

Town of Natick
Council on Aging Board Minutes
117 East Central Street, Natick, MA
Monday, January 14, 2019, 7:00 pm

Minutes

Board Members in Attendance: William Grome, Chair; Andrew Eschtruth, Vice Chair; Elaine Ostroff, Secretary, Judy Keefe, Harriet Merkowitz, Connie Pitt, Sue Peters, Roberta Ciarfella

Board Members Absent: Sal Pandolfo

Associate Members Present: Karen Oakley, Cari Ryding

COA Staff: Lorraine McNally, Assistant Director, Council on Aging

Guests: Judy Sabol

Representatives from other Boards present: Jeffrey Curran, Friends of the Natick Senior Center

William Grome, Chair, opened the meeting at 7:02 pm

1. William Grome welcomed everyone to meeting. There were some members of the public attending.
2. Guest speaker, James White, Jr, Director of Public Health – Opioid Task Force. He reported that the Health Dept. was awarded a 5 year grant that will support drug task force staffing. They will adapt and expand current programs. “Prevention, Outreach, Recovery” is the focus of the task force. Question was asked if there is a particular drug that is of concern, and Mr. White noted that there are a variety of drugs that can be abused, thus requiring more advocacy, including physicians. He noted that this is a serious mental health concern. In addition, “vaping” has become a major concern as well as adult recreational drug usage.
3. Council on Aging Director’s Report:
 - a. Lorraine McNally, Asst. Director, discussed a concern around the TV in the Lincoln Café. Susan Ramsey, COA Director, received concerns from 2 people regarding the TV in the Lincoln Café. Noise as well as the content of the TV shows were cited. After some discussion with the Board, it was decided to try turning off the volume and turning on closed captioning, and showing different shows each day.
 - b. Lorraine reported on the FY19 budget and some changes to the FY20. The total budgeted for operating expenses has not changed from FY19 to 20. Finance Committee

allowed changes to reflect actual expense and need. The salaries line had some increases, but that is set by a formula determined by administration.

4. Chair's Report, William Grome:
 - a. Bill discussed filling some of the subcommittee slots; there was a discussion about the possibility of adding a transportation subcommittee as there needs to be more clarity and visibility around options for the community. A unanimous vote was taken for the COA to establish a subcommittee to explore transportation in the greater Natick area.
5. Liaison Reports
 - a. Friends of the Natick Senior Center-- Judy Keefe reported that the Lincoln Café is running at a deficit; the Holiday Fair grossed \$3915 in profit; there was a general consensus that communications between the Center community and the Friends has improved.
 - b. Baypath Elder Services – Harriet Merkwowitz reported that BayPath served 1344 meals in their Meals on Wheels program in Natick.
 - c. Commission on Disability – Sue Peters reported that the COD is looking for new members. They are going to be providing 2 scholarships to Natick High School students as they've done in past. That process is currently underway.
6. Committee Reports
 - a. Rules of Governance – Sal Pandolfo: no meeting; no report
 - b. Diversity – Cari Ryding reported on several community events that will be happening. Discussed how new programs (like a program for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for example) could enhance and promote diversity in town and how the town could better track diverse populations within town.
 - c. Housing – Bobbie Ciarfella reported that there is a need for a new member.
7. COA Board Concerns – none
8. Director's Concerns – Lorraine reported that Susan had received a letter from an individual who is hoping to open a marijuana dispensary in town and would like to speak to the Board to educate them about this topic. While there was general consensus that this is an area where the Board would like more information, they felt that it would be better to wait to see if a location is approved before a presentation to the Board is made.
9. Secretary's Report – minutes of Dec. 10, 2018 meeting: Changes were made to fix formatting, three typos, and to add "Respectfully submitted" and the Secretary's name. Minutes approved with those edits.
10. Harriet Merkwowitz moved to adjourn meeting, Andrew Eschtruth seconded. Meeting ended at 8:45 pm.

Meeting notes prepared by

Elaine Ostroff, Secretary