

GREAT BARRINGTON COUNCIL ON AGING

**Claire Teague Senior Center
917 Main Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
Phone: (413) 528-1881**

MEETING MINUTES January 31, 2018

WELCOME: The meeting of the Great Barrington Council on Aging held at The Claire Teague Senior Center, 917 Main Street, Great Barrington, Massachusetts was called to order at 1:15 PM by Chair, David Rutstein.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Chair David Rutstein, Vice Chair Barbara Bailly, Treasurer Maureen Avery, Secretary Susan Hipwell, Jeanne Holcomb, Pat Kinne, Amy Rutstein. Also in attendance was Executive Director of the Claire Teague Senior Center, Polly Mann Salenovich, Selectman Ed Abrahams and Citizen Holly Hammer.

MINUTES: Chair Rutstein asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 29, 2017 meeting. The minutes were approved by Barbara Bailly and seconded by Maureen Avery.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Avery stated: as of today, January 31, 2018, there is a balance of \$20,600.91.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: David congratulated Polly on her nomination to serve on the Advisory Council for the Secretary of Elder Affairs. Polly continues to serve as a regional rep for the Massachusetts Southern Berkshire COA's which include Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis, Sandisfield and Sheffield. Meeting with South County COA's, a senior winter safety program was discussed and "Sand for Senior's" program was implemented. A thank you to Big Y and The Marketplace for supplying the buckets! A proposal for a joint effort to attend the Food Bank as a means of outreach was also discussed. Polly has arranged a meeting with Smitty Pignatelli to meet with the group on March 9th to talk about the needs of our seniors.

Polly has requested the COA Board Members to write and sign a letter of thanks to Governor Baker and LT Governor Polito for their pledge to increase funding for the COA's. David and Amy agreed to draft a letter. Thank you, David and Amy!

Updates and Changes:

- A.G.E. TRIAD – Mtg. time changed to the fourth Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM at the Claire Teague Senior Center.
- Therapy Dog Classes' name, changed to "Good Citizens Training Class." Canine Link will be working with Nora Hayes to coordinate a fun "dog show" this spring/summer.
- Barbara Bailly met with Simons Rock Outreach Coordinator for the swim program that they will be offering the Senior Center. Thank you, Barbara!
- A.G.E. Friendly Berkshires: Polly has requested, from the task force, a list of what improvements it is currently working on to make life better for our Gt. Barrington seniors.
- Memory Café will begin again in the spring as Polly looks forward to better attendance.

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- Cultural Council Grant awarded the Senior Center \$150.00 towards the American Music Series Program.
- Friends: Polly has requested a meeting to discuss another event to raise funds for trips.

February News: Open Generosity Economy Circle is planned for Sunday, February 11th from 2:00 PM-4:00 PM. It's all about sharing our needs and gifts! There will be a Valentine's Day/Mardi Gras Party on Feb. 13th from 11:00 AM-12:00 PM at the Senior Center. (GB Health Care will be providing a free lunch and Bill Shontz, saxophone player and singer, will provide the entertainment). Joe Roy, of Birches & Roy Funeral Home, will give a presentation at the center on Wednesday, Feb. 14th at 12:30 PM concerning what funeral cost benefits may be available for seniors who receive certain entitlements, such as Food Stamps and Mass Health. Saturday Winter Bingo & Lunch is scheduled for Saturday, February 24. (Lunch will be served at noon and bingo will follow).

The Claire Teague Senior Center Seniors and The High School Pathway Program Seniors join together to plan a 50's theme prom. Also planned . . . line/square dance lessons with Karaoke, Tom Soules.

BOARD SPEAKS: David communicated how delightfully surprised he was to see (for the first time) sewing machines set up in the computer room with a sewing group facilitated by Mary Warford. David also mentioned to Polly how full the parking lot was and wondered (why?) Polly answered: "BINGO!" Polly, also, asserted that the Tap Dance Group is expanding and Amy quipped that we may need to add-on to the building. It was also noted that the number of "Brown Bags" has significantly declined.

CITIZENS SPEAK: Ed Abrahams offered to make a pitch (plug) for the Brown Bag program. Holly Hammer sought clarification of funds given by the state to seniors.

ADJOURNMENT: The Chair called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pat Kinne made the motion to adjourn and Amy Rutstein seconded. It was unanimously voted to adjourn at 1:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hipwell Morris

Secretary