

GREAT BARRINGTON COUNCIL ON AGING

Claire Teague Senior Center

917 Main Street

Great Barrington, MA 01230

Phone: (413) 528-1881

MEETING MINUTES

November 29, 2023

WELCOME: The meeting of the Great Barrington Council on Aging held at the Claire Teague Senior Center, 917 Main Street, Great Barrington, Massachusetts is called to order at 1:00 pm by Chair Doug Wilber.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Chair Doug Wilber, Treasurer Maureen Avery, Secretary Susan Hipwell-Morris and Members Barbara Bailly, Sandra Larkin, Donna MacDowell, Amy Rutstein and David Rutstein are present. Member Jeanne Holcomb is absent.

MINUTES: Chair Wilber asks for a motion to approve the minutes of October 30, 2023. Member Amy Rutstein makes the motion to approve, and Member Bailly seconds the motion.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Avery reports a balance of \$28,531.61.

TRI-TOWN CONNECTOR: *Updates from Chris Rembold, Assistant Town Manager & Town Planner, and Tate Coleman, Program Director.*

- The program is successful overall in terms of serving the needs of the public, particularly early mornings, evenings and weekends.
- The program has expanded beyond just serving seniors to serving the workforce and the general public which was the goal of the program.
- Ridership went from 400 rides the first month to 1200 rides a month today.
- The core of the program ridership is seniors at, approximately, a 60-40 percent ratio.
- Currently the primary challenges are:
 - recruiting, training and retaining staff in part-time roles
 - equipment problems with vehicles, particularly the handicapped vehicles
 - no loaner vehicles are provided by BRTA
 - at some point the vehicles will need to be replaced
 - lost a few good people
- Rides have been provided at no-cost through the end of the year.
- Partnerships have been formed with the Town of West Stockbridge.
- Applying for additional funds for operations and new vehicles
- Received a grant to help with the cost for training.
- Funding has been awarded through 2025.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Updates:

Improvements:

- Patio is complete
- Awning has been installed
- Air purifiers have been purchased for art room, library and dining hall
- Comalli Electric is working on repairing the electrical outlet that operates the new awning and, additionally, adding new lighting fixtures where needed.

Looking back:

- The veterans luncheon and the (90 year olds and over) seniors' celebration: Both events were very successful. Joan was quite pleased with the large turnout.

Coming in December:

- *Lunch & Learn* presented by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission: A complimentary lunch will be provided while attendees learn about Mass save income-eligible incentives to keep your home warm and save on energy bills this winter. Dec. 5, 2023 from noon to 1:00 pm.
- To help us celebrate the Christmas season, the Earth Angels vocal group will join us for our potluck luncheon on December 9, 2023 from noon to 2:00 pm.
- Jane Kelly, the center's long-time foot nurse, is retiring. Jane's final appointments will be Monday, December 11. Joan has reached out to FootCare by Nurses of Greenfield, but regrettably their charge for the service is substantially higher than what Jane has been charging. Joan will continue to search for a replacement.
- Movie day - any movie suggestions? Ask for donations for refreshments?
- AARP scehdule to be posted.

BOARD SPEAKS: Member Bailly proposes for consideration that all TriTown Connector rides for veterans be provided at no cost.

CITIZENS SPEAK: Secretary Susan Hipwell-Morris speaks by proxy for senior center member, Patricia Labagh. Ms. Labagh requests that something be done at the front entrance to keep the cold air at bay during the winter months.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Wilber calls for a motion to adjourn. Member Barbara Bailly makes the motion to adjourn and Member Amy Rutstein seconds the motion. It is unanimously agreed to adjourn at 1:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Hipwell-Morris
Secretary

Approved - December 27, 2023