

KINGSTON COUNCIL ON AGING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 10, 2024

Meeting called to order at 11:30 a.m. at the Kingston Senior Center and broadcast on Local Seen with Zoom available for those not able to attend. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Board Members Present: Caty Starr-Chairman, Donna Weinberg-Vice Chair, Maureen Elwood, Mary Harriman, Mary Hayes, Joan Hutchison, Kathy Studley and Associate Member, Lucy Colletta.

Other members present: Holly Nighelli, Interim Director, Kingston Council on Aging, Chris Favaloro, Treasurer, Friends of Kingston Council on Aging.

Announcements: Chairman Caty Starr announced that there are several volunteer positions at the Kingston Council on Aging for Meals on Wheels, Café help, Computer Skills and for the new season of the Senior Tax Write Off Program. Reach out to the Director of the COA, if interested. Reminder of COA Advisory Board email: coa-ab@Kingstonma.gov.

Open Forum: There was no discussion at open forum.

Secretary Report: A motion was made by Maureen Elwood to accept the Secretary Reports of September 10, September 27, and October 8, 2024. This was seconded by Mary Harriman. All were in favor.

New Business:

1. Caty Starr gave a recap of the November 1, 2024 annual Senior Safety presentation that she attended led by Tim Cruz, Plymouth County District Attorney and Joseph McDonald, Jr., Plymouth County Sheriff held at Haddad's Restaurant, Marshfield, MA. All those that attended represented surrounding senior centers in the area. There was discussion between the audience and the two leaders and also packets were distributed containing valuable information, community resources, references, phone numbers (Hotline) and File of Life Handouts for seniors to display on their refrigerators or wallets for the purpose of listing personal medical information and a meds list in case of an emergency and how to properly dispose of meds by dropping off at local Police Departments. Caty stated that she learned valuable information at this event.
2. Kathy Studley, Board Member, shared with group her experience with free medical transportation to her doctor offices in past few months. A grant was awarded to the Old Colony Elder Services, Brockton, MA utilizing the Uber and Lyft Program to provide free medical transportation for seniors, both local and to Boston. Seniors are entitled to two medical trips per month, having to call OCES 508-584-1561, four days in advance for transportation. Senior is expected to carry cell phone to communicate with driver, one driver to pick up from home and drop off to appointment, and another driver to pick up and return home. Their names are given by OCES in advance for safety purposes. Seniors need to be mobile on their own and appointments need to be made after 9:00 a.m. and before 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is optional if senior wants to tip to driver. The senior is handed a performance review at end of appointment by driver. Kathy Studley had a wonderful experience with this program and

recommended to fellow seniors. She also stated they were punctual and professional.

3. Joanne Zygmunt, Senior Planner at Old Colony Planning Council, author of the Needs Assessment for the Age and Dementia Friendly Study, spoke to Board via Zoom. Kingston has been awarded \$35,000.00 which is to be applied to this program which all have long waited for these past months. Kingston has chosen to work with Joanne and OCPC over next couple years to get this program running. The first of many steps is to get this contract in place signed by the Town of Kingston Administrator, Keith Hickey. Joanne will work with Holly Nighelli to accomplish this task and work on a payment plan to OCPC from this grant money. Once signed, a copy of this contract will be then distributed to our Board. After this, there are three choices to proceed with this study. The first is work from a town level where the Town Administrator appoints a task force committee to carry this program out, including about 8-12 members, such as COA Director, COA Advisory Board member, Select Board, and at large community members. These members would be of various ages, professionals, have a personal interest, represent the disabled, retirement community member, and those having a connection to our senior community including a variety of perspectives by all on this task force.

The second choice would be to have the COA Advisory Board run this task force working and meeting with OCPC. This could be time consuming for the Advisory Board, not all easily available.

The third way would be to have a subcommittee working group not written into law. After discussion with our Advisory Board, Caty Starr made a motion to accept the first choice of working from the town level. Maureen Elwood seconded and all were in favor. The reasoning behind choice one was best for Kingston to work with Town, the other two choices would be more of a disadvantage for our Board, this first choice best all around, best communication and consistent. Joanne discussed with Board the survey needed necessary for this study filled out by our Kingston community. Caty Starr made a motion to have this survey voted on and finalized by our Board and Select Board together within the next few months. Joan Hutchison seconded and all were in favor. This survey would take up to a year to complete and we would work with Joanne using a survey monkey to access survey featuring a customized template.

