

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Marjorie Mlodzinski, Treasurer Roberta Avery at 9:05 am, Vice Chair Nan Wasniewski, Secretary Gerrie Transue, Linda Pasternak, Rosanne Tousignant, Sandy Gaetano, Alternate Nola Weston.

OTHERS PRESENT: Board of Selectmen Liaison Rosemary Coyle, Board of Education Liaison Mary Tomasi, Senior Center Director Patty Watts, Board of Finance Liaison Mike Egan, Quinn Kozak.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Marge Mlodzinski called this Regular Meeting to order at 8:32 am.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Mlodzinski led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – No additions were requested.

4. CITIZENS' COMMENTS - No comments received.

5. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 8, 2021

Minutes of the March meeting were presented for review. It was noted that L. Pasterak also attended the Senior Resources meeting on March 11, 2021.

Motion by: G. Transue

to approve the March minutes with a correction to Item 7. Chair Report, second paragraph, to read, "R. Avery and L. Pasternak will be attending a Senior Resources Meeting . . ."

Second by: L. Pasternak.

Vote: Abstaining: S. Gaetano (absent from meeting).

In favor: All others present. Approved.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

6.1. CoA

In R. Avery's absence, Chair Mlodzinski reported that the CoA budget remains at \$516.26 and the Printing and Publications line item remains at zero. There is \$300 in the Printing and Publications line item in the proposed budget, if approved, will go into effect on July 1, 2021.

6.2. Senior Center

Report attached.

7. CHAIR REPORT

Chair Mlodzinski stated there is a Board of Finance (BOF) workshop tonight at 6:30 pm with a Board of Education (BOE) budget proposal with a 2.78% increase. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) will present their Town budget with an 8.24% increase at 6:30 pm on April 14, 2021.

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for May 19, with a referendum to be held on May 27, 2021. A fire equipment referendum is scheduled for June.

L. Pasternak reported on the Senior Resources recent meeting where discussion was held on calling Senior Centers something to include more than just seniors, such as community center. R. Avery noted that the new senior center is a senior center but the community will be able to use it, similar to the way the library allows public use.

Director Watts noted that the Senior Resources forum gathers information from caregivers, CoA members, directors of senior centers, etc. from the region. The need for rural transportation, affordable housing, and nutrition information were discussed.

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2021 APR 13 AM 8:50
Gayle Furman
TOWN CLERK

Selectman Coyle stated that the BOS members are all in budget mode. Many items were cut from last year's budget due to Covid worries.

M. Egan said last year's budget was very conservative with special circumstances. To reach that budget many core items were removed and now need to be put back in. There are union negotiations, health insurance increases and new police equipment with unfunded mandates

BOE member Mary Tomasi said there are no guidelines yet for the stimulus money that has been received but there is a need for summer school, transportation and remediation.

8. DIRECTOR OF SENIOR SERVICES REPORT

Director Watts presented her report. Report is attached.

R. Avery arrived during the above report.

9. OLD BUSINESS

9.1 Senior Center Building Committee

Chair Mlodzinski said there will be an ongoing outreach with an information bulletin mailed to every household, a power point presentation and letters of endorsement to the local newspaper, all to raise support for the new center.

9.2 Programs for 2021

The Environmental Club from Bacon Academy will present a program entitled *Food, Stuff, Energy and Water* on Earth Day, April 22, 2021. The program will begin at 6:00 pm. The Zoom link is available by calling the Senior Center at 860-537-3211 or www.colchesterct.gov

Chair Mlodzinski asked the members to choose a topic from a list for the Spring program put on by the Alzheimer's Association. The consensus of the members was to do the *Healthy Living for Brain and Body from the Latest Research* from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm on May 19, 2021. The Fall program may possibly be one for caretakers.

9.3 Norton Park Committee

N. Wasniewski said the committee is waiting to see some site preparation soon now that the weather is better. A Power Point presentation at the Senior Center is scheduled for 1:30 pm on April 15, 2021. At this time the members are reviewing historical documents to be included in the kiosk that will be built on the property.

9.4 Reopening of Senior Center

A reopening was planned for May but there has been a rise in Covid cases recently and a date will be determined depending on the fall of the reported cases. Director Watts receives regular updates from Director of Health Russell Melmed.

R. Coyle asked about combining in person and zoom members at the center for programs.

P. Watts said she is looking into programs that would work and the equipment that would be necessary.

10. NEW BUSINESS

10.1 Community-Wide Health Fair

Chair Mlodzinski has proposed a health fair to be held in the Spring of 2022 in

partnership with Chatham Health Department and open to the community. There will be a need for committees and persons to chair committees.

11. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Chair Mlodzinski noted that Quinn Kozak's application for an alternate to this Commission will be addressed at the Selectmen's meeting this week.

12. CITIZENS' COMMENTS – No comments were received.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by: G. Transue
to adjourn this Regular Meeting.

Second by: N. Wasniewski.

Vote: Unanimous to approve.

Chair Mlodzinski adjourned this meeting at 9:32 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Slade
Clerk

**Director of Senior Services Report
CoA Meeting April 12, 2021**

Though our building is still not open to the public, we continue to provide the following services:

- Transportation for in-town, medical rides and monthly shopping trips (masked and socially distanced)
- Meals: MOW deliveries (Tuesday-Friday) and Community Café (5 frozen meals delivered every Tuesday)
- Virtual Programming with at least 1 in-person safely distanced special event per month.
- Weekly communications through email blasts and robo-calls to all members
- Management of the office: volume of phone calls have remained steady, paying bills, grant reports, management of social media, etc.
- Building is closed, but people can call in to make an appointment for any one-on-one assistance which cannot be handled by phone. (masked and socially distanced)

Colchester's seniors are over 97% vaccinated (for ages 65+) and so are the CSC staff. Colchester is at an Orange Alert status for COVID, after spending a week at Yellow. Overall, Colchester and the CHD is trending well. Given those factors, in consultation with Mary Bylone and Russ Melmed, we have set a tentative reopening date for Monday, May 3rd, as our planning goal. Due to the unpredictability of this virus, that may have to change, but that is what we are aiming for.

I am working with the CSC staff to audit all of the classes previously held on site, prior to the shutdown, to make a plan if they can 1. Meet in person with certain safeguards in place. 2. Continue to meet virtually through Zoom or 3. Continue to be on hold until conditions changes which make it safer to meet in person. We will be auditing every service available and making adaptations for safety, as well. Once we have a cohesive reopening plan, we will push that out to our members, so everyone will have realistic expectations. It will be different than before.

DPH has issued a Public Health Warning regarding COVID-19, urging folks to continue with mask wearing and social distancing, even when vaccinated.

We have been receiving many phone calls about the 3rd round of Stimulus Checks, with many people concerned that they have yet to receive theirs.

Working with a small subcommittee of the CoA (Marge, Robbie and Gerrie) to review and update CSC Policies & Procedure Manual. Once revised, it will have to go before the BoS for approval before it can be shared for public use.

IRS has extended the tax filing deadline to May 17th. We will end the season for AARP Tax Aide appointments, as planned, by April 15th. I commend their dedication and work to offer this program this year.

Travel survey going out next week to all members with email. Trying to gain information about people's comfort levels with travel, for planning purposes.

Attendance & Meals Served:

- Meals delivered in February: Community Café: 170 MOW: 342
- Monthly transports in February: 405
- Monthly attendance in February: 733
- Total Membership: 1382

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Watts
Director of Senior Services
Municipal Agent for the Elderly