

**COUNCIL ON
AGING
MEETING
MINUTES**

May 4, 2015

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

In Attendance: Chair Myra Bigelow, Vice Chair Maria Griffin, Members Richard Provost, Grace Wadsworth, Annette Castonguay, Department Specialist Bernadette Denson, Social Service Coordinator Jessica D’Amato and COA Director Janice Nowicki. Secretary Judi Blanchard and Member Betty Consigli were not able to attend.

1 The monthly meeting of the Council on Aging was called to order on Monday, May 4, 2015 at
2 9:10 a.m. by Chair Myra Bigelow. The April 6 minutes were reviewed and a motion was made
3 to approve. Motion was seconded; unanimous vote of the Board followed.
4

5 **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

6 Jan reported that there was good attendance for many activities in April. She also shared the
7 good news that Jessica passed her SHINE counsellor exam and will be certified May 20. We are
8 currently down 1 bus driver. Jan is speaking with Blythe about potentially hiring another one;
9 we need to wait and see on the budget. Tai Chi attendance has been low. We’ll stick with our
10 plan to stop it for the summer and resume in the fall. Jan would like to come up with a
11 spreadsheet for tracking our use of transportation.
12

13 May is older Americans month. We’ll have our Mother’s Day Celebration with music provided
14 by the Upton Cultural Council Grant. Other programs coming up include breakfast with a
15 healthy hearing talk, flower arranging, a lunch trip, a birthday bash and more.
16

17 There was some discussion about why the newsletter went out to one part of Millhaus a little
18 late this month. Jan suggested anyone responsible for distributing the newsletter let her know
19 if they need help, rather than having it go out late.
20

21 We received \$1000 from the Upton Women’s Club to help with fuel assistance. It’s now in our
22 donation account. A meeting was held before the Board of Selectman meeting to officially
23 accept the check and say thank you. That same night, Upton became a Purple Heart
24 community.
25

26 Jan attended a free workshop on navigating the challenges of aging. There’s another one
27 coming up in June on Elder and Disability law that Jan would like to publicize and provide rides
28 to. Jessica and Jan met with Kerry Rutkowski – Wellness Ambassador for Rite Aid.
29

30 **SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT**

31 It was a busy month since Jessica was out most Tuesdays and Thursdays. She concluded her
32 SHINE training on April 30th with a grade of 95 on the final. Marcy Singer from SHINE will
33 continue to come every other Wednesday for now.
34

35 SMOC slowed down greatly; only 1 application was received in April. SNAP was having an issue
36 with the syncing of their programs last month. Jess worked with them by phone to get this
37 resolved. We had a few people come in for durable medical equipment; we were fortunate to
38 have the items they needed. We're always taking medical equipment that is in good shape.
39 Jess made many referrals to Tri-Valley for home care services.

40
41 Jessica attended a MCOA Outreach Summit to learn more about guardianship. It was a great
42 program. The Summit included an AARP presentation for their program "Life Reimagined",
43 which focuses on how seniors can move forward in their lives. These meetings occur quarterly
44 and are a great networking opportunity.

45
46 There was a motion to accept both reports. The motion was seconded and unanimously
47 approved.

48
49 **OLD BUSINESS**
50 As a reminder, we voted on changing the COA meetings from 9 to 10:30 starting in June. Maria
51 mentioned she'll need to miss the June meeting.

52
53 Jan had to come up with a proposed budget that cut 7.5% of expenses, showing the cuts that
54 may have to happen if the override does not go through. If the override fails, it will increase
55 taxes for homeowners by an average of \$550, which is a concern. You can go to Uptonma.gov
56 for more information. Jan encouraged all to get educated and vote. We are separate from the
57 schools, but if the schools are short on money, the rest of the town will have to contribute in
58 some way. The only way Jan could come up with the 7.5% was to cut down on training (local
59 conference), programming and transportation expenses, and by keeping Jessica at 35 hours.
60 Jan was supposed to get a pay increase of 3%; she won't get that if the override fails. And we'll
61 lose some driver hours as well. Hopefully this won't have to happen.

62
63 **NEW BUSINESS**
64 We have one more Men's Club supper coming up before they take a break for the summer. We
65 have 1 greeter already; we need 1 more greeter. Annette volunteered to be here at 4:30.

66
67 Grace thanked Jan for allowing her family to hold her birthday celebration at the Center. Grace
68 also mentioned that she attended the pharmacy program and they then gave her a very
69 thorough follow-up call. She was happy with the follow-up.

70
71 A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. Unanimous vote of the Board followed. The
72 meeting was adjourned at 9:47 a.m. The next meeting of the COA will be held on Monday, June
73 1 at 10:30 a.m.