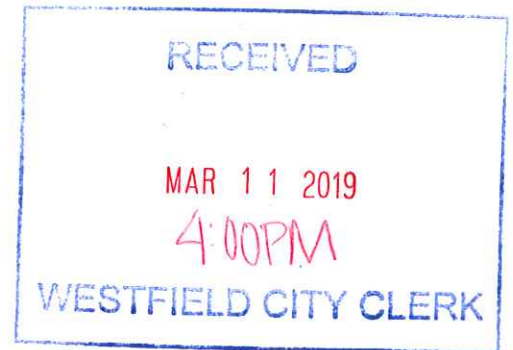


**City of Westfield  
Council On Aging  
Monthly Meeting  
February 11, 2019  
City Hall, Room 201**



**59 Court Street, Westfield, Massachusetts**

**I.** The meeting was called to order by the Chair, James V. Liptak, at 1:03 p.m.

All Board Members were present: Cynthia Lee Andersen, Elizabeth Boucher, KerryAnn Kielbasa, James V. Liptak, Eileen Rockwal, Alan Sudentas and Barbara Taylor. Also present were our Executive Director, Tina Gorman and our City Council Liaison, Councilor Ralph Figy.

**II. Approval of minutes of the January 14, 2019 meeting:**

Upon Motion duly made by Elizabeth Boucher and seconded by Barbara Taylor it was unanimously:

**VOTED:** To approve the minutes of the January 14, 2019 minutes with corrections.

**III. Public Participation:** The sole member of the audience, Ed, asked about the new program funded by the grant Senator Humason obtained for us. Ed asked if the horticultural supplies were in yet. Ms. Gorman explained that they have not been ordered yet. Ed wanted to know if the seniors would be participating. Ms. Gorman said that the program is being run at the Westfield Technical Academy greenhouse so the students will be doing the work but the seniors will benefit from the vegetable giveaways. If we attempted to grow the vegetables at the Senior Center we would be limited to when the weather is good. They anticipate that the Westfield Technical Academy will be doing demonstrations for the seniors. The seniors' part of this project will be eating the vegetables grown.

#### IV. Items for Discussion/Information:

**A. Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES) Report:** Our representative to HVES James Liptak presented his report of the February 4, 2019 HVES Board meeting: 1. A subcommittee has been formed to investigate either buying or leasing a building in 5 years. The staff seems to like the Northampton area. 2. The Marketing Committee is working on improving the visibility of HVES. He is not sure what actions they plan to take. 3. They are re-writing the Board rules. They would like to enhance their committees by recruiting and by assigning people to committees that suit their talents. 4. The finances for HVES are good. 5. Their lease with the Boys and Girls Club for the Meals On Wheels is on a year to year basis. There is a big concern should the Boys and Girls Club say they need the space. HVES is looking at a place in Westfield near City Hall and near Washington House. Ms. Gorman inquired as to whether they are still doing meals at Washington house? She requested that Mr. Liptak find out and let us know. It had been a congregate meal site but Ms. Gorman noticed that a number of people who live at Washington House are now coming to the Senior Center for lunch. 6. Mr. Liptak reported that HVES has made an offer to a candidate for the open nutritionist position.

**B. 2019 Calendar Year, Special Events Calendar:** Ms. Gorman reported that she and our Program Director, Mary Lou Niedzielski have completed the major work for the Special Events Calendar. They got the big items and events in. They must book the entertainment way in advance to get the popular performers. They schedule 1 special event per month whether a party, concert, or educational program. They are still working on evening and some Sunday events. Events will still be added to the calendar, so it is a work in progress.

**C. 2019 Retire the Fire! Programming:** The programming will run from March 4 through 8, 2019 (before daylight savings takes effect). This is a program of the Senior Safe Grant which is through the Westfield Fire Department combined with our Retire the Fire! They are focusing on 2 things this year: first, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. The Massachusetts Laws are really strict, stricter than most of the country. Unfortunately, it takes a number of detectors to comply which is expensive. A lot of seniors have no detectors at all. Mary Regan when she was Fire Chief said get something on every level. We realize that we are looking at installing the detectors more from a safety perspective than if the senior were selling his or her home. With last year's grant

