



APPROVED

Town of Newbury Council on Aging  
Meeting Minutes  
Date: March 20, 2023

**Members in attendance:** Bill DiMaio, Chuck Bear, Joyce Machiros, John Ferrara, Chris Howe, Damon Jespersen

**Other attendees:** Cindy Carrier

Motion to open the meeting made by Chuck Bear, seconded by Chris Howe. Unanimously passed.

**Public Comment:** None

Motion to approve Minutes of February 2023 meeting. Motion to approve made by Chuck Bear, seconded by Joyce Machiros. Minutes approved.

**Chair Report:** Bill DiMaio

Cindy and Bill met with Kate and Deb of Friends of the COA on Mar 9<sup>th</sup> to review financials during which the point was made again on the small current investment returns i.e., CDs, three of which were at ~ .05%. Bill suggested that there are higher yields that can bring in another \$3k in interest annually and suggested moving the investments. Cindy Carrier was in attendance but had to leave early. Bill remained and continued discussions w/the Friends providing updates of current COA programs.

There was an appeal for new members made in the Newburyport Daily News. Interview with someone interested in joining the Friends today at noon (Bill and Cindy).

Tentative future meetings with the Friends. The Friends' annual meeting has to happen in June. Members are an issue; currently have 2 vacant slots; should be a four-member committee. Their annual meeting coincides with the election of officers for COA.

Discussed the Friend's Annual Appeal letter, but COA is not clear as to who the audience (mailing list) is. Bill has some homework to find out what population the Friends annual appeal will be sent to. John Ferrara suggested that the COA mailing list be expanded to include all three villages: Plum Island, Old Town, Byfield, i.e., and to appeal to each age group category - the whole town has a stake in the COA.

Next business item was about the request made to each COA member to submit three ideas to increase participation in COA-sponsored programs and events. First up was John. He is an advocate and spokesperson for the COA at two facilities, including the Governor's Academy, and is making introductions with Cindy in hopes that the Newbury COA can be invited as a guest, not a 'renter'. Discussion ensued about the future lease expiry of the current COA offices. Various proposals on space, one of which is to move to facilities to 25 High Road.

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John Ferrara suggested Lunt St property as a possible COA space, in order to take advantage of the adjacent town library and parking lots.

Susan: Outreach to residents via a digital newsletter. Suggest member bring a friend, cup of coffee, etc. Survey local residents for suggestions. Reach out to other local COAs to see what they do to boost attendance.

Joyce Machiros: Suggestion of new programs: Walking program. Meditation. Mentioned NextDoor app and how the social connection and suggestions lead to mentions of activities coordinated by the Newburyport COA.

Chuck's ideas: Classic car shows. Byfield Community Art Center has a whole new board of directors, and maybe put on an art show once or twice a month. Third is more of a concern, not an idea. Great space downstairs but the lease is going to expire in the blink of an eye. Without a place, all the ideas are pointless. The lease expires in 2026.

Damon's ideas: Finding things to be doing as folks retire. Can we connect with different volunteer organizations within the town. Find ways to connect people with jobs that they can contribute to society and connect with other people. Combats isolation. Went to a game night, it wasn't just seniors, it was other ages. Find ways to bridge the age divide to get people working multi-generationally. How do we get people involved in the community that we have? We have the Audubon, we have Spencer Pierce Little Farm, etc.

Chris's suggestions: Additional marketing; establish a marketing sub-committee. Reestablish social media presence (Facebook, etc.) to allow sharing of upcoming events online. Print flyers and post them at strategic locations around town. Post upcoming events at Manter Fieldhouse so attendees are aware of what's upcoming. Also suggested revisiting COA mission statement and target audience. What is the perception of the COA? What is the mission and the audience that we serve? What's our elevator speech?

**Director's Report:**

- Gordon Center for Balance event Mar 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Delvina Theater Group next Monday "Meet Julia Child."
- Monday is also the AARP tax prep day – by appointment only.
- St Patrick's Day event was a success.
- Newsletter has arrived; awaiting inserts then begin folding and sending.
- Always NEET drivers
- Creative Writing group
- Try to do educational programs on Tuesday evenings to reach an audience 60+; this audience is normally still working full-time or taking care of their grandchildren.
- Alternative to change the operating hours of the COA.

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**New Business:**

No new business

**Executive Session:** None

Establish April 24, 2023, at 9:00am for next meeting. Damon made the motion. Seconded by Joyce.

Motion to adjourn by Damon Jasperson; seconded by Joyce Machiros; approved unanimously.