

WESTON COUNCIL ON AGING
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes – June 13, 2019

Present: Marge Ackerman, Vida Goldstein, John McCahan, Ireta Metchik, Mignonne Murray, Prather Palmer, Phyllis Ritvo

Absent:

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 am.

John noted that Shirley Small-Rougeau had written him to resign from the committee. Mignonne noted that Leila Hewitt had left the COA. Both will be missed. Committee members will consider replacements for the volunteer members. A new staff member is being sought.

1. The minutes of May 1st were approved as written.

2a. Personal Finance Group.

Visits to various care facilities have continued: Sunrise yesterday; Whitney Place, One Wingate, Carleton-Willard and a revisit to Waterstone are yet to come.

Some discussion occurred over the problem of misconceptions about the constituents and programs at the COA that many townspeople are believed to hold. Some upbeat programming was suggested by Phyllis (see minutes of May 1st, 3a).

The Personal Finance Group will be meeting next week.

2b. Meeting the needs of diverse cultural and ethnic groups

Marge noted that a new associate had been recruited by the Board, Teresa Young. The committee agreed that she might be a good candidate to join the Community Connections Committee and that she might bring a perspective useful to serving residents from China and Eastern Asia. Marge will find out if she would be interested in joining us.

The committee further discussed the incorporation of program leaders who come from other cultures. Examples already include the offering of Chinese, Indian and Armenian cooking classes.

2c. Meeting the needs of younger generation caregivers

In respect to meeting the needs of non-elder caregivers, the committee brainstormed. There was the thought that “caregiver” might not be word recognized even by those giving care, but most felt it was useful term. Prather suggested considering a support group for caregivers other than those caring for Alzheimer’s patients but modeled on that group. John suggested a joint program with the Recreation Department. Mignonne further suggested that a joint program with the library might also be valuable. A joint program could use the communication mechanisms that these agencies employ to reach younger residents. A joint program would also avoid the stigma of seeming as if the program was just for older citizens. The PTO might also be a joint sponsor since there may be school age children who are living in a stressful household because of parental responsibilities to older family members. Michelle and Ireta will think about language that could best frame the issue to attract younger adults coping with a caregiving situation.

Other suggestions for advertising COA services:

Prather – a banner on the Old Post Road

Vida – a brochure listing general town services

3ai. Life Long Learning at Regis

Vida had wondered about coordinating with the LLARC program and offering courses at the COA. Marge who knows the director of LLARC, Jill Rosen, was confident that an overture to LLARC would not be productive. John agreed. The item was dropped.

3aii. Guidelines on looking for a CCRC

John wondered if there was interest in printing the guidelines that Susan Wagner had written for assessing extended care facilities. The committee thought the guidelines were not well enough organized to be of use. A social worker will continue to accompany the trips to facilities and provide oral commentary on what to look for and think about. Ireta may also schedule a program next year dedicated to that topic. In addition, the committee thought that a repeat of the housing fair would be useful on a biennial basis.

3aiii and 3aiv. **Ethical will writing and end of life programming.** A general discussion was held on potential programming for the coming year that would follow up on the “Having the Conversation” sessions that Ireta and John have conducted. Subject matter that is newer, including the writing of an ethical will, might be addressed in formal programs. Ireta and John will think about the issues over the summer and come back with suggestions in the fall.

The next meeting was set for Wednesday September 18, 2019 at 8:30 am

The committee adjourned at 9:40 am.

Submitted by John McCahan