

TOWN OF SUDBURY
COUNCIL ON AGING
MINUTES OF MEETING

January 11, 2022

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), Kay Bell (Chair, Sudbury Commission on Disability)

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 Meeting of December 14, 2021 –The COA unanimously approved by roll-call vote as submitted with amendments.

BayPath Elder Services report (Pat Tabloski): Discussion covering the recent Bay Path Elder Services meeting including 1) Advocate of the Year award to Carmine Gentile, 2) Home and Community Based Services direct care workforce compensation increase extended through June 30, 2022, 3) MassHealth Family Assistance and 4) Light Up the Holidays program. Please see Appendix A for details.

Director's Report: (Debra Galloway): Updating emergency procedures including health, fire, severe weather and Board of Health policies. Transportation policy is under review for updates and an Uber clinic has been offered to assist riders with the online functionality. Caregiver baskets were distributed for the members of the Dementia Friendly program.

Board of Health (Pat Lewis): No specific update was presented but mention of discussion concerning the food pantry and the need for delivery personnel continues.

Transportation (Sandy Lasky): One computer “app” for all transportation options is under review. Continued focus on sustainability of the program funding via available grants to be applied for and free cash request at upcoming Town Meeting.. A survey will be conducted to explore copay options for taxi and Uber rides. A

business plan will be submitted to the Select Board to include low, medium and high level of service programs to support a newly formed transportation group to take over and administer the program.

State Legislative Update (Carmine Gentile): Joint Committee on Revenue meetings were held to discuss pending issues and concerns while the State House and Senate conducted informal meetings over the last 30 days.

Fairbanks Project Update (Jeff Levine): Last week a meeting was held with the project team to look at finishes for each tenant (Sudbury Senior Center, Park and Recreation and the Sudbury School Administration.) including tiles, carpet and flooring. Samples are available for viewing in the hallway outside the Fairbank gym. The Select Board is considering an article for the upcoming Town Warrant to utilize an incremental five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) of free cash to fund a) three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) for audio visual equipment and b) two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) for furniture. Discussions continue with the project team and the Friends of Sudbury Senior Citizens with respect to funding of a covered outside patio.

ARPA Funds (Jeff Levine): A consultant has been retained to review the qualifications for the application of the appropriation of funds received. A large portion of available ARPA funds can be used to offset the fiscal revenue shortfall for the Town provided it is used for municipal purposes. Enhanced audio visual equipment to support Zoom/Hybrid meetings as well as Life Long Learning programs is critical to meeting the goals of the Senior Center, and ARPA funds could be used for this purpose.

Commission On Disability (Peg Espinola): Concern was raised that the Commission was not involved in the design of the new Community Center. Questions were raised on receiving an accountability statement from the builders with regard to ADA compliance and whether outside consultant would agree to oversee initiative linked to ADA standards.

Nominating Committee (Jeff Levine): Discussion pursued with regard to members on the committee. Current members on the Board (Pat Tabloski and Peg Espinola) are not seeking re-election Nominating committee members' including Bob Lieberman, Pat Tabloski and Carmine Gentile agreed to facilitate the search for the two pending open seats.

Town Meeting Articles (Debra Galloway): Discussion on the spending limit of the COA Program fund in the amount of sixty five thousand dollars (\$65,000) revolving account was discussed.

Motion was made by Peg Espinola and a second by Carmine Gentile to approve the Warrant article form . Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

A second article discussion continued concerning the FY 23 spending limit of the COA Metro West Regional Transit Authority (MWRTA) revolving fund at one hundred and seventy five thousand dollars (\$175,000). After discussion a

Motion was made by Bob Lieberman and a second by Anna Newberg to approve the Warrant article form Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

Tax Work –Off Program (Debra Galloway): Discussion on Sudbury Property Tax Work-Off Program proposal to allow for an increase from the current \$1,350 per year to \$1,425 per year consistent with Mass. State minimum wage increase as of January 1, 2022 from \$13.50 an hour to \$14.25 per hour. This would accommodate up to 100 work hours as the maximum abatement allowance for qualified individuals. The proposal would automatically increase the property tax abatement rate each year as the minimum wage was increased.