we were able to get 48 smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, the new photoelectric ones with 10-year lithium batteries but they are only good for 10 years. Ms. Gorman explained that they have been keeping a running list for 1 ½ years of people who need detectors. This week the staff will call to determine who still needs detectors. She asked the Fire Department last year to help the families with people with disabilities. We still have some house numbers left so they will be working on that as well. The second major focus for the grant is Dementia Friendly Community status, we need to sustain it. We want to target homes where a person with dementia resides. Last year, Lauren Mielke did a comprehensive form for dispatch, however, Nina the new person does not want to put too much information in. She asked Ms. Gorman to streamline the form. Ms. Gorman is presently working on that because the form has to be done so it can be presented to the City Council. Ms. Gorman has redesigned the Retire the Fire! Flyers. We have 8000 seniors in our community, so we need their families to step up as well as the community. Ms. Gorman met with Patrick Berry of the Westfield News this morning. She redid the articles and wrote new ones regarding the concern for seniors with dementia. The interim Fire Chief, Patrick Egloff, will be speaking at our Senior Safety Luncheon. Ms. Gorman checked with other communities to see how they did their safety grants to get some ideas. Ed from the audience added that when he installed his detectors, he wrote on them the date he installed them so he would know when they were getting near the end of their useful life. Ed also asked if the new form for dispatch would be listing pets. Ms. Gorman replied that it would be up to Nina. Ed wondered what if the person had a big dog? Ms. Gorman pointed out that it is their database not ours, so they have to determine the information they need. Board Member Elizabeth Boucher wondered about smoke detectors in condominiums. How would the occupants know they work? Another Board member suggested hitting the test button. Ms. Boucher said she would bring the information she just learned to her condominium meeting to make them aware.

**D. FY20 City Budget:** Ms. Gorman has already started work on the Senior Center Fiscal Year 2020 budget for the City. The Mayor wants it in by February 22, 2019 and he again requested "level funding" but Ms. Gorman pointed out when you factor in required union raises it means we have less money for the other items in our budget. Under the current budget, the position of Outreach Coordinator is split, being paid partly from the City budget and partly by the state grant.

Ms. Gorman hopes to switch this, maybe move the funding for a part-time position to the state grant so the Outreach position could be funded solely by the City. This would make it easier for the Auditing Department. Ms. Gorman has to go to the Finance Committee with the budget each year. This year the Finance Committee has different members with more experience so she hopes the meeting will go smoothly. Most of our City budget is for staffing anyway. Carol Shannon, our Principal Clerk, and Ms. Gorman have reviewed all supplies and services and made adjustments to the figures. They need to leave some wiggle room for unexpected expenses.

**V. Items For Action:** none

**VI. Our Executive Director, Tina Gorman, then presented the Director's Report, copy attached:**

**Review of Programs:**

**AARP Tax Assistance:** As of last Monday, all appointments are booked. They are now referring people to THRIVE which also helps with income tax preparation at no cost. The staff members are also calling around to other COA's to see if they have any openings. Our program is going smoothly.

**Heaven's Angels:** They had their second gathering and have increased to 21 participants. They have created 40 baby gowns. Michelle Moniz organized the project. They will have to stay in the Great Room because they need to the extra room to do their work. Western Mass News came to do a report on the group.

**Paper Projects/Scrapbooking:** There were only 3 participants during the initial gathering but now they are up to 5. They meet in the Creativity Center.

**Whips of Westfield:** On Tuesday, January 15, 2019 local author Bruce Cortis presented the program "Whips of Westfield" as part of the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lecture Series. Mr. Cortis wanted to offer it during the day to seniors who do not drive at night. The program was extremely well received with over 80 participants.

**Lucky Penny:** On Tuesday, January 29, 2019 Blair Soucy, a Professional Coin Dealer, gave a presentation on coin and currency collection. Participants brought coins for Mr. Soucy to review. Mary Lou Niedzielski said the program was super successful. It started at 1:30 p.m. and at 4 p.m. he was still

reviewing coins. The seniors want him to come back. Mr. Soucy said the optimal time for him to return would be in 1 ½ years.

**Westfield Community Solar:** The Sign-ups for the annual compensation checks was well received. City Councilor Mary Ann Babinski went around the Senior Center telling people about the program and encouraging them to sign up. Mia Behm from Community Solar also helped with the sign-ups.

