

**City of Westfield
Minutes of the Council On Aging
January 9, 2023**

I. The Meeting was called to order by the Chair, James V. Liptak, at 1:01 p.m.

Board Members Present: James Liptak, Eileen Rockwal, Elizabeth Boucher, Ed Ekmalian, and John Greaney. Also present was Tina Gorman, Executive Director of the Council On Aging.

II. Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2022 Meeting:

Upon a Motion duly made by Ed Ekmalian and seconded by John Greaney, it was

VOTED unanimously: To approve the Minutes of the December 12, 2022 meeting.

III. Public Participation:

No public participation.

IV. Items for Discussion/Information:

A. Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) Report

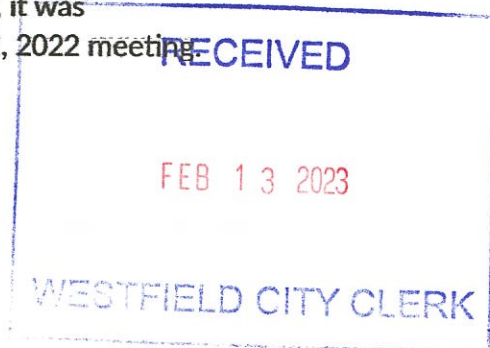
Mr. Liptak reported that because of the holiday schedule, the HVES Board meeting will be held after our COA Board meeting at 2 p.m. However, Mr. Liptak attended two HVES committee meetings on Friday and reported on those. There is a concern that when the ARPA funds are discontinued, it will affect the HVES financial situation. The food van purchased from Sarat Ford in Agawam last month is still awaiting modifications. Until those modifications are complete, the van cannot be used for the transport of food. The van actually arrived sooner than expected and is currently in Springfield for the work to be done on it.

B. Second Floor Renovation Project, Update

The bid deadline was extended to January 12, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. In the meantime, Mrs. Gorman has met several times with Eric Bascom from Lexington Furniture. They reviewed both work station needs and existing furniture stock at the Senior Center. Mr. Bascom has submitted a price quote and would like to finalize the order before the furniture costs increase. Mrs. Gorman is waiting until the bids are opened on January 12 and she has the assurance that the project will proceed within the allowable budget. The Friends of the Westfield Senior Center, Inc. will be purchasing the furniture.

C. AARP Tax Assistance Program

Mrs. Gorman reported that the dedicated Tax Assistance telephone line is operational as of January 4, 2023. There were 105 calls made on the line the first day that it was open. To date, 170 people have called requesting a tax appointment and all have been entered into the database. Prioritizing those Westfield and Hilltown residents who are 75+, a total of 76 appointments have been scheduled. With the addition of two new Tax Aides, Mrs. Gorman is confident that most, if not all, who request appointments and meet the criteria of a simple return, can be accommodated.



D. Foot Care Health Service

Mrs. Gorman provided a brief history of the foot care service at the Senior Center. For many years, foot care was provided by a specific nurse through PediCare in East Longmeadow. The service was provided monthly and participants paid the nurse directly in cash or by check. The role of the COA staff, was to handle the scheduling. The goal was to provide this very necessary service for Westfield's older adults. When that foot care nurse moved out of the area, the Senior Center was sent a string of unsuccessful replacements from PediCare. Eventually, foot care at the Senior Center was discontinued and a partnership was formed with The Arbors. Westfield residents 60+ were permitted to schedule their foot care there. That arrangement was dissolved following COVID. Mrs. Gorman is now working with Joe Rouse, Director of Public Health, and exploring the possibility of Evelyn Bristol, BSN, becoming foot care certified. All monies collected from participants would go the City Health Department. Lynn Hills, Senior Benefits Coordinator, verified that foot care for those with Diabetes is generally covered under Medicare. The COA would not assume the responsibility of working with Medicare. It would be up to participants to receive reimbursement. The Board was in favor of resuming foot care services at the Senior Center following the Health Department/COA nurse, Evelyn Bristol's, foot care certification.

E. September and October Meeting Date Changes

The meetings for those months will now be: September 18 and October 16, 2023 (third Monday of the month) as a result of Monday holidays and the HVES Board schedule.