Motion was made by Carmine Gentile and a second by Peg Espinola to approve the Sudbury Property Tax Abatement increase Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

Sudbury Senior Center Budget (Debra Galloway): Reviewed the FY 23 budget components including salaries of Director and 4 staff and general expenses for mailings, supplies, kitchen/entertaining, training and copier cost , Total fiscal year budget of \$358,400.

Motion was made by Don Sherman and a second by Pat Tabloski to approve the budget. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote.

Mission Statement and Goals (Jeff Levine): Preliminary discussions began to identify what the focus of the Council is. Separate discussions to continue with each board member to identify purpose, what we hope to achieve and actions to be taken. Carmine Gentile will chair the project

Market Research Plan (Sandy Lasky/Jeff Levine); Continued discussion to outline steps to interview focus groups. Identify four groups consisting of 1) those between ages 60-70 who come to the Senior Center,2) those between 60-70 who don't utilize the Senior Center,3) those 70 and older who come to the Senior Center and 4) those over 70 who don't use the center. From there a survey will be developed for a larger audience looking at but not limited to new programs, how we communicate and any negative perceptions. Expected launch in the March/April timeframe

Open Meeting Law/Ethics Training (Debra Galloway): Reviewed the specific training areas required that include 1) Conflict of Interest/Ethics, 2) Open meeting law and 3) LGBT training.. Links were provided to COA board members to access online training classes to complete the classes.

Sewataro Update (Jeff Levine): Consensus for the submission of a Warrant Article to retain a consultant to conduct a study for alternative uses of the property. A Citizens Petition article will potentially be submitted but could be withdrawn if the Select Board submits a warrant article. In addition, the contract calls for a mutually agreeable extension for the Camp Operator of up to five years. A subcommittee comprised of the Select Board Chairperson and Vice Chairperson to be formed to negotiate directly with the Camp Operator. Term extension, financial terms and accessibility are among the area for discussion.

Motion was made by Carmine Gentile to adjourn. Second by Pat Tabloski. Unanimously approved by roll-call vote. Adjourned at 5:49pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for February 8,, 2022 at 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 – January 2022

Advocate of the Year

Carmine Gentile was named Advocate of the Year by the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts. He is a past member of this board and a current member of the Sudbury Council on Aging. The Board wishes to congratulate Representative Gentile on this acknowledgment and express its gratitude for his efforts on behalf the of the home care aid workforce, as well as older adults and people with of all ages disabilities.

American Recovery Plan Act Funds for Home and Community Based Services

The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged community-based services providers in many ways, but particularly in the area of retention and recruitment of direct care workers. MassHealth and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services have responded throughout the pandemic by funding rate increases to providers for the purpose of increasing compensation to the direct care workforce. EOHHS just announced that those increases will continue through June 30, 2022.

MassHealth Family Assistance

Effective November 1, 2021 MassHealth has extended access to community and facility based long term services and supports to legal residents under color of law who have not been in the U.S. for the five years required to qualify for federal Medicaid. Prior to November 1, the Family Assistance coverage provided by MassHealth did not include LTSS, such as nursing facility care, Personal Care Attendant, Adult Day Health, etc. Aging Services Access Points such as BayPath are responsible for assessing eligibility for LTSS.

Light Up the Holidays

Every year the generous employees at The TJX Companies (the company that owns TJ Maxx, HomeGoods, and Marshall's) purchase gifts for BayPath Elder Services consumers, who may not otherwise receive one. BayPath staff delivered 100 gifts from TJX to consumers. In addition, BayPath staff donated over 100 toys for tots and a shipment of household goods to Pathways Transitional Shelter in Framingham. We are grateful for the holiday giving to so many people in need.