Joanne will guide us through this program finding a task force and all working together. Donna Weinberg-Vice Chair, requested that Joanne send to our board a simple step by step procedure to follow to make it easy for all of us to carry out this study. Joanne stated she would send us samples from the Town of Duxbury and Town of Easton COA's on their completed study. As per Joanne, this will be a long process, but the final result of this study will be beneficial to the future of the Kingston COA as has been successful in surrounding towns identifying the needs of our Kingston senior community such as housing, transportation, aging in place, care giving and much more. Further discussion of this study will be held at our next Advisory Board meeting in January.

Director's Report: See report attached. Holly Nighelli spoke about the following:

1. Holly is working with Joanne Zygmunt of OCPC to proceed with the Age and Dementia Study. Holly said that she already has a few who have volunteered to be on the task force.
2. Donation from the Friends of the KCOA for newsletter bulk postage.
3. Holly reported about staff training for Alice and CPR training.
4. Holly is gearing up for 2025 programming at the COA, updating and renewing for future.
5. Holly is working with the Looking Ahead segments broadcast on the Local Seen (Formerly PAC TV) aired the third Wednesday each month for Kingston and surrounding towns interviewing COA Directors in the surrounding communities.
6. Holly mentioned transportation program busy providing rides to Kingston seniors. For the month of October, 381 rides were provided. For November, 291 rides were provided despite local construction in area.
7. Jenny Styers, Outreach Coordinator, is busy as ever helping consumers with fuel assistance, training seminars for recertification, screening and scheduling SHINE appoints during Open Enrollment, working with SHINE Counselor who saw 66 clients helping with Medicare Issues. Jenny also re-vamped Wednesday "Bag and Go" program and continues to work on issues regarding food insecurity, housing troubles and much more.
8. Café Evergreen has been successful these past months, 393 meals for October, 2024 and 343 meals for November, 2024. Holly passed out a recap of last year at a glance of total monthly number of meals served at café. Phil, the cook has tailored menu to accommodate seniors, very understanding to all. Thanksgiving luncheon dinner prepared for over 100 seniors. Again, for the Christmas luncheon, this coming week, almost 100 have signed up.

Chairman's Report: Caty Starr discussed the following:

1. Caty gave Board an update in the search for a new Director. Caty has been chosen to be on the interview committee of six members of selected town officials. So far 13 candidates have applied. Meetings begin this month and interviews start in January.
2. Caty also shared her experience with a fraudulent activity where debit card numbers were stolen off her card. Not communicating through a text, luckily she handled it with her local bank and shut it down in time, changing her numbers.

Old Business:

1. Chris Favaloro, Friends of Kingston COA, gave an update highlighting last six months. In June, the Friends had their annual meeting and luncheon, electing new officers, held at the Hilltop Athletic Club Function Hall, Kingston, MA. There were 110 attending along with ice cream truck. Over the next few months there were monthly luncheons with Kentucky Fried Chicken, Mama Mia's and Market Basket catering the event. Thanksgiving luncheon was held at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Kingston, MA with catering by Charlie Horse and servers from

the Fire Department, 120 seniors attending. Same for Christmas luncheon planned for December at the Knights of Columbus again, catered by Charlie Horse and servers from the Police Department. Mr. and Mrs. Claus will be attending.

2. Chris also spoke of the Friends donation to the COA, newsletter bulk mailing fees they paid for, funding the Matt York singer event at the COA and funding for the Christmas Cookie Decorating class in December run by Dot McFarland.
3. Caty Starr discussed and wanted to make a plan for future review and updates of the Advisory Board Policies and Procedures and By Laws. She also recommended that the Kingston COA Building and Usage Agreement be tabled to a future meeting.

Other Business: Remembered was the loss of Gerry Thibodeau's mother this past month. Gerry is one of our Kingston senior members of the COA.

Next Regular Meeting: Next regular COA Advisory Board to be held on Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 11:30 a.m. at Senior Center.

A motion made to adjourn meeting at 12:48 p.m. by Mary Harriman, seconded by Maureen Elwood and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Weinberg, Vice Chair COA Advisory Board, Interim Secretary