

**COUNCIL ON
AGING
MEETING
MINUTES**

December 1, 2014 9:06am

Upton Senior Center – 2 Farm Street, Upton, MA 01568

In Attendance: Chair Betty Consigli, Vice Chair; Grace Wadsworth, Secretary Myra Bigelow, Members, Judi Blanchard, Richard Provost, Annette Castonguay, Maria Griffin, Social Services Jessica D’Amato, Department Specialist Karen Varney, and COA Director Janice Nowicki.

1 The monthly meeting of the Council on Aging was called to order Monday, December 1, 2014 at
2 9:06.

3 Attending the meeting was resident Edna Lariviere.
4

5 Motion was made by Richard Provost to approve the November 3rd meeting minutes with a minor
6 change. Motion was seconded, unanimous vote of the Board.
7

8 ***DIRECTOR’S REPORT:*** (full report available for review)

9 Director Janice Nowicki gave a summary of the programs and events held in November. Nipmuc
10 students volunteered to rake leaves for seniors, Miscoe Hills 5th grade students participated in a
11 program sponsored by King Arthur Flour and baked loaves of bread which was donated to the
12 Upton Center. The Miscoe after school program came to the Center and worked with the seniors
13 on a craft project for Thanksgiving. They plan on coming again on December 18th for another
14 special project. Snacks will be organized by Janice and Jessica for the students and participants.

15 A winter preparedness program was presented by Rita Sullivan from RSVP. Rita shared some great
16 tips on staying safe. She will be coming back in January to share her tips on anti- clutter.

17 The Annual turkey dinner sponsored by Senator Michael Moore and the Blackstone Valley
18 Chamber of Commerce was well attended.

19 Millhaus coffee hour held by Jessica was a success.

20 As requested by seniors, the Birthday Bash returned the month of November. It was stressed that
21 if you sign up, you must make every effort to attend. This program needs to be self- supporting.

22 The Thanksgiving cookie decorating was a big hit as well as the Tri- Valley’s Thanksgiving lunch.
23 The trip to Atria Draper on Friday was well attended. The senior had a wonderful time. It was
24 suggested to switch the Friday shopping to Wednesday, and Keeping Friday’s open for special
25 trips. Most agreed but no affirmative vote.
26

27 **STAFFING:**

28 Welcome Pat Lang! Pat will be helping out in the office and with programs. Pat will be working
29 20 hours per week under Operation A.B.L.E.

30 It is with sadness that I announce Karen’s resignation/retirement. We wish her health and happiness
31 and we hope to see her back visiting.

32 Two candidates for the driver position were interviewed and Janice is looking to hire both
33 individuals for the Senior Tax Work Off program. Both candidates must attend training before
34 they will be allowed to transport seniors. It was noted that volunteer driver Jim Earl is available to
35 transport Senior’s on Saturdays if the need arises.
36
37
38

39 **TRAINING:**

40 Director Janice Nowicki and Driver Jim Earl recently attended the Drug and Alcohol Awareness
41 Safety Sensitive Employees training by MARTAP.

42 Janice also attended a conference on Alzheimer's and Dementia as well as a performance
43 Evaluation training by Personnel Board Member Bob Carnegie.

44

45 **OTHER:**

46 Janice recently meet with the Board of Selectmen and the Library Commission in reference about
47 the possibility of a combined library and senior center. There may be grant funds available up to
48 \$8,000. Additional informational gathering and discussion is needed.

49 Social Service Coordinator Jessica D'Amato and Janice recently toured Summit Elder Care, a day
50 program in Worcester.

51 The members had a discussion about organizing a "Friends Group". Edna Lariviere gave an
52 overview of the function and benefit of a Friends Group saying it is a financial asset. It was noted
53 that the group would need to be registered by the State.

54

55 Member Judi Blanchard requested that the Director's Report be available a few days before the
56 meetings to give the members a chance to review the report. Director Janice stated that the report
57 will be available and she can email it to all members who have an email address.

