



OAKHAM COUNCIL ON AGING

AGENDA: for regular meeting of January 12, 2024 at 12 pm at Town Hall

Call to order: at 12:05

Attending: Barbara Wreschinsky (chair), Jan Handrahan (vice-chair), Clare Hendra (treasurer), Priscilla McGlynn, and Rick Hendra (secretary)

Not Attending: Lucy Tessnau

Also attending: Melanie Silva (coordinator); Pauline Dwelly, Paul Rochette, Becky Austin, Judy Menard, Aaron Langlois

Approval of Minutes of Dec. 8, 2023 and Jan. 3, 2024: Jan moved to accept both minutes, Clare seconded; approved unanimously [**error later noted: Sandy Knipe will be offering blood pressure/glucose screenings on the 4th Tuesday of the month, not Thursday**]

Reports:

- **Outreach report (Jan)**
 - Delivered a chair to a local resident
 - Been in regular contact with four households
 - Working on vendors for Health Fair; we have 8 confirmed so far
 - Waiting on approval for using the Fellowship Room at the Church should the number of vendors continue to grow.
 - Barbara noted: if we want to use the meeting room at the Town Hall, we need to bring it to the Selectmen in advance
 - Action item: invite and involve the Oakham Board of Health in the Fair.
- Barbara moved to accept the Outreach report, seconded by Rick and approved unanimously

- **Treasurer's Report (Clare)**

- Clare reported that the accounts are now straightened out and balanced.
- She passed around our account balances and how much is left in each
 - We are currently carrying a deficit in the Formula Grant, but we recently received the first half of the grant, and that will put us in a positive position once posted.
 - Clare recommended that we leave funds in that account at year end to tide us over into the next fiscal year while we await the funds.
 - Clare recommended that we look to use funds from the Recreation account since we haven't touched it yet this year
- Clare also presented a copy of our Town budget for this fiscal year along with initial recommendations for next year's budget
- The most important recommendation is a raise in Melanie's hourly pay rate and hours per week:
 - Her pay rate is currently low by comparison to other towns around.
 - A \$2/hr raise, from \$18 to \$20/hr is recommended, which should bring her into line with neighboring towns
 - Also recommended: 2 more hours per week, bringing her up to 12 hours.
- Melanie's charge for Zumba and Functional Fitness also needs to go up to bring charges into line with other towns' program costs:
 - An increase from \$25 to \$35 per session means an annual increase of \$1040 out of the Formula 1 Grant
 - We can cover that thanks to expenses that should no longer be charged to the Grant, but to our regular operating budget:
 - Dues to the Mass. Council on Aging
 - The cost of the Mitel phone system at Town Hall
 - The cost of the Verizon fax line that's been removed
- We have \$8,661 in the Donations Account; we should look to this account for any furniture we may need (substantial one-time purchases).
- Also recommended: Clare spoke with Jan about the Outreach budget and they recommend we raise that budget from \$2400 to \$2700 for next year.
- Budget for FY 24 was \$16,900; the budget increases Clare is proposing would bring the FY '25 budget to \$20,125.
 - Should Mitel be switched to the operating budget, that would bring the total to \$21,270.

- Paul suggested we move MySenior Center out of the Formula 1 Grant to its own line item in the operating budget
 - We agreed to review the Treasurer's budget recommendations over the next month, then discuss and vote on a budget to put forward at our next meeting.
 - Action item: Clare will find out if Formula Grant funds roll over or get deducted from next year's grant.
 - Rick moved to accept the Treasurer's report, seconded by Barbara and approved unanimously.
- **Coordinator's Report:**
 - Melanie's working on the February calendar, so we can start volunteering for coverage as needed.
 - A rep will talk about Blue Cross/Shield on a Wed. Meet and greet.
 - Lunch and Learn in Feb. will feature a Chile cookoff
 - Rick moved to accept Melanie's report, Jan seconded, approved unanimously
 - **Chair's report (Barbara)**
 - Barbara spoke to the Selectboard about removing our Fax machine, and that's done
 - We were able to purchase and set up the key box
 - We're going to use the software already installed on our new laptop rather than start paying an annual license fee for Microsoft Office
 - Barbara has asked Dennis Bergin about adding outlets and wiring in the Senior Center and is asking two others to bid. Dennis estimates a cost of \$1000;
 - Barbara's also begun asking about replacing our flooring; that's still in process
 - Barbara purchased 151 gift cards from Hanaford's – which wasn't easy, as it turned out:
 - There were difficulties because she didn't know Lucy's password for the online bulk purchase site and they wouldn't let her change it or even open a new account.
 - She had to buy them locally over several days.
 - This lost us a \$225 incentive for using the site.
 - She drew up and sent a letter of complaint to Hanaford's
 - But they all got out on time.

