

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES

Veteran's Memorial Building, Rm 19

900 Main Street, Millis, MA 02054

MEETING NOTES FROM December 11, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: Mary Skilling called the meeting to order at 9:10 am.

The following persons were present: Chairman, Mary Skilling, Maria Neville, Bill Brown, Kaplan Hasanoglu, Patty Kayo, Carol LaFreniere, Brooks Corl, Mary Russo, Brian Riley and representing the Planning Board, Jim McKay

Secretary's report accepted as written

Motion to accept report made by Maria Neville, seconded by Bill Brown

Planning Board Report:

A report was given by Jim McKay regarding some future plans for Millis. These plans include a possible assisted living facility, an over 55 community, a solar farm, and other housing and businesses.

HESSCO Report:

The Annual Meeting was held on 12/10/15. Issues of concern to Office of Elder Affairs are empowering seniors, aging in the community, homeless seniors, and the increase in the dementia population. Alice Bonner, Secretary of Elder Affairs talked about how well COA's are meshing with the community. Also Mass Option website has been launched which is the Commonwealth's new free service to simplify access to long-term services and supports for the elderly, individuals with disabilities and their caregivers.

Motion to accept by Kaplan, seconded by Bill

Outreach Report:

Hard to keep up with documentation while taking phone calls and office visits.

Board agreed on getting Dan Harp, our retiring SHINE rep., a gift certificate for all his service, funded by the Friends.

Motion to accept by Maria, seconded by Bill

Director's Report:

No headway moving pool table. Will contact Chris Soffayer to get name of person who can move it for \$250

Complaint concerning lack of events was discussed. Events are up 20% over last year; 119 events up to 143 events. Participation has also increased; Social/recreation is up 14%, and community education is up 26%. The town administrator wanted an independent audit. The problem is who would conduct that. The Executive Office of Elder Affairs was contacted. They have never had a request like this. It is dependent upon the size of the center, staffing, the needs, the hours, the involvement, the budget, etc. Emmet from the EOOEA will talk to the town administrator. Charles Aspinwall is supposed to follow up by contacting Emmett Schmarsow.

Our newsletter is sent to all Selectmen and Planning Board electronically. It was suggested to also send it to FinCom and the library.

Upcoming events are movies, pizza and ice cream starting in January.

Motion to accept by Maria, seconded by Bill

Chairman's Report

Chairman is on the Housing Board. The town needs more senior housing. According to the Housing Director if the town has property available the state will build more housing.

Medfield had a program on home downsizing. It may be a good idea to have a program on this for Millis residents as well.

Motion to accept by Kaplan, seconded by Maria

Old Business:

The raffle resulted in one response for the first month and four responses for the second month. The question remains about how many people are reading the newsletter. Also there was a discussion about what we should call ourselves. Does the term "Senior Center" have a stigma. Discussed a future meeting regarding advocacy and empowerment for our seniors in town. A civic action meeting with the theme of empowerment, advocacy, and together we can be powerful group will be planned for January to which we will provide transportation and food.

Millis Founders Day is not going to happen in 2016. The people who would be helpful in this never responded despite 2 emails, 2 phone calls, and 1 email to the website. Now there is not enough time to put it together.

Mary Russo discussed the needs for automatic doors to the Center. This will be proposed to the administration. We might be grandfathered in as this is an old building so it may not be a state requirement. Other proposed changes re: maintenance have had some results. The carpets have been cleaned and the coat rack has been moved. The thermostat/heater in the community room was looked at by the building maintenance person but it is beyond his expertise. Need to approach Charles Aspinwall again. A discussion of another hand held bar in the ladies room will be deferred until next month.

Brian Riley reported that the sign company owner has been in the hospital. He thinks the signs are ready but he has been unable to get ahold of the owner.

New Business:

There is a need for a new emergency list for seniors. We have a data base here but it is not accessible by the Police/Fire Departments. Will start to update and get permission to share information. A blurb regarding this will be put in the next Outreach space in the newsletter.

Maria made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bill.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.