

## Northampton Council on Aging Board Minutes 6/14/18

**Present:** Bob Montague, Mary Lastowski, Gerriann Butler, Casey Fowler, Dennis Helmus, Deborah Epstein, Kathy Pekala Service, Mark NeJame, Marie Westburg

**Excused:** Donna Park

**Absent:** None

- Robert Montague called the meeting to at 1:35 PM.

**Public Session** – No one from the public was present.

### **Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

- Motion made by Gerriann Butler, seconded by Mary Lastowski, to approve the 5/17/18 minutes as written. Minutes were unanimously approved as written.

**Introduction of the new Board Member(s)** –No new members present.

### **Old Business**

1. **Update on Volunteer Recognition Dinner/Meet & Greet:** Marie said both went really well. Meet & Greet had at least 60 people attend. Volunteer Recognition luncheon went well. Next time we could have more vegetarian/vegan/dairy free dish options.
2. **Update-Procedure/Policy Sub-Committee:** Marie said they met one time and started reviewing some policies. They talked some about procedures and behaviors that the code of conduct doesn't address specifically enough. The policy committee will meet again Friday at 11am. Code of Conduct and Bylaws will be looked at and then they will be brought back to the full Board. Deborah Epstein recommended consulting with Beth Cardillo, who does a lot of work around bullying and people-friendly environments.
3. **Update on Meeting with Hampshire County Jail regarding Bistro:** Marie met with three people from the jail – Ian Howard, Mindy Cady and a caseworker. They understood that the program was going to be put on hold in the summer. They talked about creating an agreement, guidelines, for issues that come up and a form that inmates sign. Once the inmates finish the program here, we will provide them with a letter of reference that will be put in their file at the jail. A curriculum will be developed here to expand skills the inmates learn at the jail, making them more ready for the job market. Marie is hoping to hire a chef to coordinate Senior Center food needs. Food needs are the coffee shop, bistro, events and catering for outside rental groups, etc. Marie is on the steering committee for Healthy Hampshire and is very involved in food access initiatives in the valley. Dennis Helmus has a volunteer packet he created and will give Marie a copy of it.
4. **ElderVision-Friends Group:** Bob Montague spoke and said that they spent about \$4000 for the Volunteer Recognition Dinner. They have money to spend on Senior Center projects. They already bought bigger monitors for the computer room. They are a non-profit organization separate from the Senior Center. Dennis asked for a copy of the Bylaws of Elder Vision. Bob mentioned that no money was received from Valley Gives this year as they were not signed up.

5. **Any further nominations for Elections:** Positions are Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. Gerriann Butler will run for Chair. Kathy Pekala Service will run as Secretary/Treasurer. Deborah Epstein said she would be willing to run for Vice Chair. Gerriann nominated Dennis Helmus for Vice Chair. Deborah said she would remove her name from nominations. Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer are the correct names in Bylaws.
6. **Northampton Neighbors/EARN:** Marie will be going to their meetings to discuss how they can work together and collaborate. They fill needs we can't fill. Northampton Neighbors fills needs that support seniors to Age in Place. They fill a big need because of less funding to elder services. We need to have more information at the front desk regarding Northampton Neighbors. Multiple options for assistance for people are good. The more options, the more needs get met.

### **Highland Valley Elder Services Report by Kathryn Pekala Service**

Kathy Pekala Service spoke. HVES received a grant from United Way for \$30M for 3 years. They may be moving their offices. Otherwise, they are doing well. Marketing and fundraising is being done.

### **New Business**

1. **Discussion about sub-committees or steering committees:** Marie wants to get feedback from the community on what we can do better. She proposes the focus group/steering committees are separate from the Board. She is collecting names of people we may want to engage or to develop programs etc. Kathy Pekala Service asked to have one Board Member as a Liaison for input. If a Board Member has an expertise, they can be on it.
2. **Recommendations of topics to meet for discussion and input on:**
  - a. Arts & Culture Programming
  - b. Creating a welcoming environment – how we are interfacing with the public, facility updates, etc. How we are presenting information to the consumer. Maybe facility updates. How we disperse information, what it looks like. What are we doing well, not doing well, etc.
  - c. Inclusivity/Diversity – Creating avenues for access to programs and services for underserved groups. Michele Dihlmann will be involved. Engaging more people in how we serve the Hispanic community is a goal.
3. **Announcement of New Assistant Director and other Staff Developments:** Marie hired Kim Park as the new Assistant Director. She will be starting on June 25<sup>th</sup>. She has a great skill set. Marie interviewed for the Media & Program Coordinator position, but cannot announce yet who it is. Bob Kies retired and a custodian will be hired soon.
4. **Cultural Council Grant:** Marie submitted it through the Senior Center, as Forbes Library was already submitting a grant to the Arts Council.
5. **Change of Meeting Time:** Marie requested a change of meeting time to accommodate new working Board members. Deborah Epstein made a motion that we change the start time of the Board Meeting to 3:30 and Gerrinn Butler seconded it. The motion was voted on and passed 7 in favor, one opposed. The Board Meeting will start at 3:30pm starting with the July meeting.
6. **Age Friendly & Dementia Friendly-Tufts Grant Opportunity:** Deborah Epstein and Kathy Pekala Service have been working towards Age Friendly City designation. The Mayor agreed that the group should apply. Cindy Langley can help us through this process. Dementia Friendly community has a different process. A group has started working on it. Communication and education are needed to reduce the stigma of dementia. How do we welcome them? Kathy is going to a training with first responders. There is funding for planning through the Tufts Grant Health Foundation. A letter of intent is due by July 20. Marie will meet with the committee about this opportunity.
7. **Election of Officers:** Slate of three. Gerriann Butler for Chair; Dennis Helmus for Vice Chair; and Kathy Pekala Service for Secretary/Treasurer. Is there anyone else or does anyone oppose anyone on

8. the slate? No. Entire slate voted on at once. Casey Fowler made a motion to approve the entire slate. Mary Lastowski seconded it. All in favor; none opposed. Passed unanimously.

### **Other Business**

1. Gerriann Butler suggested we meet in July. The Bylaws say the Board does not meet in August.
2. Gerriann has a list of things to think about that people have mentioned to her. a. Clearly marked recycling boxes around the Senior Center. b. New custodian. c. Dead trees out in parking lot. d. Complaints about Fitness Center machines being dusty. The machines need to be wiped down...the whole machine. e. Feasibility study of class fee structure. Satisfaction / pay scale on different classes. Streamlining and quicker at the front desk when paying for the class fees.
3. Casey Fowler said they have a punch card where she teaches classes. They just pay once for a bunch of classes on the card. Card gets punched as they are used.
4. More applications for new Board Members are at the Mayor's office to be approved.

### **Adjourning the meeting**

Mary Lastowki made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kathy Pekala Service seconded it at 2:59 PM. Motion was unanimously approved.

### **Announcements**

- **Next NCOA Board Meeting:** Thursday, July 12th, 2018, at 3:30 at the Northampton Senior Center.

Respectfully submitted by \_\_\_\_\_  
Linda R. DeMercurio