

TOWN OF SUDBURY
COUNCIL ON AGING
MINUTES OF MEETING
December 14, 2021
4:00 PM

ALL COA MEETINGS ARE NOW RECORDED AND
AVAILABLE ON SUDBURYTV.ORG

**COA meetings done over Town Zoom video
Conference Account**

WEBSITE: <http://sudbury.ma.us/departments/CouncilOnAging/>
Meeting Conducted Via Zoom

Present: Chairman: Jeff Levine

Members Present: Sandy Lasky, Bob Lieberman, Anna Newberg, Pat Tabloski, Don Sherman, Peg Espinola, Pat Lewis and Carmine Gentile

Also Attending: Debra Galloway Director of Sr. Center

Guests via Video: Lynn Puorro (Sudbury TV resource), Jennifer Roberts (Select Board Member), Janie Dretler (Select Board Member), and Charlie Russo (Select Board Member),

Meeting called to order by Chairman Jeff Levine at 4:02 PM

Attendance by all those members above confirmed by roll-call affirmation.

Approval of Minutes from Meetings of November 9, 2021 and November 16, 2021
-The COA unanimously approved by roll-call vote as submitted with amendments.

State Legislative Update (Carmine Gentile): Massachusetts House passed an appropriations bill to include a provision for Home Health Care workers to receive a one time premium payment of between \$500 -\$2,000. In addition, provisions were made for 1) \$16.5 million to repay student loans, 2) \$13.5 million toward workforce programs, 3) \$300 million for home and community based services, 4) \$50 million toward nursing home capital improvements, 5) \$25 million for forgivable loan programs and 6) \$25 million to support critical workforce shortages in nursing homes

BayPath Elder Services report (Pat Tabloski): Discussion covering the recent Bay Path Elder Services meeting including 1) Funding opportunities for Councils on Aging, 2) Home Care Aide Shortage and 3) Organizational Update - Adult Foster Care program. Please see Appendix A for details. Additional topics included healthy living, family caregivers and transportation opportunities available.

Director's Report: (Debra Galloway): Transportation remains a critical and valuable program as the need for medical taxi rides remains key. A special event was held to supply meals in a safe, contact free open space. An emergency procedures update was held for staff, front desk personnel and volunteers. Additional communications were held to discuss planning to stay at home and

coping with severe weather needs. The Friends of the Sudbury Senior Citizens Board has requested a meet and greet with the Board Members of the Council on Aging.

Board of Health (Pat Lewis): A letter was submitted from the Sudbury Commission on Disabilities to the Permanent Building Committee with respect to the new Fairbanks Community Center. Issues concerning the wellbeing of our community members included Locker room spaces (Roll-in showers, Universal changing rooms,) Doors (Entrance to Senior Center and Automatic openers) as well as Parking concerns, Assisted Hearing Technology and potential ARPA funding. Food supply remains a concern for residents and the recent Massachusetts House passed an appropriations bill which included funding in the amount of \$25 thousand for freezer/ refrigerating at the Sudbury Food Pantry.

Transportation (Sandy Lasky): Focus on sustainability of the program funding via available grants to be applied for. A survey will be conducted to explore copay options for taxi and Uber rides. The Select Board has requested a business plan/structure to support a newly formed transportation arm to take over and administer the program. Resources include JFK, Tommy's Taxi and Uber drivers

Fairbanks Project Update (Jeff Levine): Just prior to this agenda item, public comment was taken from Jennifer Roberts (Select Board Member). Discussion continued with regard to the potential use of a portion of the Towns free cash (approximately \$6 million and requires a Town Meeting appropriation) to help augment and restore certain value engineering cuts made to the project. The Select Board awaits submission of a proposal from Town Manager. The use of ARPA funds was also to be considered in the earlier stages of this discussion. Meetings continue with project management to discuss furniture and fixtures as well as audio visual equipment in all program rooms and providing supplemental hearing capabilities. This effort needs to be coordinated with Town Manager and project management team for specific costs associated with this initiative. Friends of the Sudbury Senior Citizens has agreed to apply for a grant from the Cummings Foundation in the amount of \$100,000 for funding of the new kitchen, and to fund the total difference between these costs and the grant monies received. In addition the Friends voted to allocate up to \$100,000 toward a covered outside patio. Value engineering/cost benefit analysis continues to explore potential savings to stay on the budget track. We have not yet received permission to discuss with the Architect our request to supply the COA cost by line item for potential use of ARPA funds. Timeline for the project includes March/April bid process, May/June commencement of construction, Summer of 2023 occupancy and Jan 2024 to complete the project.

Mission Statement and Goals (Jeff Levine): Preliminary discussions began for the consideration to update the COA's mission statement and short term and long term goal. Follow up at the next board meeting to consider.

Market Research Plan(Sandy Lasky/Jeff Levine); Discussion to outline steps to interview focus groups and conduct market research followed by qualitative research to get seniors more engaged and integrated into Senior Center programs. Need to set goals and objectives while identifying what seniors want as there has been a shift due to the pandemic. Identify what else can be done to enhance membership.

Motion was made by Pat Tabloski to adjourn. Second by Anna Newberg. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote. Adjourned at 5:43pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for January 11,, 2022at 4PM using the Hybrid meeting approach of In Person at the Fairbanks Community Center and via zoom. Viewable later on Sudbury TV (SudburyTV.org).

Respectfully submitted by
Robert Lieberman
COA Secretary

Appendix A

BayPath Elder Services – Updates for COAs – December 2021

Funding Opportunities for Councils on Aging

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) at BayPath Elder Services is opening a mid-year, 18-month grant cycle funded by the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA). The grant cycle will be from April 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023. The funding is dependent upon satisfactory performance, as monitored by BayPath Elder Services, and availability of funds. This is in addition to the annual cycle that will commence on 10/1/2022 through 9/30/23.

The priorities for this 18-month cycle are transportation needs, Evidence Based Healthy Living Programs and Family Caregiver supports, including Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. The application can be found on the BayPath website. The due date of the application is January 10, 2022.

Home Care Aide Shortage

The shortage of aides to provide needed homemaking and personal care services to participants in the Commonwealth's Home Care Program continues. This is affecting agencies all over the state, not just BayPath Elder Services. The Executive Office of Elder Affairs has made additional funds available to aging agencies for provider rates, and BayPath has given providers significant rate enhancements in the hope that they will increase compensation to home care aides to attract and retain qualified workers. Although we have not seen a reduction in the workforce as a result of the vaccine mandate for in-home care workers, the BayPath list of consumers waiting for services has not gone down. We hope that the rate increases will have the desired effect.

Organizational Update

BayPath has made the difficult decision to close its Adult Foster Care program. Adult Foster Care is a program with a high administrative cost due to the many MassHealth requirements. The program at BayPath is small and has not grown over the past few years. We are working with members and caregivers to transition them a new agency of their choice.