Groton Council on Aging

The Groton Center

163 W Main Street

Groton, MA 01450

Minutes – July 10, 2023

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| **Date:** Monday, July 10, 2023 | |
| **Time:** 1:00 PM | |
| **Location:** The Groton Center | |
| **Attendance**  **COA Board Members:** Michelle Collette; Pascal Miller; Judith Palumbo O’Brien; Tony Serge; Dottie Zale; Michael Bouchard. Harris McWade joined the meeting in process (late due to car trouble)  **Absent:** Lois Young  **Member vacancies:** One  **COA Staff:** Ashley Shaheen, COA Director  **Members of Public:**  Berta Erickson | |
| **Recording of Meeting Minutes:**  Michael Bouchard | |
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| **Agenda Items** | **Notes** |
| 1. Open Meeting | Pascal Miller, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. The meeting was recorded on Zoom. There were no attendees via zoom as all attending members were present. |
| 1. Approval of meeting minutes | Michelle Collette motioned to accept the minutes of the June 12, 2023 meeting. Motion was seconded. The minutes were accepted by unanimous vote. |
| 1. COA Board reorganization | As this is the first meeting of the fiscal year, an annual board reorganization. Pascal identified that he would be requesting nominations for Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk/Secretary.  Pascal was nominated for Chair, and was seconded. He was elected by unanimous vote.  Michael Bouchard was nominated for Vice-Chair, and was seconded. He was elected by unanimous vote.  There was a discussion about the role of the Clerk/Secretary in the recording of meeting minutes. The central discussion was should the Clerk/Secretary record meeting minutes or if that was better accomplished by a COA Staff member. The Clerk/Secretary has a role in certifying documents/actions of the COA Board. An argument against recording was that it’s difficult to participate in discussions while recording minutes, and that many other town committees enlist a staff member to record minutes. It was stated that this is an “extra” duty for a staff member and hinder execution of “line duties”. Current practice is for the Clerk/Secretary to be the first reviewer of draft minutes, and responsible for distribution the minutes. Ashley Shaheen suggested consulting the bylaws for clarification of the Clerk/Secretary role.  Judith Palumbo O’Brien was nominated (and seconded) for Clerk/Secretary. She was elected by unanimous vote. Judith accepted subject to the clarification that the role did not involve recording meeting minutes. |
| 1. COA Director’s Report (Ashley) | The report was delivered verbally.  Community Engagement Specialist position: There were 44 applicants for the this position. 3 interviews were conducted. The position was accepted by a well qualified candidate. The individual is currently undergoing a background check. The timeline, assuming successful background check, is request appointment by the Select Board on July 17. If appointed, a late August/early September start date is expected.  Programming: There were 1144 duplicated and 256 unduplicated user visits in June, with 8 new members joining. Summer event registrations are strong.  TREAD: The TREAD (elder tax relief) program is being formalized.  Volunteers: New volunteers are in training.  Picnic table volunteer project: Bryce June, Eagle Scout, volunteered to build a picnic table for The Center. It will be a standard sized table, and will be accessible. Bryce is considering a car wash to fund raise for the project. He would like to have the project completed by late August/early September. He is looking for community input. Michelle Collette, with others agreeing, suggest an umbrella be added to the table. She also asked if West Groton Water might be asked to consider donating the water for the car wash fundraiser.  Transportation: Debbie Dennis has come aboard as the eighth per-diem van driver. Transportation requests are increasing. There is another applicant being considered as a driver. Several questions were asked about van services into Boston. The van will take people to medical appointments into Boston, but not to the airport or Boston shopping. A round trip to Boston will cost the rider $10-$15. It was noted that all drivers are “per-diem”. Some have a set schedule, while others work upon request. Drivers are typically invited to attend the events which they service.  Accreditation: The COA Accreditation Application was submitted June 27. The next step is a review by NCOA Accreditation, with an opportunity for Groton to submit any missing information. Then a two day on-site visit is scheduled with the accreditors, after which the COA receives a final decision. It is anticipated that the on-site visit will occur in September or October, and a final decision rendered later. Application documentation is available on the COA google drive. Pascal will arrange for access for new board members.  Board vacancy: There is currently one COA Board vacancy. It has been advertised on the Grotonma.gov website and the Groton Herald. The deadline for applications is July 31. As of July 10, there are three applicants. Board members discussed the process for review of applications and interviews. Members were partial to in-person interviews, and that is one applicant was interviewed that all recommended applicants be interviewed. It was motioned (and seconded) that 3 members (Judy, Harris, and Pascal) and Ashley would be the screening committee. The motion was passed by unanimous vote. The screening committee will review applications and recommend appropriate candidates to the full board. Applications are being accepted through July 31. The tentative dates for the screening committee to meet and then recommend candidates to the COA Board are August 15 and 16. A special full COA Board meeting will be held on August 28 (via Zoom) to recommend preferred candidate(s) to the Select Board. This timeline was approved by unanimous vote.  Board workshop: Tony Serge, Judy and Mike recommended that the COA Board conduct a workshop on October 2 with a suggested agenda items of: Board team building, assimilating COA membership input, “actionize” strategies for the long range plan, growing membership, reviewing COA mission statement, and reviewing bylaws and policies. The idea would be a 4-6 hours session on an agreed date, perhaps using an off-site facility and utilizing a facilitator. Ashley will investigate potential facilitators, whose availability will guide the selection of a date. Tony will draft a workshop agenda by August 7. The agenda will be finalized at the special COA Board meeting on August 28.  Other business:   * Michelle thanked Ashley for scheduling a COVID vaccine clinic on July 24 from 2-6 PM. Appointments are needed. The vaccine will be the latest bivalent version. * It was suggested that COA Board members be issued nametags for use at board meeting and other events. * The next regular COA Board Meeting will be September 18 at 1:00 PM.   + Note: There will be a special full board meeting via Zoom on August 28 |
| 1. Adjournment | The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 PM. |