

**COUNCIL ON
AGING
MEETING
MINUTES**

February 11, 2015

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

**In Attendance: Chair Betty Consigli, Vice Chair Grace Wadsworth,
Members Richard Provost, Annette Castonguay, Maria Griffin,
Department Specialist Bernadette Denson, Social Service
Coordinator Jessica D’Amato, and COA Director Janice Nowicki.**

1 The monthly meeting of the Council on Aging was called to order Monday, February 11, 2015 at
2 9:10 by Chair Betty Consigli.

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4 The January 5th meeting minutes were reviewed and a Motion was made to approve. Motion was
5 seconded, unanimous vote of the Board followed.

6
7 **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

8 Director Janice Nowicki reviewed the Centers many January activities. She noted that the shopping
9 trips are now being scheduled two days a week on Wednesdays and Fridays which has been well
10 received by the seniors. Bernadette Denson has started as Department Specialist and the transition
11 is going well. Karen Varney has gone to Florida and will return to handle the Sr. Tax Work-off
12 Program. The Valentines party is still expected to happen as planned; we will keep an eye on the
13 weather. The Welcome Party for staff had to be rescheduled to February 27 due to the weather.
14 Jan will use that as an opportunity to do some staff appreciation. Betty Consigli thanked our driver,
15 John, for his extra effort snow-blowing the lot and fire hydrant area. She also acknowledged new
16 Driver Eddy’s help in digging the bus out of the snow. There was some discussion about whether
17 Bingo may need to be cancelled due to weather as well. The amount of snow has been
18 unprecedented; we will continue to keep our eye on the weather’s impact on all programs. Jan
19 mentioned that the Historical Society will be coming to do a genealogy program on February 22.

20
21 A discussion was raised about a volume issue that occurred recently when the card players’ group
22 was in session at the same time as the Greendale Chorus program. Jan suggested we inform people
23 that “ongoing programs may be cancelled for special events at the discretion of the Director” to
24 avoid similar issues in the future. A suggestion was made to offer alternative rooms for any
25 cancelled programs, if available. A motion was made by Betty Consigli to accept this language.
26 Motion was seconded, unanimous vote of the Board followed.

27
28 Jan shared upcoming dates for March, including a Saturday Spring Fling semi-formal on March
29 21 which will include an a Capella group. The upcoming senior walking program was discussed,
30 and Betty suggested that we consider using the town hall for indoor walking until the weather
31 improves. Jan encouraged those present to suggest individuals who might be able to champion the
32 program, for a stipend. A motion was made to accept Jan’s report. The motion was seconded and
33 the report was accepted.

34
35 **SOCIAL SERVICE’S REPORT**

36 Jessica reviewed the many Social Service programs, services and activities offered. She discussed
37 case management advocacy which refers complicated cases to Trivalley, SHINE or Milford Senior
38 Center. Jessica will be reviewing old files to review any outstanding issues. She also has a list of
39 group support services which she shares as needed with people who may benefit from such
40 services. These include services such as AA, narcotics anonymous, Alzheimer’s Association, and

41 Trivalley’s financial management support services, mental health services, and SNAP. She
42 discussed transportation services available to eligible seniors through Blaire House and MART.
43

44 Jessica talked about the heart healthy column she submitted to the February newsletter. She
45 mentioned that SMOC is running through the end of April. Funding is running out for some, so
46 it’s good to have Upton Fuel Assistance as an option. Jessica attended an outreach meeting with
47 social service coordinators from other towns. She learned that Upton is unique in that it funds a
48 full time social service coordinator, which is fantastic.
49

50 Betty inquired about whether we have a list of shovelers available to seniors. Jan explained that
51 the High School opted not to provide a list due to liability reasons, but that we have been
52 connecting people informally when we receive inquiries. The challenges with all the snow and
53 limited parking spots was discussed.
54

55 A motion was made to accept Jessica’s report. The motion was seconded and the report was
56 accepted.
57

58 **OLD BUSINESS**

59 Jan mentioned that Bernadette’s hours were increased from 18 to 19 and that there is a proposal to
60 increase Jessica’s hours from 35 to 37.5 hours. She mentioned that the van drivers are paid
61 employees. They may decide to do the tax work off program in the future. The meeting with the
62 trustees has been postponed to March 2. Jan is gathering information for that. The surveys about
63 Upton Center space are being submitted to the library and then forwarded to the Upton Center
64 where Jessica is tallying the numbers. People seem divided on the issue of whether the Upton
65 Center should be a shared vs. stand-alone space. The Board of Selectmen support combining
66 Upton Center space with Library space.
67

68 **NEW BUSINESS**

69
70 The election of officers are now in session. There is only 1 person proposed for each opening.
71 The nomination for Chairperson is Myra Bigelow. By a show of hands the vote was unanimous
72 to approve Myra. The nomination for Vice Chair is Maria Griffin. By a show of hands the vote
73 was unanimous to approve Maria. The nomination for Secretary is Judi Blanchard. By a show of
74 hands the vote was unanimous to approve Judi.
75

76 Jan discussed transportation issues. We’ve started enforcing rules about scheduling transportation,
77 such as calling 48 hours in advance to schedule, having all necessary information when calling,
78 informing us of all required stops when scheduling, and the need for 3 or more riders to run the
79 shopping trips on Wednesdays and Fridays. Jan reviewed the costs per ride with Blythe. The goal
80 was to make a gradual, realistic increase in the price, so there is no need for a drastic increase all
81 at once in the future. The VA is an alternative for some. Jan would like to do a registration form
82 for new riders. There was a motion to accept the Transportation update. It was approved by a
83 unanimous show of hands.
84

85 Jan said we'll be doing name badges for board members. Jan showed a picture of the ID she'll be
86 doing for staff as well. The cost is \$12 each, for 7 staff members. They will be left in the office
87 and only used for business purposes.

88
89 Jan has started posting things like closures, events, etc. on the COA Facebook page. She plans to
90 meet with the Town Manager to discuss what type of information will be posted there going
91 forward, and what type of releases may be needed when posting photos to the site.

92
93 Open Meeting training has not yet been rescheduled. Jan acknowledged Betty's service and what
94 a pleasure it has been working with her.

95
96 Motion was made to adjourn and seconded. Unanimous vote of the Board. The meeting adjourned
97 at 10:05 a.m. The next meeting of the COA will be held Monday, March 2, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

98
99 Respectfully submitted,
100 *Bernadette Denson*
101 Department Specialist