*COA meeting Wednesday December 18th, 2024*

The meeting was called to order by BJ Roche at 3:02pm

Attendees: Chair BJ, members Donna, Diane, Rachel and Kelle

**General Business:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the meeting minutes of November 20th 2024.

**Past Activities:**

***Holiday Luncheon***- Took December 13th from 12-2ish at the Ashfield Lake House. They had a special menu prepared for us with about 6 options and also a spread of desserts. About 25-30 residents attended.

**Scheduled Future Activities:**

***Foot Clinics*:** Continue to go well and are popular with residents. The prices of foot clinics have increased in July from $50/hour and $20/per person to $60/hour and $25/per person (average increase of $115 a clinic). Findings of survey shows that most attendees were willing and able to contribute a $20 voluntary donation for the foot clinic time slot. A donation box was set up in the October Foot clinic with a document of explanation. 3 more donations were received for the November Foot clinic (a total of $120) and in both December clinics, 7 residents donated in each clinic. The money was counted and given to treasurer Ben Gelb to put in a newly opened ‘donation’ revolving account for the COA.

***Walking Club with Rachel and Kelle****-* to continue indefinitely as long as weather permits. Great feedback from residents with this club. 1-1.5 Hour long from 10am-11(30)am. Continue to be advertised in Goal Post. Walkers have signed liability release forms.

***Bowling club*-** at Shelburne Falls bowling alley. January 9th and 23rd from 3-5pm for seniors- $10 to bowl and shoes. Paid for by COA. No need to sign up. Contact BJ for more info. 3 lanes have been reserved. BJ paid for the last bowling session by check and will get reimbursed.

**January Third Thursday Coffee Hour**: To take place January 16th- Donna to lead residents in vision board making. Donna will order all supplies needed. Will use 11X14 inch boards.

**January Tech Talk with Justine:** To take place Wednesday January 29th from 1-3pm. Residents will bring laptops, tablets, ipads and Justine will lead a workshop on Cyber security, Google Calendar and Google Docs. Will advertise in Goal Post.

***Winter Fitness Program with Deb Lively***- This will start February 3rd and will be Mondays and Wednesdays (ending at end of March) from 230pm-4pm and will include a 5 or 6 station circuit training. The COA will pay Deb what hourly rate the park pays her.

**February Third Thursday Coffee Morning:** Will be on February 20th and will be ‘Man Day’. We will come up with ideas for what we may do- or just have good coffee and treats and encourage the male seniors to come out to socialize. We also will do a chocolate tasting event.

**March Third Thursday Coffee Morning:** Will be on March 20th. BJ to contact Deidre (elder attorney in S.F.) to see if she will come talk with elders about estate planning and elder law. Rachel will also do a educational talk about Health Care Proxy and MOLST forms.

**Future Activities in the works (but getting close)**:

* ***Summer event to Tanglewood*-** BJ to look into a bus trip for August 2025. Bus to be paid for by Cultural Council grant money ($500). Residents to purchase own tickets? (shed tickets) BJ to do a write up for Goal Post for February. This will be a first come first serve event. The bus holds 14 people.
* *“****Winter Helpers”*-** A group of people willing to help with grocery shopping, picking up meds, library books for seniors during the winter months (especially during impending storms). To potentially run during the winter months and will require a group of volunteers. Residents will be able to ‘sign-up’ as a helper or someone who needs help. Susan White from Lifepath will be coming to our next meeting (January 8th) to talk about logistics and legalities of a program like this.

**Potential future activities (but still being brainstormed)**

* *Holiday Snacks (healthy)-* demonstration how to make healthy snacks for the holidays. Putting together a small (easy) cookbook or folks to take home.
* *Community Welcome Guide:* idea brought forth to provide a guide to the area, services, maps, things to do etc for new seniors/residents in town. May be a multi-committee/board effort. Includes local food, shopping, fun/outdoor, handman, medical care, park maps. BJ will create a Google Doc to start adding ideas to this.
* *Rowe “Village”-* a spin-off of the ‘Village” that was set up in Shutesbury, Leverret and Wendell, providing free services /rides to seniors in town. Pre-reg/appointments would be required. Services include handman work, gardening, assistance with household chores, grocery shopping, rides/med rides etc. This is a very large undertaking requiring a lot of research- we will follow up on this at a later date.
* *SENIOR PROM-* a multi-town prom for seniors at the Mohawk HS with music, dancing, drinks and food. To take place in Spring/early summer 2026…will begin the planning for this in the future.
* *Paint and sip*- Donna to look into this for the winter- may be a zoom event, possibly paid for in part by the cultural council.
* *Positivity Speaker*- ? Richie Davis who was a community journalist and author. GCC or Rowe Camp may have suggested speakers- will look into this at a future time. ?Cultural Council to pay for this with grant money.
* *Metal Detecting Club-* still in the works- need to get permissions to walk on personal/town owned land.
* *Pet talk-* getting a local veterinarian/retired vet to come and chat about pet safety/health/ answer pet questions.
* *Combining with other Town COA’s to hold events* (Ie. Heath, Monroe, Charlemont)- Donna has contacted local towns and has invited them to the April coffee morning to hear about Lifepath.
* *Suggestion Box*- It was discussed to put a suggestion box at the Town Hall entrance and in the Library for the seniors/community members to make suggestions of what activities they would like to see or topics they would like to get more information about.
* *Check-in communities/Buddy system*- Household groups of 3-4 would combine to make a ‘pod’ and check-in on each other at least weekly in whatever way suits them- Ie. Text, email, phone call, in-person, social media, etc. The COA would then do a matching process and create the ‘pods’ after sign up is complete. This is voluntary and people/households would be able to add themselves to the pods or discharge themselves as they desire. This will be tabled for the future due to lack of interest/confusion.

**Other Business:**

**Shoveling/Snow Removal Service**: It was brought to multiple COA member’s attention (by town residents) that ‘FRCOG’ had a program that would reimburse towns for shoveling/plowing seniors’ driveways and paths. BJ contacted FRCOG regarding this potential program and it was found out that it does not exist and by knowledge of Bob Dean, director of municipal services, the program never had existed. It was decided by the COA to refer residents to private pay services.

**Exercise Room TV:** COA has agreed to purchase a TV for the Town’s exercise room, but before making a final decision, BJ will research TVs and stands and bring choices to next meeting to vote on them.

**Adjustable chair for footcare nurse**: The COA has agree to purchase an adjustable chair/stool for the footcare nurse to alleviate back discomfort due to ergonomic concerns.

**Budget**: The COA has agreed to increase budget 1K for a total of 9k in the next fiscal year, due to the rise in cost of the foot clinics and rise in other expenses and increase in participation in COA activities.

Next meeting is Wednesday January 8th at 3pm.

Meeting adjourned 4:05pm