

**Meeting of the Northborough Council on Aging
April 9, 2024 – 5:30PM – Northborough Senior Center**

As the hub for all aspects of healthy aging, the mission of the Northborough Council on Aging/Senior Center is to enrich and enhance the lives of older adults.

Call to Order: A meeting of the Council on Aging of the Town of Northborough was called to order at 5:30 PM by Paula Moore, Chair. The following were also present:

Fran Bakstran, Member
Alli DellaRovere, Member
Elizabeth Nasser, Member
Theresa Lee, Member
Virginia George, Member

Mitch Cohen, Chair, Select Board
Ron Doucett, Friends
Henry Squillante, Friends
Kendra Faldetta, Director

The following COA members were not present: Jerry Anderson and Joan Frank, School Committee rep.

1. Minutes: The March 2024 meeting minutes were approved with all the attachments related to Springwell considered part of the official record. This is Alli's last meeting, and she was thanked for her service. Another member is in the approval process.

2. Friends Report: Ron provided the Friend's report, including a membership report of 631 members including 210 from out of town; there have been 49 new members this year to date. The doo-wop event planned for June, starring Tony Funches, the lead singer for the Platters who also sang with the Drifters, Coasters and Shirelles singing groups is going well. A car wash is planned for August 2nd at Whitney Place and plans for the Country Fair in November are already underway.

3. Director's Report: Kendra shared her comprehensive report. During March there were 188.55 volunteer hours, 1935 individuals came in for various appointments or activities and 77 people were served by outreach or the nurse. The vans provided 326 rides. St. Patrick's Day dinner was very popular and sold out with a wait list; likewise the coffee and Irish soda bread (supported by the Friends and made by volunteers and the Bistro 119 staff) was popular. Other events were highlighted with future plans include a Root Beer Float Day in honor of Agnes Sagarini supported by her family. The intern, Ellen, has contributed a great deal and will be organizing a men's walk on April 10th. Kendra met with the town's housing director to learn more about the congregate housing program.

4. Springwell Report:

Following the meeting last month with the Springwell president/CEO Trish Smith when the COA felt she was unprepared, Kendra shared the discussion at a meeting with local senior center directors and outreach staff. Trish and her staff member, Donyln Cannella came with a similar lack of preparation. Trish seemed surprised that the other senior centers agreed with Northboro's experience. The representatives shared examples of poor communication with clients and lack of services (a woman in Hudson ended up calling 911 after weeks with no shower and in Northboro, Springwell refuses to text a client who hard of hearing). Springwell explained that these concerns were across their service area, however Framingham and Natick in their service area don't have these issues and Shrewsbury (Kendra called Elder Services of Worcester anonymously) doesn't have these concerns. There will be a follow-up meeting in May and Trish has promised to be more prepared.

The following next steps from the last COA meeting were discussed:

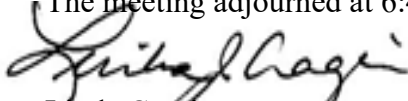
- 1) A follow-up meeting in several months – to be scheduled.
- 2) A follow-up meeting with Northborough and other COAs – completed and will continue; outreach directors have been asked to document communication (or lack thereof) with Springwell. Collaboration across the towns and engaging legislators and EOEAs will be important if appropriate answers and improved services are not reported at this meeting. Kendra has been keeping the town manager informed and Mitch will keep the Select Board informed.
- 3) More Board communication – no outcome
- 4) A timeline when town specific service utilization can be shared – no outcome.
- 5) Follow-up regarding sharing a brochure with MOW recipients – Kendra shared that Trish agreed that this was possible and was surprised that it was not supported when requested.
- 6) A commitment to discuss any shift in Protective Services with Senior Center staff prior to a decision – not needed.
- 7) Follow-up regarding Title IIIB priorities – no outcome.

5. WRTA: Kendra is now the town's representative and will have a vote at future meetings.

6. Master Plan: Fran asked Paula if she could do a report of the priorities for the senior population at the next meeting and this was agreed to.

7. Old/New Business and Community Awareness: Members were encouraged to attend Town Meeting starting April 22nd. It will most likely go for two and possibly three days. For new business, Kendra shared that the town is exploring leased solar panels on building to support the electricity costs of the center. A new roof would be needed first.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.



Linda Cragin