

**Town of Natick
Council on Aging Board Committee
Monday, April 10, 2023**

Minutes

Board Members in Attendance: Elaina Danahy; Andrew Eschtruth; Harriet Merkowitz; Karen Oakley; Connie Pitt; Judy Sabol; Mal Sockol; Rick Subber

Board Members Absent: Saul Beaumont; Sue Peters

Associate Members Present: Linda Jaffe;

Associate Members Absent: Sal Pandolfo

Guest Speaker: Travis Farley, Deputy Director, Park & Recreation

COA Staff: Lorraine McNally, Deputy Director, Council on Aging and Human Services

Chair Judy Sabol opened the meeting at 7:02 pm and welcomed board members and staff.

- 1) **Public Concerns**— none
- 2) **Guest Speaker** – Travis Farley, Deputy Director of Community Services, Parks & Recreation.
 - a) Travis is the past president of the Mass Park & Recreation Association and formerly led the services in Norwood.
 - b) Travis came to Natick 6 months ago. Meeting to learn about programs that residents would like. Collaborating with the Community Senior Center (CSC) is a goal. Having programs especially on weekends and late afternoons at the CSC.
 - c) Pickleball courts at East School have been opened; Connor Heffler Park is 5 days pickleball and 2 days tennis. Growing in popularity and hard to keep up with demand. Working on a scheduling system so residents can sign-up. Consider adding a night or 2 at CSC.
 - d) Building monitor for CSC extended until 7pm and Saturday morning.
 - e) Recreation Department is located at the Cole Center.
 - f) Walking trail network is managed by the Conservation Commission.
- 3) **Chair's Report**- Judy Sabol
 - a) COA Board Vacancy – Have 1 open position, Rick Subber will not renew his term after June of this year. Andrew Eschtruth is finishing his second term in June.
 - b) Town Meeting Warrant Articles relevant to Seniors – 200 Pond St Assisted Living Overlay article is withdrawn; no other articles specifically relevant for Seniors.
 - c) Senior Housing Updates – Former St Patricks's School demolition has started and will have some affordable units.
 - d) Nominating Committee membership – Elaina Danahy has volunteered to be chair the Nominating Committee. Harriet Merkowitz and Andrew Eschtruth volunteered.
 - e) Update on Remote Meetings – State has extended the use of remote meetings through March 2025. Consider having an in person/hybrid meeting, possibly in June.

- f) Ethics Training – Remind everyone to complete the Ethics Training by April 15. Send an email to Judy when complete it.
- g) Other - Elaina will chair May meeting.
- 4) **Other – Deputy Director’s Report – Lorraine McNally**
 - a) Staff Updates – Interviews next week for the Volunteer Services Program Manager position. Allan, afternoon receptionist, is taking a leave for April. Debbie Budd is defining a role that will report to her.
 - b) Program & Services Updates – Hosting Earth Day week events – Repair Café from 2-5pm at CSC on Saturday, April 29. Trips being planned using 3 different bus companies to evaluate how they operate and booked through the end of year. Women offer hiking programs off-site; plan 2 per month starting end of month; 2-2.5 hours hikes.
- 5) **Subcommittee and Work Group update**
 - a) Housing Subcommittee Update—Sue Peters – No update
 - b) Pickleball Workgroup – Mal Sockol – Halfway through a 6 hour beginners program and has been very successful. Email blast announced it.
- 6) **Liaison Reports**
 - a) Friends of the Natick Senior Center—Karen Oakley – Friends met on March 21. Gift Shop continues to do well mornings; not enough activity for afternoon hours. Last Bingo session only had 4 people attending. St Patrick’s Day Luncheon was a huge success; 80+ attendees. Annual Meeting being planned in September. Holding lunches at local restaurants for Friends members \$5 and others \$10 once per month.
 - b) Springwell Elder Services—Harriet Merkowitz, Sue Peters – Met on March 22 and meet again end of April. Grant to work with Newton Wellesley Hospital to ensure seniors have proper help before release. Merger is progressing.
 - c) Disability Commission – Sue Peters – No report.
- 7) **Board Concerns—**
 - a) Walking in the Gym can be challenging with some pickleball players starting early. Mal noted that the Pickleball players have all been informed to not interfere with walkers. Lorraine has asked custodian to not set-up nets too early.
 - b) Who is considered to be a senior? 50 and over or 65+? Technically all programs are available to any age but most participants are 60+.
- 8) **Deputy Director Concerns – none**
- 9) **Secretary’s Report—**Minutes of March 13, 2023, were reviewed. Karen Oakley made a motion to approve the minutes; Harriet Merkowitz seconded. The motion passed (8-0-0).
- 10) Harriet Merkowitz made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mal Sockol seconded. The motion carried (8-0-0). Chair Judy Sabol declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Pitt, Secretary