**COA Board Meeting Minutes for Monday December 11th, 2023**

**The Groton Center**

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| **Date** | Monday, December 11, 2023 |
| **Time**  | 2:00 p.m. to 3:54 p.m. |
| **Location** | The Groton Center |
| **Board Members in Attendance** | * Pascal Miller, Chair
* Tony Serge, Vice Chair
* Carole Carter
* Judy Palumbo
* Michelle Collette
* Dottie Zale
* Berta Erickson
* Harris McWade
* Lois Young
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| **COA Staff in Attendance**  | Ashley Shaheen, DirectorNändi Munson, Community Engagement Specialist |
| **Guests in Attendance** | Judy Anderson |

**Agenda Items and Notes**

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| **Open Meeting**  | * The meeting was officially started at 1:01 p.m. by Board Chair Pascal Miller.
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| * **Acceptance of Minutes**
 | Review of Board Meeting Minutes from November 13th Board Meeting. Edits were documented. Lois made motion to move. Dottie second to accept minutes with the one correction. All in favor. |
| * **COA Departmental Report**
 | * Ashley shared that NCOA formally re-accredited The Groton COA. Thanks to all who were involved. She shared the letter we received from NCOA. The NCOA Re-Accreditation Board met November 30th, and voted unanimously in favor of re-accreditation. The Re-Accreditation period is from November 2023 to November 2028.
* The recommendations from NCOA include GCOA pursuing internship placements, increasing staff hours, coordinating virtual programs for homebound seniors, evaluation and measuring outcomes, and finalizing and enforcing the Building Use Policy.
* Discussion of how we share this news with the community. Ideas include:
* NCOA shared a media packet with suggestions and best practices. Ashley to circulate this packet to the Board, and will also share the Re-Accreditation Announcement letter.
* Banner on Main St.
* We are planning a Celebration Event for Thursday January 18th from 3:00p.m.-5:00 p.m.
* Discussed guests we’d like to invite including the local legislators and Town Department Heads.
* The Groton COA will receive a plaque from NCOA.
* If any Board members wish to help with event planning and roll out, please let Ashley know.
* Groton COA transportation will be available for Groton seniors for the event.
* A farewell breakfast for Hannah Pierpont will take place Thursday December 28th at 10:00 a.m.
* The Admin Asst. position has been posted with a December 29 deadline.
* Noted SHINE Counselor and volunteer Bev Johnson devoted full days every week throughout Medicare Open Enrollment. We are grateful for her dedication.
* The second part of the Gender Identity Lunch & Learn will take place in February.
* There is a limited time period in January to apply for TREAD assistance.
* GCOA will outreach for TREAD.
* Groton residents will receive information about TREAD in their upcoming Real Estate tax bill. This program is for adults 60+ and individuals with disabilities.
* TREAD is a brand-new fund the town approved, that people can contribute to. It is applied to reduce a recipient’s tax bill, by being applied directly to the tax bill. It is possible to receive both Senior Tax Workoff benefit, and the TREAD benefit, if eligible.
* Benefit amount depends on how much money is given to the fund.
* Funds will come through private donation or corporate sponsorship.
* $5,000 received from Lowell Five Bank.
* The Groton Herald will have an upcoming announcement about the Lowell Five donation, and will also include information about how to donate.
* 337 rides to 41 unique individuals were provided by the GCOA in November.
* Building Monitor position has been posted with a deadline of December 8th.
* The Position is not funded by the town. It’s funded through a revolving account which comes from rental and kitchen fees. The person hired for this position will not be a town employee, but rather a contracted employee.
* This person will only work during events off hours. It is a similar model to per diem van drivers. More than one person can be hired to fill this contract position.
* RiverCourt will continue sponsoring the Speaker Series. These events are held on weekends for a multi-generational audience and draws in people from surrounding communities. This Series will likely launch in the fall.
* Senior Tax Work Off Program has 30 participants, 10 of whom are new to the program.
* Friends of Groton Elders will be sponsoring a lunch once a month starting in February.
* Friends also has fuel assist funds available to seniors who are struggling.
* Friends members are Gail Chalmers, Marie Melican, and Ginny Reinap.
* The Friends is a 501-c3 nonprofit. They have their own bylaws. They conduct an annual appeal. They were instrumental in building this facility and served as an adjunct to the building committee.
* The Board would like to invite Gail and the Friends to attend a Board meeting to give a report.
* Judy Anderson shared that the Groton community dinner takes place the 3rd Friday of every month from January –June, held at First Parish Church. Lawrence Academy and Groton School donate food. The Groton Business Association also helps organize food donations from restaurants and grocery stores. The meal is not in July, August, or December.
* The Powderhouse Gang Barbershop Quartet sings at The Groton Center Tuesday evening January 9th. Groton Channel to film.
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| * **Update on FY25 Budget Process**
 | * All department heads had to present a level services budget as well as an 11% cut budget.
* Ashley presented to Finance Committee November 28th.
* The Town Manager is proposing that the COA budget will not be impacted even if the town does not pass an override.
* December 18th preliminary budget presentation to Selectboard and Finance Committee.
* January 8th is the proposed budget presentation by Town Manager.
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| * **Sportsman Club Update**
 | * Plan presented to Conservation Committee. Town has amended the application for the fitness court, and it will no longer be on the grounds outside the COA. It will be at Lawrence playground area behind the public library where the tennis courts are.
* Upcoming meeting Friday December 15th at 9:00 a.m. on what to do next with the Sportsman Club property. Much of the property is wetland.
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| * **Workshop Part 2 Preparation**
 |  Workshop Part 2 scheduled for January 8th from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Three topics will be covered: 1)      Bylaws (review in preparation for forming subcommittee) 2)      Strategic Plan (review 6 goals, next steps). 3)      Marketing plan  |
| * **Other Business**
 | * Lois Young set up donation bins for the Ayer Family Shelter.
* Needs include winter outside clothing, personal care items, and gift cards for Shop N Save and Family Dollar.
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| **Closing of Meeting** | Judy Palumbo O’Brien made a motion to adjourn. Berta Erickson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.  |
| **Next Meeting** | * Next meeting scheduled for Monday January 8th at 10:00 a.m. at the Groton Center.
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Respectfully submitted,

Nändi Munson

December 27, 2023