

Council on Aging December 3, 2024

Chair Mary Anne Easley called the meeting to order once a quorum was established.

Members present: Abby Camp, Mary Anne Easley, Robert Kucharavy, Lisa Sherburne, Linda Williams

Members absent: Rocky Fox, Erin Lynch, Arlene O'Reilly

Staff present: Jerico Mele, Laura Stewart

Approval of agenda: Moved by Linda Williams; seconded by Robert Kucharavy.

Minutes of three previous meetings could not be approved since they had not been submitted. Mary Anne volunteered to complete them for approval at the January 2025 meeting.

Since Arlene O'Reilly stepped aside as secretary. Linda Williams moved to make minutes-taking a rotating responsibility instead of naming a new secretary; there was unanimous agreement, and Linda volunteered to take minutes at the January 2025 meeting.

Mary Anne was asked to start a Ten Taxpayer Group (TTG) to champion the proposed new nursing home. She was hesitant since there is so little information about TTGs and thought it best to seek legal advice. Council members advised against starting a TTG, and Jerico agreed to seek advice from the Town compliance officer, Maureen Coleman. (Note: Mary Anne has since declined the request.)

Jerico reported recent Human Services activities: the Contract Review Committee is currently reviewing applications; health clinics and food security programs are under way, which benefit residents of all ages. In response to a question, Jerico explained that the Visiting Nurses Association has a contract with the Town to provide home health services for seniors, as well as others; the contract was expanded this year and staff was added to handle medication management. The VNA is continually starting new programs, and assists with a grief and loss group.

Laura Stewart invited questions/comments on her monthly report. Robert Kucharavy asked if the recent fraud presentation by Cape Cod Five Bank had been well received. Laura said yes, six or seven seniors had attended, and the bank would be welcomed back for future presentations.

Mary Anne announced the Christmas dinner offered by NCEA December 18 at the Nantucket Hotel (cost \$25) and encouraged COA members to attend.

Robert Kucharavy reported that the Whaling Museum's programs for seniors continue to be very popular. Special tours of the Festival of Wreaths and Festival of Trees were well attended. New programs for 2025 are planned: decorative arts in January; an old Nantucket pictures guessing game in February; distinguished women of Nantucket with Jason Finger in March; the Atheneum in April; and a needlework program in May tied to the museum's major 2025 exhibit on textiles.

The Whaling Museum's off-island senior programs are already booking for spring. Of the 15 Cape Cod senior centers, three have already been booked and they hope to add 8 more. The topic is the impact of Quakerism on whaling.

Robert reported that the nutrition director for Elder Services of Cape Cod & the Islands (ESCCI) said that Nantucket's lunch program for seniors (Meals on Wheels and the Congregate Lunch) provided by Kitty Murtagh's restaurant is the best in the region.

ESCCI plans a fund-raising program for spring ("Spring for a Meal") with three Nantucket restaurants — Town, Kitty Murtagh's and SeaGrille — with cards on each table inviting diners to donate to Meals on Wheels.

Robert also reported major problems with federal and state legislation which would cut services to seniors. He will provide a template for anyone to contact legislators to push back.

Mary Anne asked if there is any news on selling the Saltmarsh building to the Town. Jerico said nothing is known at this time.

The meeting was adjourned after 34 minutes.