V. Items for Action:

Authorization for COA Executive Director to submit Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application

Mrs. Gorman explained that the Council On Aging applies for the grant every year for the Companion Program. Mrs. Gorman needs the approval of the Board in order to submit the CDBG application.

The following motion was made by Elizabeth Boucher and seconded by Eileen Rockwal:

To authorize Tina Gorman, Executive Director of the Westfield Council on Aging to submit the 2023 Community Development Block Grant application.

A roll-call vote was requested and the results of the vote were as follows:

James Liptak - YES

John Greaney - YES

Eileen Rockwal - YES

Elizabeth Boucher - YES

Edward Ekmalian - YES

VI. Director's Report

Review of Programs

- *Jingle Bell Brunch*
 - o Sold out event
 - o Entertainment by Jimmy Mazz
 - Fabulous entertainment; Standing ovation for Jimmy Mazz; Many requests from participants for him to return
 - Rave reviews about the brunch meal (quiche, sausage, home fries, fruit cup, dessert)

- *(Yankee Pot Roast) Holiday Curbside Dinner*
 - o Sold out at 160 participants
 - o Very positive feedback about the food
 - o Appreciation for continuing the curbside cuisine program

- *Holiday Open House Gathering*
 - o Friday, December 23; 8:30 to 10 a.m.
 - o Complementary fruit, Danish, coffee, tea
 - o 23 in attendance; a good number considering the weather was nasty

- *January WCPC Performance: Jimmy Mazz ~ Great Music of the 50s*
 - o Shown on cable Channel 15 throughout January on Wednesday afternoons, and Saturday evenings

- *'Westfield Council On Aging Presents' Series*
 - o 'Durable Medical Equipment ~ Show & Tell'
 - A demonstration of the medical equipment available through the Senior Center's loan program
 - o Airing Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. throughout the month of January

Upcoming Programs

- *Hampden Village Monthly Blood Pressure Clinic*
 - o Second Monday of the month in the HV Community Room
 - o First clinic held this morning at 11 a.m.

- *Diabetes Dialogue*
 - o In-person monthly support group returns on the last Tuesday of the month from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
 - o Facilitator: Jennifer Giffune, Registered Dietician and Licensed Nutritionist
 - o Funded by the Friends of the Westfield Senior Center

- Technology Support
 - o Partnership with WTA students
 - o In-person, one-on-one computer and smartphone assistance tutorials
 - o Advance registration required with targeted areas specified
- February WCPC Performance: Will select from the Agawam Applause Series
 - o Will be shown on cable Channel 15 throughout January on Wednesday afternoons, and Saturday evenings
- 'Westfield Council On Aging Presents' Series
 - o Tentatively: 'Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program'
 - o Airing Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2:45 p.m. throughout the month of January

Miscellaneous

- Inclement Weather Closures
 - o If the Westfield Public Schools are closed because of inclement weather, the Senior Center is closed to the public. Staff will report to work unless the Mayor closes City Hall.
 - o If the Westfield Public Schools have a delayed opening, the Senior Center will open at noon. No meals will be offered on the day. Morning programs will be cancelled or postponed. Afternoon programs will be run as scheduled.
- Eileen Rockwal cautioned that the 'grandparents' scam' has resurfaced. The parents of a friend of hers lost a substantial amount of money to scammers. Mrs. Gorman said that various scams seem to pop up at certain times of the year. The IRS scam will likely happen soon because of tax season. A variety of Medicare scams surfaced during the open enrollment period. Mrs. Gorman can put a warning in the newsletter and encourage older adults to view the Channel 15 *Westfield Council On Aging Presents* interview with District Attorney, Anthony Gulluni.

VII: The Chair reminded the Board that our next meeting is to be held on **Monday, February 13, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.** at the Westfield Senior Center.

VIII. There being no further business to come before the Board, upon Motion duly made by John Greaney and seconded by Edward Ekmalian, it was unanimously VOTED to adjourn the meeting at 1:44 p.m.

List of Exhibits:

- Director's Report


Elizabeth Boucher, Secretary