58

59 Motion made by Myra Bigelow to accept the Director's report as written. Seconded by Judi
60 Blanchard, unanimous vote of the Board.

61

62 **SOCIAL SERVICES:** (full report available for review)

63 Jessica gave an overview of the programs and services she provided from general services, case
64 management, durable medical equipment and SNAP.

65 She noted that the Salvation Army fuel fund has a limit of \$275.00 per household after all other
66 options have been exhausted. This assistance is for families that are not eligible for SMOC. Also
67 from November 15th through March 15th, National Grid is not permitted to disconnect service for
68 any customer who cannot pay an overdue bill due to financial hardship. Also National Grid cannot
69 shut off service that residents needs to run their home heating system.

70 The Bloomer Girls provided holiday food baskets to 22 deserving families. St. Gabriel's provided
71 items to 11 giving tree names. Unibank has a giving tree with items from hats to gift cards they
72 are collecting for the Center to distribute to families in need.

73

74 Motion was made by Richard Provost to accept the Social Services Report as written. Seconded
75 by Grace Wadsworth. Unanimous vote of the Board.

76 Jessica thanked Edna for helping decorate the Center for the Christmas holidays.

77

78 **OLD BUSINESS:**

79 Last week Janice met with the Town accountant to review the budget numbers and the general
80 ledger account numbers as some of them were changed per request of the Auditors. Financial
81 reports will be provided to the COA Board. The COA budget has \$5,000 in an account that is to
82 be used for the Center's programs. The donation account can be used for the annual Christmas
83 party. Janice is open to transportation options, i.e., trips to enjoy the seasons Christmas lights etc.
84 Alan, Friday's van driver can work up to 8 hours so Janice is looking for suggestions as to where
85 the senior's would like to go.

86 Christmas Party update: Everything is ready for Friday December 5th. Food, snacks and gifts are
87 ready. Entertainment has been scheduled. A donation basket will be placed on one of the tables for
88 anyone wishing to help defray the entertainment cost.

89 Annette asked about other senior's around town and how the Center can get word out about the
90 different programs and parties available here at the Center. Discussion but no active resolution.

91 Janice welcomed Annette Castonguay as the new COA Board member.

92

93 Janice spoke of the need to have greeters at the monthly Men's Club supper. Richard Provost,
94 Edna Lariviere and Annette Castonguay have volunteered to help out at the December 19th supper.

95

96 ***NEW BUSINESS:***

97 Per request from Janice, Mary Ann Carpenter has drafted a Council on Aging Comparison from
98 eighteen-surrounding towns indicating hours of operation, staffing, and transportation for the
99 Board members review. This report will eventually specify the different programs they offer.

100

101 There have been issues with the card players staying well past the 3:00pm closing time. A
102 discussion took place about changing the Center's hours of operation from 9:00-3:00 to 9:00 to
103 3:30. Janice made a motion to changes the hours of operation to 9:00 to 3:30. Motion was tabled.

104 Further discussion on the hours of operation as well as offering the Center for AA meetings, baby
105 showers etc. A "donation" fee of \$75.00 could be assessed vs, "charging" a fee.

106 After a lengthy discussion, Motion was made by Grace Wadsworth to change the Center's hours
107 of operation from 9:00 to 3:00 to 9:00 to 3:30pm. Seconded by Richard Provost, unanimous vote
108 of the Board.

109

110 The process for the Election of Officers were reviewed.

111

112 Betty Consigli gave an overview of the town's cable channel saying it was a great way to work
113 toward getting new seniors to the Center. She also indicated the need for new Board members.
114 Grace complimented everyone saying the Center is doing all the right things.

115

116 The next meeting of the COA will be held Monday, January 5th at 9:00am.

117

118 Motion was made by Richard Provost to adjourn at 10:42am. Seconded by Grace Wadsworth,
119 unanimous vote of the Board.

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121

122 Respectfully submitted,

123 *Myra Bigelow – Karen Varney*

124 Secretary Dept. Specialist