**Upcoming Programs:**

**Heart Health - What's Blood Pressure Got To Do With It:** Melissa Fournier, RN (Mercy Hospital) a non-traditional student who returned to school for her Bachelor's Degree will be conducting blood pressure checks on Wednesday, February 13, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. She will have a table set up in the Fireside Lounge with information on hypertension and lifestyle changes to control blood pressure. Ms. Gorman noted that she has really good handouts. She will also be distributing "Go Red For Women" pins (February is heart month).

**"Love Is In The Air" Valentine's Day luncheon:** This luncheon sold out in less than 3 hours, all 112 tickets. That is a new record. We will have a wait list. Board Member Elizabeth Boucher asked if they have the same people coming to these events all the time. Ms. Gorman explained that they don't. Usually events are limited to 2 tickets per person. This time the limit was 4 tickets due to the timing. The big party in March will be limited to 2 tickets per person. Ms. Gorman noted that we have a lot of new people coming to the Valentine's luncheon. The luncheon will be a turkey dinner on Thursday, February 14, 2019 with entertainment by Dave Colucci.

**"Community Conversation":** On Wednesday, February 20, 2019 from 5 to 8 p.m. as part of Baystate Health's Community Needs Assessment they will be holding a gathering at the Senior Center. Baystate Health will be providing dinner and childcare. They are seeking input from the public on the greatest areas of concern in the Westfield and Hilltowns areas (food insecurity, opioids, housing). Baystate must do a needs assessment every 3 years. We are only the host site, Baystate Health is running the event including the marketing. Ms. Gorman had Annamarie Golden, Manager of Community Relations for Baystate Health on her radio show to explain it. Opioids and food insecurity are big concerns for our area. Baystate Health will be getting experts to assist including Rebecca Hart, Director of the Westfield Food Pantry. Anyone wishing to attend the event must register. Beth Cardillo

will also meet with groups at the Senior Center to get the seniors' feedback.

**"Lunch and Learn"**: Lunch and Learn is a new series which they hope to schedule a several times a year. On Tuesday, February 26, 2019, John Berkowitz, Director of Western Mass Death with Dignity will be giving a 15 to 20-minute presentation at the lunch between entrée and dessert on the proposed Massachusetts legislation. Representative Velis wanted to know what our community felt about the topic. The presenter will explain the legislation, no moral discussion will be taking place, just nuts and bolts, very similar to how the nurses' issue was handled last fall. A Board member asked if both sides would be presented. Ms. Gorman said: "No, no viewpoints are to be presented just the nuts and bolts of the legislation." She understands that it is a controversial issue.

**Hearing Loss and Hearing Aids - Get the Scoop**: On Thursday, February 28, 2019 at 1 p.m. Gary Winn, a Licensed Hearing Instrument Specialist will be giving a presentation on all aspects of hearing aids. Although Baystate Hearing comes to the Senior Center once a month a senior felt that Gary Winn was helpful. He will not be there to sell anything, just to provide information.

**Westfield Trivia!**: The Friends of the Westfield Senior Center will be holding a fundraiser on Sunday, March 3, 2019 at the Senior Center at 2 p.m. The questions will be Westfield related. Patrick Berry is doing a great job helping with the questions. There will be 7 people on a team so either gather up a group of 7 friends or they will put you on a team that day. The tickets are \$5 and must be purchased in advance at the Senior Center. There will be celebrity questioners plus an ice cream sundae to go for each person. A 50/50 raffle will be available as well.

**Retire the Fire!**: The program will run from March 4 through March 8, 2019. The Senior Safety Luncheon will be Thursday, March 7, 2019 with Acting Fire Chief Patrick Egloff as speaker. The emphasis this year is on smoke detectors in the home of every older adult.

**VII.** The Chair reminded us that our next meeting will be held on Monday, March 11, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. at City Hall in Room 201.

Ms. Gorman took the opportunity to remind the Board that Secretary Cynthia Lee Andersen will be coming off the Board having been a member of the Board since 2008. The Board members

gave her a round of applause and thanked her for her service. Councilman Figy stated: "Thanks for your work as Secretary. Your minutes par excellence are second to none. You will be missed."

**VIII.** There being no further business to come before the Board, upon Motion duly made by Elizabeth Boucher and seconded by Barbara Taylor, it was unanimously

**VOTED:** to adjourn at 1:45 p.m.

A true record.

**List of Exhibits:**

- a. Agenda
- b. Director's Report

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Cynthia Lee Andersen-Secretary

