



APPROVED

Town of Newbury Council on Aging
Meeting Minutes
Date: August 28, 2023

Members in attendance: Damon Jespersen, Joyce Machiros, John Ferrara, Chuck Bear, Susan Grillo, Chris Howe, Gerry DiMaio, Jeanine Cunningham

Other attendees: Cindy Currier

Motion to open the meeting made by Chuck Bear, seconded by Jeanine Cunningham
Unanimous approval.

Audience: Bill DiMaio (Select Board Member), Leslie Matthews (Select Board Member), Kristen Grubbs (Assistant Town Planner). Comments: Bill liked idea of ad hoc site selection committee and suggested COA notify the Select Board and also refer to the prior needs survey report on COA website; and Leslie asked COA to clarify if Select Board and/or other Town Board members can participate on the COA ad hoc committee. Damon said he would clarify this before next meeting. Kristen just introduced herself to the COA.

Motion to approve Minutes of July 17, 2023 meeting made by Chuck Bear, seconded by Jeanine Cunningham. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Damon introduced topic of forming an ad hoc site selection committee and presented an overview and discussion ensued as follows:

Newbury land at library is a viable site.

Jeanine questioned whether an ad hoc committee is in our purview? Per Damon, yes. Purpose is not to decide, but to make recommendations to full COA voting members and then to Select Board.

We need to look at needs first and COA members should refer to document from June 2020 with background work already done. (See Cindy's email of 8/28/2023 for link to 2020 needs report on the Town website.)

Timeline = current COA lease expires May 2027.

Jerry questioned whether we can form a sub-committee.

Chuck suggested we get other Town departments involved (e.g., COA, Select Board, Finance Committee, etc.)

Per Damon, an "ad hoc" committee is not a formal committee and its intent is to get started on the process of selecting a suitable site for the COA.

Purpose of an ad hoc committee is to set goals for the committee, such as timeline for decision; define needs of COA (including extra-curricular activities); review 2020 needs report, update and consider ADA compliance needs; identify location options; invite others to join the ad hoc committee (e.g., Bob Connors for financial input, Eric Spawn for design input).

John elaborated on needs for COA and his preference for a particular site and other possibilities.

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Motion to form an ad hoc committee by Chris Howe, seconded by John Ferrara and Joyce Machiros. Unanimous approval.

A discussion on COA needs included:

Joyce suggested a need for a place where all can dine together with parking, seating and a kitchen.

Cindy said more individual meeting/activity rooms are needed (COA only has 2 rooms now). For example, a yoga/meditation room for 8-12 people. Cindy pointed out that offsite locations now are PITA Hall for large group meals, Manters Field for yoga/exercise/pickleball and it is a burden to pack and take everything “on the road”. We need spaces indoors and outdoors onsite. She added that the current individual office spaces for director, activities director and outreach coordinator are good for now.

Chuck suggested we need an option for emergency shelter and a warming/cooling center with AC, water, cooking and sleeping areas.

Jeanine suggested that we have a community center available to rent out to other organizations and private parties to earn some money for COA needs.

Chris said we need a growth plan component.

Jeanine asked who is or is not participating in COA programs? How do we justify growth needs.

Gerry said we should look at the 2020 survey to identify present use and future wants/needs and Cindy said we can also do another survey if deemed necessary.

Damon introduced discussion regarding potential members of an ad hoc committee which may include COA members, Select Board members, other Newbury Town committee/board members, and public individuals. He emphasized that this ad hoc group would not be a formal public group so it wouldn't need to follow open meeting law rules. Others suggested the committee needs 6-7 people, 2 COA members, building department member, planning board member, COA director (Cindy), and general public members. Gerry emphasized that Cindy would be an essential committee member.

Motion to (prior to next COA meeting) generate draft letters via Cindy's email or office asking the general public to participate in this ad hoc committee was made by Damon Jespersen, seconded by Chris Howe.

Next topic discussed: COA flyer for inclusion tax bills. Cindy said we received permission from Tracy Blaze to include a flyer in the tax bills, but we are too late for 9/1 deadline for 11/1 tax bills. We could meet the deadline for 2/1/24 tax bills. For 3600 tax bills, the printing cost would be about \$680. Cindy presented 2 different drafts of a flyer for COA members to review, edit and select one or the other prior to next meeting. (See her email of 8/28/2023 to COA members.) Susan suggested the concept of “less is more” to keep the document to one page and be eye catching with graphics. The flyer will be finalized and voted on at next meeting.

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Motion made to table further COA flyer discussion to next meeting by Damon Jespersen, seconded by Chuck Bear. Unanimously approved.

Director's Report:

- Programs:
 - Game Night: Tuesday, 8/29 (desserts only!) and 9/12
 - Traveling Chef: Tuesday, 9/5 (chicken saltimbocca; risotto; mushrooms and parmesan; garden salad; Tiramisu)
 - Coffee With a Cop: Tuesday, 9/12 @ 10am
 - Watercolor class: Wednesday, 9/12 @ 10am
 - Tech Class (iPhone and iPad Back to Basics): Wednesday, 9/13 @2pm (Kevin Figueroa of KevTech Services)
 - The Clutter Queen (Rhea Becker) presentation: Tuesday, 9/19; light dinner at 4:30pm; presentation at 5:30pm. Will discuss Swedish Death Cleaning.
 - Pickleball courts have been painted. COA will be purchasing equipment for seniors to borrow. Scheduled pickleball will end at the end of September.
 - Working on a plan for ping pong (many pickleballers have expressed interest in this!)
- COA is closed Monday, September 4th for observance of Labor Day.
- Next newsletter will be October/November – will be sent to the printer mid-September.
- In need of volunteer NEET drivers. If you are interested in driving Newbury seniors to medical appointments (local or as far as Boston), give us a call and we can connect you with NEET.
- In need of volunteers for the annual Chocolate Tour (walking tour of Newburyport with chocolate treats from 30 stores). Annual fundraiser by the Central Congregational Church in Newburyport. Benefits 4 COA transportation programs and several other local non-profits.
- In need of AARP Tax-Aide volunteers (tax preparers; administrative support; tech help). AARP Tax Aide is a free tax preparation service. Last year Newbury had 15 appointments available in one day. Volunteer tax preparers met with seniors; prepared their taxes; reviewed and submitted everything for them. Looking to do this again this year. If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering, please contact us at the COA and we can connect you with the right person.
- Have been interviewing for the Outreach Coordinator position.

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New Business:

- Chuck Bear introduced, for information only: Byfield Car Show is 9/8 at Byfield Center. Between Lunt and Central Streets.
- Jon Ferrara introduced idea of planning a field trip activity to Lowell's Boat Shop in Amesbury for COA participants.
- Cindy reminded of ongoing need to recruit NEET drivers, especially for long road trips (e.g., to Boston for Dr. appointments).

Motion to establish September 18, 2023 as the next meeting made by Damon Jespersen, seconded by Joyce Machiros and Chris Howe. Unanimous approval.

Motion to adjourn by Damon Jespersen, seconded by Chuck Bear. Unanimous approval.