

KINGSTON COUNCIL ON AGING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
MAY13, 2025

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, Lucy Colletta, Mary Harriman, Joan Hutchison (Zoom) and Kathy Studley. Those absent: Maureen Elwood.

Other members present: Holly Nighelli, Director, Kingston Council on Aging. Other guests included, Deb Bruno, Gail DeThomaso and Pauline Dodd.

Announcements: Chair, 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 Senior Tax Work Off Program. If any interested, reach out to the Director of the COA. Note that the email of the COA Advisory Board is coa-ab@Kingstonma.gov.

Open Forum: No discussion.

Secretary Report: A motion was made by Donna Weinberg to accept the Secretary Report from the April 8, 2025, COA Advisory Board Meeting. This was seconded by Mary Harriman. All were in favor.

New Business:

1. Kathy Studley led the discussion along with input from Holly Nighelli regarding the Age and Dementia Friendly Community first working group meeting, Monday, May 5, 2025. There were 13 members who attended including the following:
 - Holly Nighelli, Director of Elder Affairs-Town of Kingston
 - Kathy Studley, Member, Kingston COA Advisory Board
 - Joanne Zygmunt-Senior Planner-Old Colony Planning Council
 - Jason Derosier-Senior Planner-Old Colony Planning Council
 - Eric Crone-Chair, Kingston Board of Selectmen
 - Valerie Massard-Kingston Town Planner
 - Heath Howell-Detective, Kingston Police Department
 - Jill Proulx-Superintendent, Silver Lake Regional School District
 - Janet Wade-Consultant to Kingston Board of Health
 - Karen Peterson-Community Benefits Manager-BID Hospital Plymouth
 - Tyler DeCost-Business Manager-Saints Mary and Joseph Parish Collaborative
 - Julie Lane-Director Lending-Neighborworks Housing Solutions
 - Ellyn McSweeney-Community member/knowledge of dementia friendly efforts

In addition to a meet and greet, Kathy stated that Joanne Zygmunt and her fellow Senior Planner, colleague, Jason Derosier, both from Old Colony Planning Council, led the meeting. OCPC is one of 13 regional Planning Agencies in MA who assist cities and towns in planning for present and future needs utilizing local knowledge, technical expertise and regional collaboration. Working from AARP's established framework of the 8 Domains of Livability, a community wide survey will be sent out. Jason and Joanne introduced to the group the scope of the project and the timeline for putting together the survey, collecting results and working on the focus areas that come from survey results. This survey should be out in our community within the next 2-3 months in various forms including in person at COA, mail, online, etc. These 8 Domains of research include: Housing, Transportation, Health Services, Communication, Outdoor Spaces, Social Inclusion, Employment and Retail. Again, the results of this survey established by our working group, will be able to identify the most priorities needed in our Kingston community. Approximately 3 or 4 of these domains will be chosen after these results. The next monthly meeting will be held on Monday June 2, 2025 at 1:30 p.m. Joanne and group will put together questions for the survey, review and proceed. Jason Desrosier stated that a normal response rate to the survey is between 2-5%. Joanne will be coordinating speakers/experts on each domain working group to attend future meetings.

2. Caty Starr, Chair, discussed the two COA updates voted upon at the April 8, 2025, Select Board meeting. First, the Select Board reviewed and approved the revised COA Advisory Board Policies and Procedures. Second, they approved the request of the new COA hours to be changed to Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. starting May 5, 2025.
3. Our Board discussed the two applications received for COA Advisory Board Member and Associate Member. The two candidates discussed their background and interest in joining our Board. Gail DeThomaso, a Carver resident, Volunteer and Book Club Facilitator at our COA, expressed interest in becoming a voting member of the COA Advisory Board to fill upcoming vacant position of Caty Starr as of July 1, 2025. Deb Bruno, a Kingston resident is also a Volunteer at the COA. Deb works in the office and has donated her time updating the COA computer database. Deb has expressed interest in becoming the new Associate Member, a non-voting position, now vacant. As both of these candidates are dedicated members of our COA, they wish to use their expertise in assisting our Board. First, Donna Weinberg made a motion to vote in favor recommending Gail DeThomaso to join our Board. Lucy Colletta, seconded and a vote was cast by attending Board members in favor 5 Yeah to 1 Ne. Majority in favor. Also, a second motion was made by Lucy Colletta to vote in favor of Deb Bruno recommending her to be our new Associate Member. Mary Harriman seconded and all were in favor. These two candidates will be placed on an upcoming Kingston Select Board meeting agenda for approval and appointment to our COA Advisory Board.
4. Caty stated that Maureen Elwood had requested an agenda item at today's meeting to discuss kitchen beverages served. Maureen was not present at this meeting, so this discussion was tabled to a future date.

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

1. Upcoming Programs at COA:
 - May 30, 2025 – TRIAD – Featuring Plymouth County Comfort Dogs
 - June 5, 2025 – Thursday - Summer Kick Off Party Luncheon
 - June 12, 2025 – Thursday – Father's Day Luncheon with the COA Friends contributing toward an Ice Cream Truck and Entertainment
 - COA closed Thursday, June 19, 2025 due to Juneteenth Holiday
2. Staff Updates:
 - Holly welcomed Stacy Driscoll who is our new COA Assistant Director of Elder Affairs. Stacy will be taking over the production and distribution of the Newsletter, overseeing the Volunteer Program, Senior Tax Work Off Program and more.
 - Holly Nighelli is still interviewing van drivers.
3. COA Café: There were 311 meals served in the month of April, 2025, quite an increase from a year ago. In August, 2024, the COA was awarded a grant in the amount of \$5,800 from Maine Council on Aging's CHEF grant sponsored by Hannaford. A portion of this grant money was currently used to purchase new kitchen supplies including small and large dishes, flat ware, a flat ware organizer, chef's knives, new pans and storage containers. Plans are also being made to have the ice machine repaired.
4. Holly stated that at this time there are roughly 13,000 seniors in Kingston of which approximately 2,200 active at COA.

Chairman's Report: None.

Old Business:

1. Caty Starr, Chair, again reviewed and reminded our Board members of the June Advisory Board meeting and election of officers for Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Donna Weinberg expressed an interest in remaining as Vice Chair and Secretary. There wasn't any response from our group in taking on any officer positions, so Caty asked our group to seriously think about our nominations and voting of officers in preparation for our June meeting. Caty will not be renewing her term for the new fiscal year.
2. Friends Representative update has been tabled to a future meeting.
3. COA Building Usage Agreement (rental agreement) and application review has been tabled to a future meeting.

Other Business: Remembered. Our Board had a moment of silence for Carol Caruso, a long time well-loved COA member and volunteer who passed last month. Condolences were made to her family.

Next Regular Meeting: Next regular COA Advisory Board meeting to be held on Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 11:30 a.m., at the Kingston Senior Center.

A motion was made to adjourn meeting at 12:20 p.m. by Donna Weinberg and seconded by Mary Harriman. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Weinberg, Vice Chair COA Advisory Board and Interim Secretary