

Holliston Council on Aging  
Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting (Corrected)

December 9, 2020 - 1:00PM

By zoom: 811 7714 9113

By telephone: 1-646-558-8656, meeting code 81177149113#

Members Present by Zoom (roll call):

Kathy Anguish, Millie Bedard, Yvette Cain, Frank Caron, Carmen Chiango, Bob Hopkins, Bob Malone

Associates Present by telephone:

Shirley Hopkins

Staff Present by Zoom:

Linda Marshall, Bryan Perkins, Marty Schneier

Others Present:

Chris Meo, Town of Holliston; Chris Cain, Holliston Reporter

Bob Malone called the meeting to order at 1:03PM. A quorum was present. He read the statement regarding the suspension of certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law and the authorized use of remote participation. He noted that a roll call of attendance will be taken; that all votes during the meeting will be by roll call, and that any motions, seconds, or discussion should be preceded by the member's announcing their name.

Motion was made to approve the minutes of the meetings of October 12 and November 2 by Bob Hopkins, seconded by Millie. Vote to approve was unanimous by roll call vote.

Bob held Chair comments to the new business portion of the meeting.

The next item on the agenda was the report of Senior Center activity by Linda Marshall, Director, which had been provided to members prior to the meeting. Under building issues, Linda reported that the December Town Meeting had approved an item including interior carpet replacement (offices, pool room, computer lab), painting (great hall and associated rooms), and ceiling tile work for \$40,000.

We have received an additional \$400 in memory of Jeri Chartrand, and another \$400 from the donation jar at the Superette. We have also received an anonymous donation of \$7,000 to provide 750 meals to seniors. Over \$1,000 in gifts and cash for senior holiday gifts have been received, and the Holliston Girl Scouts have provided particular service in gathering gifts and donations and wrapping gifts.

Linda has also applied for a \$34,000 transportation grant through the MAPC that would allow us to provide out-of-service-area transportation and meet other excess transportation needs for our seniors.

Program activity remains robust even as the Center is essentially closed. In January, a new program entitled *Chat With Staff* will begin on a bi-weekly basis. It will allow seniors to talk with staff about updates and issues of interest. Also, due to a grant from the Metrowest Health Foundation, a program entitled *Decreasing Social Isolation in Seniors Through Technology* will begin with the proceeds received to date for computer tablets and technology training. A one time program entitled *Creating Your Own Psychological First Aid Kit For Surviving Covid-19* is planned. Also Zumba classes and Phone-A-Friend will continue.

The Center continues to provide approximately 45 meals twice a week for seniors, prepared at the Center and delivered by our drivers. Special drive-up meals for the holiday season are planned for December 16, with catering by Oliva's. Over 200 people have signed up in advance – a new record for special meal functions. Also planned is a Valentine's drive-up lunch for February 8.

Requests for funding through the SSF include increased funding of \$500 for the holiday meal (to a total of \$1,900), as well as access to the funds donated by the Newcomers (\$500) and Police Association (\$500) for desserts and treats. Also requested are \$500 for Valentine's lunch items, \$500 for St. Patrick's Day lunch items, and a one-time check to Henry Quinlan for the Creating You Psychological First Aid Kit workshop. Also noted is access to the donation received anonymously for meals for seniors, to the total of \$7,000. All requests were moved as a single motion by Bob Hopkins, seconded by Frank, and voted unanimously by roll call vote.

Linda has announced her resignation as Director, effective March 31, 2021. She has submitted a letter to Town Administrator Travis Ahern, with an agreement to continue to serve as a part-time consultant for time undefined to help introduce and acclimate a new Director.

Under new business, there was discussion about the search process. Linda and Bob Malone have been in conversation with Town Administrator Travis Ahern and Mary Bousquet about timing and tasks for beginning a search for a new Director. Travis has suggested a Screening Committee to be chaired by Linda, comprising 4 or 5 people, including at least one other staff member and several Council members, and a Finalist Selection Committee to be made up of Travis, Bob Malone, and another person – perhaps another Town department head.

There has also been an exchange of information to be used for posting the position, and a position description. The last job description (from 2017) was modified slightly. It was the consensus of the Council that the two modifications – adding a part time administrative position in the list of staff supervised, and noting the qualifications for applicants included language for working with a senior environment or with senior groups – did not constitute a substantial change. That revised job description will be provided to the Town Administrator.

Discussion then turned to the budget and budget process for next year. While the guidelines for the FY2022 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022) budget year have not been received, it is expected that it will be a tight year, even though a number of expenses have been curtailed due to the virus pandemic, and many extraordinary expenses for the situation have been covered by state and federal funding (CARES Act).

The Council strongly endorsed the submission again of the request for a part time (18 hour) administrative assistant in the coming budget. That position was approved by both Finance Committee and Select Board before cuts had to be made due to the virus situation. And while certain tasks have changed around somewhat due to the virus pandemic situation, the amount of work has not lessened – just been reconfigured. Transportation, meal service, on-line virtual programs, drive-by functions all require continuing and complex administrative attention. Filling the new position to help with administrative tasks is of paramount importance.

There is traditionally no January meeting of the Council. The next scheduled meeting will be February 10, 2021, weather permitting. Due to the Chair's travel schedule Linda and Bob Hopkins will work together for posting of the February meeting and agenda. Also the Council voted to authorize Linda and Bob Hopkins to jointly call a special meeting of the Council at any time in the Chair's absence as may be necessary to approve the 2022 budget to be developed by Linda, or for any other business that requires timely action by the Council. A motion to that effect was made by Kathy, seconded by Frank, and voted unanimously by roll call vote.

A motion to adjourn was made by Millie, seconded by Carmen, and voted unanimously by roll call. The meeting ended at 2:21PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Robert Malone