

**COUNCIL ON
AGING
MEETING
MINUTES**

November 2, 2015

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

In Attendance: Chair Myra Bigelow, Secretary Judi Blanchard, Vice Chair Maria Griffin, Members Richard Provost, Grace Wadsworth, Betty Consigli and Annette Castonguay, Social Service Coordinator Jessica D’Amato, COA Director Janice Nowicki, and Department Specialist Bernadette Denson. Judie Pitts and Edna Furphy of Upton also attended.

1 The monthly meeting of the Council on Aging was called to order on Monday, November 2 at
2 10:43 a.m. by Chair Myra Bigelow. The October 5 minutes were reviewed and a motion was
3 made to approve them. Motion was seconded; unanimous vote of the Board followed.
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5 **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**
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7 Jan reported that October was an incredibly busy month with the Health Fair. Jessica took the
8 ball and ran with it to get the fair organized. Many thanks to her for her efforts, and to
9 Bernadette and others who pitched in as well. Myra added that Jan did a great job behind the
10 scenes of the fair too. Jan is looking for feedback and suggestions for next year’s fair.
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12 Debbie Saulen is a new addition to our staff as of today. She will help with office work to free
13 staff up for other things. Our van driver, Alan, is moving to Colorado. We’ll have a Farewell
14 Social for him November 4 at 9 am.

15 November 24 is the TriValley Dinner. We’ll be doing a flyer to promote it.
16

17 Thank you to Grace and Doug who helped out with our Mystery Tour. The Bake Sale went well
18 – thanks to all the bakers and those who purchased items.
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20 **SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT**
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22 It was a crazy month! Fuel Assistance started November 1. Jessica has been working on
23 recertification applications since August. She attended SMOC training and is now following up
24 with 7 or 8 new applicants. There is now a new Director of SMOC programs, and the financial
25 guidelines are still being finalized.
26

27 31 vendors RSVP’d for our Health Fair. All but 2 showed up for the event. The number of
28 attendees allowed the vendors to interact with all visitors, which was good. Annette and Myra
29 were helpful greeting and giving out raffle tickets. Judi Pitts helped out as needed too. The
30 Town Manager was very pleased with the fair and we have received a lot of good feedback.
31 The Board of Health gave out flu shots that day. Many town departments participated. We
32 owe a huge thanks to the DPW for their help with the tables. We will be debriefing on the fair
33 to determine what went well, and where we can improve it for next year.
34

35 Marcy Singer of SHINE has added extra appointment days to free Jessica up to focus on fuel
36 assistance.

37
38 The Wednesday Wellness sessions are happening about twice a month due to other things on
39 the calendar. We'll aim to have more after the holidays.

40
41 Jessica attended an MCOA conference for 2 days and spoke with many of her counterparts. She
42 attended a workshop on Human Services which focused on the fact that we serve more than
43 just seniors.

44
45 Jess reviewed the issue of confidentiality. Due to the sensitive nature of the issues she deals
46 with, she asked that people do not cut through her office. Jess is looking to identify anyone in
47 town who may be in need. If anyone knows of people who need assistance, please let her
48 know. She'll use this information to provide the Bloomer Girls and Saint Gabriel's Church with
49 names to use for their holiday outreach programs.

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51 **SPECIAL REPORT on LIBRARY/SENIOR CENTER**

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53 Janice reported on the Library/Senior Center progress. She has seen a proposed floor plan of
54 the project. The Senior Center area was very small. Bob Flemming was not pleased with the
55 proposal, and a request was made for a new proposal. There are only a couple of possible
56 locations being considered at this point. One is the land where the funeral home is.

57
58 There was a motion to accept all three reports. The motion was seconded and unanimously
59 approved.

60
61 **OLD BUSINESS**

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63 We're still trying to get attendance up for our Tai Chi and Strength & Stretch programs. We
64 need to give it a bit longer, and then reassess whether we can continue with these.

65
66 **NEW BUSINESS**

67
68 Judi Pitts has now attended two meetings and asked to join the COA Board. Myra asked her to
69 introduce herself and tell why she'd like to be on the Board. Judi said she spent close to 20
70 years working for the government. She later moved to Upton to be closer to her daughter. She
71 feels she would be a good fit for the Board because she has good ideas, enjoys people, and likes
72 to help. She stepped out so that Board Members could talk and vote. A unanimous vote was
73 made to add her to the Board. Town Selectmen will need to approve this at their next meeting.

74
75 This year's Christmas party will include a 10 am Yankee Swap, Hot dog bar luncheon, and 1:00
76 entertainment by Johnny Diamond. The Men's Club Supper takes place that same night.

77
78 There was a discussion about holiday hours for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

79

80 Annette asked how Veterans will be made aware of our upcoming Veterans Breakfast. Jan
81 explained that Winona will have the VFW notify them, and Robin Fletcher will also help spread
82 the word. We have included the invitation in our newsletter as well.

83

84 A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. Unanimous vote of the Board followed. The
85 meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. The next meeting of the COA will be held on Monday,
86 December 7 at 10:30 a.m.