

DEDHAM COUNCIL ON AGING
Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2020

Present: Chairman Leanne Jasset, Sherri Hannigan, Geri Pacheco, Diane Barry-Preston, Russ Poole, Maureen Teti, Sandra Tocman, Parks and Recreation Representative Jonathan Briggs, HESSCO Representative Anne Heller, COA Director Sheila Pransky

Absent: Vice-Chair Marie-Louise Kehoe, Police Chief Michael D'Entremont

Meeting called to order by Chairman Leanne Jasset at 5:08 PM. Because this was a remote virtual meeting, all votes were by roll call.

Director's Report:

- We are moving into the new Senior Center on July 10th and are in the process of packing in preparation for the move. These past months have been difficult for the staff and me so we are looking forward to working in the wonderful new space.
- No Senior Center programs are planned as yet. We will have to wait for and follow the rules and regulations in place for our opening and activities.
- The focus on taking care of seniors' urgent needs has eased with the routinization of the Food Pantry distribution. We are delivering Food Pantry items to about 65 households.
- I have been able to secure a large amount of frozen meats for seniors on our Food Pantry list through HESSCO. Thanks to Rob Blaney from the Youth Commission for picking up the meat and George at Cafe Bagel for storing it for us until we distributed it.
- The meat and other benefits are the result of regular communication with HESSCO and the regional Directors of the Councils on Aging. I cannot say enough about the HESSCO staff and the sharing of information and programs during this very difficult time among other COAs.
- We are receiving more traditional calls for assistance now similar to the previous normal.
- The staff and I have been producing virtual programming. Cable has taped Zoom calls, programs, and classes to be shown often on the local channel. We hope to reach seniors who are home now and those who may usually be confined.
- We received a \$10,000 grant from the Covid-19 Taxi, Livery, and Hackney Transportation Partnership Grants with the Massachusetts Area Planning Council (MAPC). It will be used for seniors, disabled adults, and veterans.
- I am working on a card to be sent all seniors who have had any contact with the COA in the past year. It will have information about the staff, resources, and programs. The purpose of the mailing is to wish all seniors well, let them know they are not forgotten, and remind them of our virtual programs.

- We were unable to make a donation to the Food Pantry from the formula Grant. We will use the money for other needs in the new Senior Center.
- There will be a Rolling Rally Sing-a-Long of patriotic songs to celebrate the 4th of July. The COA staff will be joined by staff from other town departments and visit local housing developments.

HESSCO: Anne Heller

- The HESSCO Board met the new Human Resources Director at the monthly meeting. She presented an overview of new employee programs.
- The Finance Committee reported HESSCO is doing well with the infusion of funds for Covid-19.
- The "Give 65" fundraiser will take place in July.
- SHINE is preparing for the open enrollment period.
- The Nutrition Department is doing an excellent job. They have hired a new caterer and supply 700 meals daily compared to 400 pre-pandemic.
- Sandra Tocman from the Dedham Council on Aging Board was elected President of the HESSCO Board of Directors. Congratulations, Sandra.

Livable Dedham:

- The Planning Department and AARP/ MA held a virtual and telephone meeting to present information and recent data on how communities are addressing the need for affordable housing with updated zoning regulations for accessory dwellings.
- Fifty five residents listened in and participated in a lively discussion.

Old/New Business:

- Maureen raised the issue of tele-visits and/or virtual visits with physicians sometimes being very challenging for the patient and the doctor. She fears seniors may not be getting the health care they need because of the inability to complete the connection or not having the proper device. Sherri also pointed out that the type of visit depends on what the insurance company will cover. Further discussion will follow on how to get help for seniors who are having difficulty reaching their doctors.
- Russ, the COA representative to the Human Rights Commission, pointed out that minority housing in Dedham is very limited This problem is also being looked at by the Livable Dedham Committee.

Public Discussion: None

Motion made by Russ, to adjourn. Seconded by Jon. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM