

**COUNCIL ON  
AGING  
MEETING  
MINUTES**

**September 21, 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 and Annette Castonguay, Social Service Coordinator Jessica D’Amato, COA Director Janice Nowicki, and Department Specialist Bernadette Denson. Member Betty Consigli was not present.*

1 The monthly meeting of the Council on Aging was called to order on Monday, September 21 at  
2 10:40 a.m. by Chair Myra Bigelow. The July 7 minutes were reviewed and a motion was made  
3 to make one correction to line 14, changing the name “Heidi” to “Wendy”. There was then a  
4 motion to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded; unanimous vote of the Board followed.  
5

6 **DIRECTOR’S REPORT**  
7

8 Jan reviewed the highlights of activities from July and August since we were unable to meet in  
9 August. The 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Senior Center was marked by a special event with  
10 entertainer Greg Curtis that was very well received. We provided free transportation to the  
11 Upton Concert series at Kiwanis Beach which was very popular. Many thanks to Jim Earl for  
12 volunteering to drive to the evening concerts. It was great for the seniors, and a nice way to  
13 increase visibility of our van. We had some nice summer socials with singers Emily and Eoin.  
14 The seniors enjoyed “breakfast by Jan” again.  
15

16 We announced the date for the Men’s Club suppers to resume in September, which are always  
17 very popular. The suppers will be held 9/18, 10/30, 11/20 and 12/18, with additional dates in  
18 the new year. Our monthly birthday bashes continue to be popular. The interview process  
19 began for our van Driver position, and Lori McGann was hired to start on Fridays beginning on  
20 September 21. Alan Rainville will be switching his shift from Fridays to Wednesdays. Lori will  
21 shadow our other drivers before beginning on her own. The van was used to transport people  
22 to the Annual Sherriff’s Picnic, which was a hit. We celebrated National Senior Citizen’s Day in  
23 August with root beer floats. We are continuing our Strength and Stretch program. Jessica is  
24 leading “Weekly Wellness Talks” on Wednesdays. We are offering free transportation to the  
25 Friends of Rachel charitable dinners at Blackstone Valley Tech. High School. Tai Chi and  
26 Computer Classes have resumed.  
27

28 Jan toured Rockwood Acres, a 55+ housing community being built in town. It’s beautiful. They  
29 have offered us the free use of a community room they have there. Funds will be deposited for  
30 a new bus in the future.  
31

32 An Upton Town Tour has been scheduled for September 30 to give seniors a tour of the  
33 refurbished Upton Town Hall along with the Fire Department and Police Department. Save the  
34 date for Upton’s Heritage Day on October 3. The COA will have a table there. We’d appreciate  
35 any volunteers who can help out. We have use of the stage at 1pm. Judi Blanchard offered to

36 help. Also save October 21 for our Health Fair at the Upton Town Hall. We'll need volunteers  
37 for that as well. We have many vendors, but we need to get the word out for people to come  
38 to the fair.

39

40 Event statistics for the month of August were distributed. We're working on getting financial  
41 information together to distribute at the COA meetings as well.

42

43 *[Note: Myra Bigelow needed to leave the meeting at this time so Maria Griffin took over to lead*  
44 *the remainder of the meeting.]*

45

#### 46 **SOCIAL SERVICES REPORT**

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48 Jessica attended a good caregiver training through Pleasant Valley in Sutton in July. They  
49 reviewed non-traditional ways to support caregivers, such as phone apps., websites, blogs to  
50 communicate with other caregivers, etc. SHINE's July meeting covered legal matters when  
51 applying for Medicaid. Jessica learned about wills and life insurance policies and which take  
52 precedence for beneficiaries. Jess dealt with some SNAP issues in July as well.

53

54 Jessica reminded everyone that our VA Rep., Robin Fletcher, is a great resource, as is Marcy  
55 Singer from SHINE, who visits every other week.

56

57 People were receiving their SMOC recertifications in August. Jessica will attend refresher  
58 training on October 13. New SMOC applicants must meet with Jessica. SNAP work remains  
59 steady. There are no longer individual caseworkers, so that simplifies the process a bit.

60

61 The Coffee Social at Millhaus went very well. The seniors requested Millhaus Ice Cream Social,  
62 which we've planned for September 22.

63

64 Over 50 vendors were invited to participate in our upcoming Health Fair. A good number have  
65 signed up already. It will be a chance to connect people with health resources. We've notified  
66 other Senior Centers of the fair so they can let their seniors know about it. We'll be giving out  
67 door prizes.

68

69 Jessica continues to attend her monthly SHINE meetings. On October 15, Open Enrollment  
70 starts.

71

72 There was a motion to accept both reports. The motion was seconded and unanimously  
73 approved.

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#### 75 **SPECIAL REPORT on LIBRARY/SENIOR CENTER**

76

77 Janice reported on the Library/Senior Center progress. She explained that the library feasibility  
78 committee disbanded and reformed. There is now one committee with Janice and members on  
79 the library side, plus Town Clerk Kelly McElreath and Selectman Bob Flemming. All the

80 members of the previous committee opted to be on this newly formed committee. The new  
81 committee interviewed architects and all voted on one to work with. They held an initial  
82 meeting with her. Six or seven parcels of land have been identified for consideration as a  
83 potential site. The Committee feels the town properties are not viable. There are three parcels  
84 now being considered, but specifics can't be disclosed yet. Jan and others will tour the sites  
85 later this week.

86

87 **OLD BUSINESS**

88 Updates on old business items were covered in the Director's report above.

89

90 **NEW BUSINESS**

91 Updates on the upcoming Heritage Day and Health Fair were already discussed above. Jessica  
92 and Jan are planning to attend the MCOA conference in October. The Formula Grant has been  
93 submitted; we should have an update on this at a future meeting.

94

95 Judi Blanchard suggested we have phone coverage in the front office if staff is out during office  
96 hours. Jan said we'll work on that and look into getting a volunteer to cover the phones.

97

98 A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. Unanimous vote of the Board followed. The  
99 meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m. The next meeting of the COA will be held on Monday,  
100 October 5 at 10:30 a.m.