The Council on Aging Advisory Board met in regular session at the Senior Center at Punchard on Thursday, September 19, 2019. Chair Paul MacKay called the meeting to order at 8:33 am.

PRESENT: Jemma Lambert, Kimberly Rainen, Louise Hadad, Tana Goldberg, Paul MacKay, Jeff Kaplan, Joan Fox, Ken DeBenedictis, Molly Bicking

ABSENT: Thomas Rando, Judy Trerotola

GUESTS: Jay McGrath and Mark Woods, Pro AV Systems; Jim Bruneau, BH&A. Inc.

MINUTES
MOTION: Minutes of Council on Aging Meeting held on August 8, 2019 were presented. Ken made a motion to approve the minutes of August 8, 2019; Jeff seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

SEATING OF JEFF KAPLAN - Paul announced Jeff Kaplan’s appointment as a COA Board Member voted by the Select Board on August 12, 2019.

MCOA CONFERENCE – Currently we have Louise, Tana and Paul attending the conference in October. Jeff and Molly are interested in attending and indicated they would register.

LIAISON REPORTS – Paul attended a Zoning By Law Study Committee meeting. He will be attending the Housing Partnership – next meeting 2020, and he has been unable to attend the Housing Trust Fund due to conflicts. Tana was appointed by the Town Clerk to represent the COA on the 2020 Census Committee. Louise did not make the Toll Fund meeting as it had to be rescheduled. Molly went to the Commission on Disabilities meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE - none

CITIZEN INPUT - none

HEARING ASSIST TECHNOLOGY – Mark Woods and Jay McGrath presented four different hearing assist systems that would work with sound systems/microphones for the new Center and discussed each:

- RF system using radio frequency
- IR system using light waves
- Copper loop system – installation is expensive
- Wifi – uses app on cell phone and personal headphones

The group discussed pros and cons of each system along with cost. The Council was leaning towards the Wifi system because of the cost and flexibility. The Wifi system would cost approximately $1,800 for two rooms plus the Town would want to purchase 4-10 iPod touch

Approved on October 10, 2019
devices at about $99 each for those clients without a smart phone. The Town would also want to purchase a large quantity of ear buds as those are inexpensive. ADA requires a permanently installed system and Wifi meets that requirement. ADA will require a certain number of units based on the capacity of the room. There would also be flexibility to add the WiFi system for more rooms if needed in the future. If the room is divided, the Wifi system will work on both sides of the room. We are only required to put this system in one room which would be the lifelong learning center; however, Paul would like to see it in the wellness room too. Ken asked if we have looked into federal funds to underwrite the cost. Paul informed the Council of the $5,000 donation to the Friends from Quota of Andover. Quota’s donation was designated for a hearing assist system.

MOTION: Ken made a motion to recommend to the Town the purchase and installation of the Wifi System as described by Pro AV Systems; Joan seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

TIME BANK SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – no report. Kim shared her research after the August meeting with regards to the IRS. She found that time banking is not taxable and there is no tax issue.

MEN’S ACTIVITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – no report

PUBLICITY – Tana connected with Jessica from the Townsmen. She and Paul met with her and gave her some story ideas to carry through the fall. She was eager to work with us.

PROGRAMMING SUBCOMMITTEE FORMATION
Paul started this discussion to help us plan for post opening and find out what our clients want for programming. The following would like to sit on this subcommittee: Joan, Ken, Jeff, Molly, Jemma and Kathy. Ken will chair the subcommittee. Paul will also speak to Tom about this Men’s Activity subcommittee. The Programming subcommittee report will become a standing COA agenda item. Jemma discussed getting our hands around best practices where outcomes are measured and evidenced based programming, as well as researching on a national level. Kathy and the new director will be looking at this. Joan heard people complaining at grill nights about there being no trips this summer and not much going on. Ken focused on finding out what people want for programming. Molly thought there were some workshops at the MCOA conference that would help.

“RESTAURANT OF MISTAKEN ORDERS” DISCUSSION -
Paul distributed this video. He distributed this to see if the Council would be interested in trying to create something analogous here. The time bank could be involved. We could form a small subcommittee to pursue this and targeted date could be when the new Center opens. Jemma discussed the benefits of art based programming. Subcommittee: Joan, Paul and Molly. No chair was appointed. The subcommittee will invite Frank and Judy to participate.
DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Jemma presented the Director’s Report for August 2019.

- Average 146 people coming thru the Center each day in August. Thursdays being the busiest day due to food pantry.

- 687 rides in August to 61 clients

- Senior Connections 176 days of service, with an average of just over 8 per day. Our new coordinator Stephanie is great.

- Director search – Jemma updated the Council on the new director search. One finalist backed out the day before the second interview/assessment on 9/12/19, leaving only two finalists. Andrew feels strongly that the pool should be larger than two. There was detailed conversations regarding the delay in hiring a new director, reposting the position, Jemma’s increased responsibilities as Acting Director, how to improve the search process by making personal phone calls, communication during the process, and the importance of finding the best candidate.

- Transition – Jemma updated the Council on the search for program space and kitchen space. Last week they visited the Lawrence Elks for the kitchen – cost $2,500 per week; Greek Church wanted $1,000 per week – Andrew may go back to negotiate. Yesterday and last Friday, they visited the Ballard Vale United Church and the space is perfect for programs, serving lunch and possibly the kitchen (if upgraded to commercial). Jemma is waiting to hear back from them with what they want for rent.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURN: Kim made a motion to adjourn at 10:26 am; Jeff seconded the motion; motion carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:26 am

Respectfully submitted,
Christine M. Marshall, Office Assistant