- Four gift cards were returned. We need to discuss what to do with them under New Business
- Barbara also visited the Rutland Senior Center and spoke with Nancy, the Director there.
 - Barbara's thinking we might want to explore collaboration with Rutland or one of the other nearby senior centers (Barre?)
 - We're already working with New Braintree, using their space for our Friday Functional Fitness sessions.
 - Rutland has:
 - a 40 hr/wk paid director and a 16 hr/wk paid outreach staffer
 - a large facility that allows for Zumba and other well-attended big movement activities
 - an 8 passenger van; we might join them on field trips.
 - We should make it a point to receive and pass around the newsletters from other towns' senior centers – and make sure ours goes out to them
- Barbara shared a binder she'd prepared of all the SenCen related information anyone might need. It will be stored in Melanie's office in the glass cabinet behind her desk.
- Jan moved to accept the report from the Chair; Rick seconded, and it was approved unanimously.

Old Business:

- Check-in on scheduling and coverage for medical services at the Senior Center
 - Janice checked with the BP nurse, and she's satisfied with our coverage on her end, being pretty much self-sufficient
 - Jan and Judy have been covering Podiatry on Monday, and suggest we officially extend our coverage till 3:00 pm as the podiatry shifts have grown longer.
 - Pauline asked about the funding for added Podiatry hours, and Barbara said that would come from the Formula Grant
 - We confirmed that we decided to restrict our subsidy for podiatry to Oakham seniors only
 - we will ask out of towners to pay \$28 for Podiatry services; the subsidy for Oakham residents is \$13/person

- Paul asked whether the DP and Podiatry programs are cancelled when the SenCen is closed. We agreed they would be.
- Request for funds for the Health Fair:
 - Jan asked for \$300 for refreshments at the Health Fair on Feb. 14
 - Jan also asked about replacing our informationally obsolete magnetic COA business cards - 400 for \$200.
 - Finally, she asked for \$60 for a ream of paper for sending out the Heralds; Clare suggested we use the Office Supply paper so we can track the total use of paper.
 - In response to Pauline's inquiry:
 - Jan sends out 36 Heralds per month;
 - the piles at the Library, etc. are separate but add up too
 - Clare asked about advertising for the Fair
 - Jan will make some posters
 - The Barre Gazette will be notified,
 - and the Herald is already promoting it.
- Approval of ordering for supplies –
 - If we go through Maribel, we save on sales tax
 - Melanie will coordinate resupplies with Maribel

New Business:

- Approval of once-Tuesday-a-month blood pressure/glucose screening offer from LRPHC by general assent. (The COA didn't really need a motion to approve – Melanie's decision)
- **Review of subsidized podiatry services:**
 - The podiatrist has spoken with the out-of-towners, and they've agreed to pay her standard (unsubsidized) fee
- **Discussion of procedures for lending out durable medical equipment: do we need waivers?**
 - Jan, Barbara and others laid out the possible liabilities attached to durable medical equipment, suggesting we look to signed waivers
 - Several other towns' waiver forms were reviewed.
 - An action decision on who will come up with an Oakham form was not made [for next time]
 - We also need a start keeping a record of who has borrowed our equipment so we can keep track of our stuff. Who cleans it?

- [there was general agreement, but no action item issued from this discussion]
- **The MCOA has issued an Outreach Manual**
 - Barbara suggested we each review that, as there are tracking and reporting requirements for visitations and other matters we should be aware of.
 - **Do we need to worry about liabilities for visitations?**
 - The Outreach Manual recommends a number of forms for tracking visitations to provide protection for our Outreach coordinator
 - Rick proposed that Jan use our telephone messaging systems to keep track of who she's visiting when. But who answers the phone?
 - Clare noted there was a lot of paperwork there for a lone volunteer, and suggested we gather a small group of volunteers to review the Outreach Manual and waiver forms to decide on how we want to proceed on this matter
 - Clare, Jan, Judy, and Becky volunteered to work on an easy to use system for tracking and monitoring visitations.
- Decision on what to do with returned holiday gift cards:
 - It was suggested we donate them to the Church next door for their suppers, or to pass on to some family that needs food support, or use them for birthday celebrations at congregate meals...
 - Aaron reminded us that the intent of the grant is to serve seniors over 75. We need to respect that intent.
 - Paul suggested we might roll them over till next year; Rick agreed.
 - We'll hold on to them and consider the possibility of passing them on to seniors over 75 who are in need either this coming year or next at a later date.
- Rick moved to adjourn at 1:50, Barbara seconded and no one objected.