vote was taken.

**Rental Assistance Program** is moving ahead and five households should begin receiving checks for April rent. If Town Meeting approves more funding we will be able to add one or two more households.

Recent staffing for **Mental Health Clinics** through Eliot has changed and has allowed us to double the hours and trim our waiting list. Grants from First Parish and St. Anne's will more than cover the extra hours.

Through the COA's centralized intake form we have been able to identify and refer more veterans for **Veterans Chapter 115 Benefits**.

**Speed Dating** was again a huge success with many participating and one couple who met last year announcing they are still together and in love.

**Matter of Balance Class** was oversubscribed with 15 on the waiting list. CHNA has awarded us another grant of \$1,000 so that we may run another class.

FLCOA will be holding the **Volunteer Lunch** on May 7 and is looking for volunteers for cleanup.

**Liaison Reports**

**Trips:** Forty-three folks enjoyed the December trip to the Newport mansions. The March trip to the MFA has been cancelled because of corona virus concerns and a low interest. May will be the Red Lion Inn and the Norman Rockwell Museum, June to the performance of 1776 at the ART and July to Block Island.

**Minuteman Senior Services:** Wendy reported on the program the MSS held on **Advocacy** - how to do it effectively and why it is an important way to influence public policy. 90% of MSS funds come from state and federal government and that building relationships with our legislators is important. She had a graph showing which methods were most effective with in-person visits topping the list. We questioned how low on the list was "Visit from a Lobbyist". Advocacy Resources: <https://malegislature.gov> and Lisa Gurgone, Executive Director, Mass Home Care [lgurfone@springwell.com](mailto:lgurfone@springwell.com), 617-972-5635.

**SHINE:** Don is still helping people even though open enrollment has ended. The federal budget country-wide for SHINE has gone down from \$2.2 m in 2016 to \$925,000 in the current budget.

**Housing Commission:**

We discussed the SLPIC proposals for rezoning in South Lincoln and whether it will address needs in Lincoln. There is concern for addressing not only low income but moderate income residents.

**Diversity Initiative.** Florence shared with us the wonderful materials she is making available for March (National Women’s History Month) and April. Such a treasure trove of great reading. We are very appreciative of this effort.

**Name Changes:** In addition to the COA asking Town Meeting to Change our name to The Council on Aging and Human Services, Jennifer Glass said they will be recommending changing “The Board of Selectmen” to “The Select Board”. They will also be looking at other town policies to ensure they are gender neutral.

**Property Tax Study Committee:**

Jennifer Glass made a presentation on the recommendations from this committee. She noted that Carolyn Bottum opened the eyes of the committee members to the needs in Lincoln. The demographics in Town have changed. There is social service safety net but also a recognition that this is not enough for many tax payers who will be severely affected by the tax increase necessitated by the School Project. The committee is proposing a Local Extension to the Means-Tested Circuit Breaker Program offered by the state. Most property owners will pay a bit more to help homeowners 65+ who have been town residents 10+ years who meet the qualifications pay no more than 10% of their income on property taxes. It is revenue neutral, just a shift of 1% of tax levy from some residents to others.

Sudbury (who drafted the first such program) and Concord have done this. It is limited to no more and ½ of 1% in the first year up to 1% in years 2 and 3. Sudbury’s program never got as high as 1%. A sunset Clause requires it be reauthorized at TM every 3 years. It is only available if the property value is \$808k or below. There are 67 residents in Lincoln already taking advantage of the state Circuit Breaker. The maximum state reimbursement is \$1130.

The Committee is recommending that this program be offered to Renters as well as Homeowners.

To accomplish the whole program requires TM vote to submit a Home Rule petition based on language in HR 2477 to adopt such a measure, and if they approve, it comes back to TM for us to officially adopt it.

A motion was made and seconded “That the Board of the COA endorse the proposal of the Property Tax Study Committee”. It was voted unanimously.

**Openings on the COA Board:** Terry Perlmutter attended the Meeting and is considering our invitation to be a Board Member. There will still be two opening since Rob Todd has decided to step down. Several others we approached have turned us down and the Board agreed to the five names that Carolyn presented and added one more.

**Summer Gift Bags:** Laura Crosby is moving ahead with this and handed out a flyer of jobs to be done and sign-up sheets. The Girl Scouts will probably not come on Board –it is a lot of work and we hope they will do it again in December.

Submitted by Dilla