

**Town of Natick  
Council on Aging Board Committee  
Monday, May 08, 2023**

**Minutes**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Saul Beaumont; Elaina Danahy; Andrew Eschtruth; Harriet Merkowit; Karen Oakley; Sue Peters; Connie Pitt;

**Board Members Absent:** Judy Sabol; Mal Sockol; Rick Subber

**Associate Members Present:** Sal Pandolfo

**Associate Members Absent:** Linda Jaffe;

**Public:** Ellen Schneider

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

Vice Chair Elaina Danahy opened the meeting at 7:02 pm and welcomed board members and staff.

- 1) **Public Concerns**— none
- 2) **Chair's Report**- Elaina Danahy, Vice Chair
  - a) COA Board Vacancy – 1 vacancy now and 2<sup>nd</sup> vacancy as of end of June. Lorraine will ask Select Board to work towards filling the 2 vacancies.
  - b) In Person / Hybrid Meeting for June – looking to hold a hybrid meeting for June. Zoom cart in room 125 of Community Senior Center to link conference room with other Zoom attendees. Let Lorraine know the Wednesday before the meeting.
  - c) Town Meeting Warrant Articles Relevant to Seniors – Not really any specific Senior Citizen impact. Concern raised on zoning change for Union Street, 'Gateway District', with commercial first floor and apartments above. Concern raised that there was no stipulation for affordable housing units, but this is determined by Planning Board. Natick is just meeting Affordable Housing minimum currently.
  - d) Ethics Training – All board members have completed their training, thank you.
- 3) Other – **Deputy Director's Report** – Lorraine McNally
  - a) Staff Updates – Maureen Pipe, Part Time (PT) receptionist in morning, retired. Allen is not returning from leave. Emily Meyers also resigned. Working diligently to fill positions. Offer to person as Program Manager of Volunteer Services targeted to start May 17. Assistant Director for Resource Allocation, shared between Cole Center and Community Senior Center is starting shortly. There will be a social worker but the job responsibilities are being updated before the position can be posted.
  - b) Program & Services Updates – Memory Café was well attended; more attendees each time. Artwork hanging on both floors from the schools. Added a hiking program, 2.5-

hour hikes and plan to have hikes two times per month. Repair Café on April 29 was a huge hit; thank you to fixers. Plan to hold Repair Café two times per year.

- c) Strategic Plan: Marketing Goal Update – Increasing presence at Community events. At a Town Employee benefits fair, the Community Services had a table. Working partnership with Olin College. Working with Town Departments; May is National Mental Health Awareness Month. Have green ribbons in lobby and encourage people to write a message that will go on a tree in the library to show support for Mental Health assistance.

4) **Subcommittee and Work Group update**

- a) Housing Subcommittee Update—Sue Peters – Met last month and Sue is drafting a progress report. May want to propose a presentation to Select Board to focus on senior affordable housing. Would have to be voted on as a COA Board.
- b) Pickleball Workgroup – Mal Sockol – Continue beginners on Fridays through the middle of June.
- c) Other

5) **Liaison Reports**

- a) Friends of the Natick Senior Center—Karen Oakley – Met in April. Gift Shop has more people coming back. Lunch at Agostino’s and had 40 people attended. Plan lunch at Morse’s Tavern in May. Like to run a Fall Fund Raising Fair at the Center focusing on raffles, membership table and like to hold at Community Senior Center for no fee. Judy D’Antonio and MaryJane Burgess have resigned from the Board. Friends will support the Mother’s Day Lunch, Coffee Pot in reading area and new TV.
- b) Springwell Elder Services—Harriet Merkowitz, Sue Peters – April 26 meeting voted on retirement plan. Governance committee has established criteria to join the board. Phone systems have been integrated. Keeping offices in both towns – Marlboro lease through 2028. Will meet with the Natick COA at a future meeting.
- c) Disability Commission – Sue Peters – No report.

6) **Board Concerns**— none

7) **Deputy Director Concerns** – none

8) **Secretary’s Report**—Minutes of April 10, 2023, were reviewed and corrected. Harriet Merkowitz made a motion to approve the minutes; Karen Oakley seconded. The motion passed (7-0-0).

9) Harriet Merkowitz made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Andrew Eschtruth seconded. The motion carried (7-0-0). Elaina Danahy declared the meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Connie Pitt, Secretary