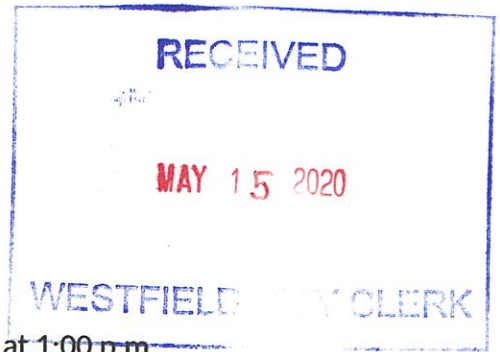


**City of Westfield
Council On Aging
Monthly Meeting, April 13, 2020
Conference Call
Court Street, Westfield, Massachusetts**



1. The Meeting was called to order by the Chair, James V. Liptak at 1:00 p.m.

Board Members present were: Elizabeth Boucher, KerryAnn Kielbasa, James V. Liptak, Alan Sudentas, Barbara Taylor, and Eileen Rockwal. William Brown was absent from the call. Tina Gorman, our Executive Director and Ralph Figy, our City Council Liaison, were present on the call. There were no guests. The COA meeting was recorded and broadcast on Cable Channel 15 by the City's Media Specialist, Peter Cowles.

II. Approval of Minutes of the March 9, 2020 Meeting:

Upon Motion duly made by Barbara Taylor and seconded by Alan Sudentas, it was unanimously VOTED: To approve the Minutes of the March 9, 2020 Meeting.

III. Public Participation:

None.

IV. Items for Discussion/Information:

1. Highland Valley Elder Services (HVES):

Mr. Liptak provided the following report of the HVES monthly Board meeting:

- There was no April Board meeting. However, the HVES Director sent an e-mail advising that many staff members were working from home during the COVID-19 Crisis. HVES is considered an essential service and is open. The Director said there is definitely an increase in the number of Home Delivered Meals and 'take-away' meals. In Westfield, those are the meals currently being distributed at Westfield Middle School, Franklin Elementary School, Colonial Pine Acres, and Powdermill Village. Mr. Liptak said that HVES is in good shape.

B. Annual Nominations Committee to Select Board Officers for FY21:

Mr. Liptak added this item to the Agenda. Eileen Rockwal and Alan Sudentas were asked by Mr. Liptak to serve as the Nominating Committee. Ms. Rockwal and Mr. Sudentas will bring forward at the May meeting the names of the Board members willing to serve as Officers for next year. A vote of those candidates will be taken at the May Annual Meeting.

C. Corona Virus Update

Mrs. Gorman advised the Board that the Senior Center closed its doors to the public on March 17, 2020. At that time, it was decided to stay closed through the month of April. The building is now locked with a doorbell system in place. Staff from both the COA and Veterans Services work daily Monday through Friday. Joyce Peregrin, Companion Program Coordinator, is working primarily from home and is in touch with clients via telephone and e-mail. Carol Shannon, Principal Clerk, works out of the Senior Center two evenings a week and Saturday mornings. She has access to her e-mail and voicemail from home. Linda Murphy, Agnes Fleming, Mary Cohutt and Kim Saffer are sheltering in place. All are over 60 and considered at greater risk than those in the general public. There are a total of eight staff members at the Center daily. All assist with the daily curbside meal program as well as a variety of additional responsibilities.

The curb-side meals program has grown since its inception in mid-March. There are anywhere between 80 and 110 meals purchased daily. The biggest benefit is that participants are getting their main meal every weekday as the menu is the same as it would have been for those dining at the Center. A benefit to the program is that it is keeping the seniors out of the grocery stores. Ms. Gorman had two concerns. The first is the availability of take-out containers because all the local restaurants also need to use them. Ms. Gorman received permission from the Westfield Health Department to use Styrofoam containers on an emergency basis during the pandemic. The other problem was the availability of durable medical equipment for loan. Westfield is the only Senior Center in the lower Pioneer Valley loaning equipment and the inventory was running low. The Director of the Amherst COA is a Westfield resident and offered to donate her equipment to us because she has no staff to clean and sanitize it. Councilor Burns volunteered to pick the equipment up with the use of a trailer donated by Westfield's Medical Reserve Corps.

Mrs. Gorman then advised the Board that she is in constant communication with EOEA and MCOA (MA Association of Councils On Aging) about the direction of re-opening Senior Centers across the Commonwealth. The consensus is that there will be a transition period and not an immediate restart to all programs.

Barbara Taylor spoke at this point to advise Mrs. Gorman that she feels the curbside meals program is running very smoothly and appreciates the hard work of the Senior Center staff in preparing and distributing these meals to so many people every day. Jim Liptak also said that he truly appreciates these daily meals.

D. Strategic Plan, Review of Draft:

KerryAnn Kielbasa advised that she appreciates all the responses she received from this Board. Because of other obligations at this time, she has had to put this project on hold but she will get back to it in near future. She hopes to have a Strategic Plan done in early July, 2020.

V. Items For Action: None

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

Review of Programs

- *Lunch & Learn: 'A View From the Bench'*
 - o Thursday, March 12 - Judge Mark D. Mason
 - o This was the last group gathering that we held before the Senior Center closed its doors to the public.
 - o Judge Mason was both enlightening and humorous. He was very well received.

- *Beach Party Indoor Picnic*
 - o Group event cancelled
 - o Participants got their curbside lunch as well as a gift certificate for an additional meal. Many are using the gift certificate for curbside pick-up.

- *Special Election for State Senate*
 - o Scheduled for Tuesday, March 31, 2020
 - o Postponed until May 19

- *Friends of the Westfield Senior Center, Spring Fundraiser*
 - o Jimmy Mazz "Songs Across America" Show
 - o Scheduled for Sunday, April 5 at 2 p.m.
 - o 100 tickets had been sold. Concert rescheduled for August 30.
 - o All participants were called. Eight asked for a refund and the rest requested a ticket exchange for the new date.

Upcoming Programs

- Normal special events in May would be the Volunteer Recognition Breakfast and a Mother's Day Luncheon
 - o Staff is in the process of creatively honoring our Volunteers as well as our mothers
 - o Brown Bag program for April and May
 - Drive-through pick-up on the Wednesday after the second Tuesday of the month

 - Considering the use of Cable Channel 15 for exercise, educational and entertainment programs

 - Will continue with curbside meal service Monday through Friday
- VII.** The Chair reminded the Board that our next meeting is scheduled to be held on Monday, May 11, 2020. It will be determined at a later date if it is necessary for this meeting to be a Conference Call rather than a meeting held at City Hall.


VIII. Eileen Rockwal asked to speak. She told Ms. Gorman that she is willing to volunteer at the Senior Center if needed. Also, Councilor Figy advised that there are more senior citizens in this City than children in our schools and he is amazed at how Mrs. Gorman and the COA staff are handling all of this so well during this COVID-19 crisis.

IX. There being no further business to come before the Board, upon Motion Duly made by Elizabeth Boucher and seconded by Alan Sudentas, it was unanimously

VOTED to adjourn at 1:30 p.m.

List of Exhibits:

1. Director's Report



Elizabeth Boucher, Secretary

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