

HOLLISTON COUNCIL ON AGING
Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting
December 14, 2022 – 2:00 PM

Members Present: Yvette Cain, Kathy Anguish, Carmen Chiango, Janet Alexander, Lynn Bajdek

Members Absent: Millie Bedard and Georgia Papavasiliou

Staff Present: Lisa Borchetta, Amanda Boralessa-Looper, Melicia DaCosta and Debbie Dupuis

Associate Member Present: Peter Eagan

Guests: Chris Cain (Holliston Reporter - remote), Nancy King-Bolger, Advocates, Inc. and Eileen Davis, Tri-county United Way

Call to Order:

The hybrid meeting was conducted in person in the Senior Center classroom, with masks being optional, as well as online via Zoom. Yvette took an audio roll call, and with a quorum being present, called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

Presentations:

Peter Eagan, COA Associate Member introduced the Elder Care TeleCheck program that provides a phone check-in service for elder adults, operated in partnership with BayPath Elder Services and Advocates, Inc. Trained call-takers contact seniors weekly to provide support and friendly conversation following life changes.

Peter introduced two top administrators involved in the program:

Nancy King-Bolger, MSW, Holliston resident, Advocates, Inc. Outreach clinician for elder care community care.

Eileen Davis, Tri-county United Way, Vice President Mass 211, the statewide service that connects callers and referral line for health & human services. Eileen is also the Founder and Director, Call2Talk, a mental health, emotional support, and suicide prevention hotline.

Peter has been involved with the Call2Talk program for the past 10 years. The Call2Talk program is a crisis and suicide hotline that handles inbound calls either directly or routed through Mass211 or the National Suicide Prevention hotline. The Elder Care Telecheck program operates as part of Call2Talk and uses trained listeners who make weekly outbound calls and offer companionship to seniors who are feeling isolated, depressed or who are showing signs of suicidal tendencies. The program services approximately 14 towns in MetroWest and is currently underutilized by Holliston residents.

Nancy King-Bolger, Outreach clinician - Elder Community Care is a partnership between BayPath Elder Services, Call2Talk, United Way and Advocates, Inc collaborating and providing a range of mental health services. If, during an in-home mental health assessment, signs of depression, anxiety or isolation are present, clients would be referred to an Advocate counselor or the TeleCheck program.

Eileen Davis administers the United Way portion of the program. The program currently has the capacity to take on additional clients. All call takers are intensely trained in suicide prevention. Relationships are nurtured and clients feel safe and are more open to talk about family, medical and/or financial issues. In

December 2013, Call2Talk started with 5 calls; as of November 2022, the program and has logged approximately 107,000 calls.

Referrals can currently be emailed to Eileen Davis at Eileen.davis@wotc.org. A follow up phone call after an informal screening/consent form would then be scheduled.

Minutes for November 9, 2022 Meeting. Minutes were unanimously approved (moved by Kathy, seconded by Lynn).

Comments:

Staff Comments:

- Amanda announced her resignation, effective December 28, 2022. She has accepted a position with the federal government in the Community and National Service Agency. Lisa is currently working with the Human Resource Director, Kathleen Buckley, to formalize the process and post Amanda's replacement.
- Melicia stated that the fire and police departments have been forwarding emails and calls to her from residents seeking help with Fuel Assistance. Her home visits have identified people suffering from loneliness and isolation and Melicia will investigate the Call2Talk program for these people. The Transportation program is increasing since more people aren't comfortable driving in the winter months. The senior center, in collaboration with the girl scouts, will be delivering 60+ holiday gifts to seniors.
- Kathy commended the staff on the wonderful holiday luncheon provided by the SSF and Police Department.

Senior Center Director's Report Lisa Borchetta:

- Building Issues:
 - New concrete entries at the back and front entrances cannot be salted this year, only sanded. Also, portions of the driveway closest to the garage may need to be closed off due to melting and freezing cycles. Working with Highway/DPW to brainstorm the winter snow/ice treatments for the center.
- Grants:
 - **UMass Boston 55+ Survey Results** will be presented via a hybrid meeting by the UMass Boston Research team to the Select Board on Monday, January 9 at 7 pm, and in a community live presentation at the senior center on January 17 at 11 am. Data gathered from this survey will be Incorporated into the Envisioning Future Holliston strategic plan. Also, based on survey results, discussions regarding COA's interest in pursuing Holliston becoming a certified age-friendly and dementia-friendly community, may be of interest. This would involve looking at infrastructure, outside space and buildings to see if they are accessible and safe for this diverse group.
 - **Senior Safe Program** –names are continuing to be added to the list and John Gagnon continues to assist residents with the installation of safety equipment.
 - **Habitat for Humanity/ARPA Program** Two projects are now underway. Another project has been approved but is not yet scheduled. And another approved project has been put on a permanent hold due to medical issues. Carole Letteney, Family Services Coordinator, is the contact person for taking applications.

- **MA Development Finance Agency.** Received a \$21,500 taxi grant - received BOS approval, awaiting arrival of funds and restart of program.
- Code of Conduct/Review Committee: No updates at this time.
- SSF Requests: No pending requests currently. Have approvals through the month of February.

New Business:

Update on Envisioning Future Holliston Committee: Request for Proposals has been completed and forwarded to Town Counsel for review.

Adjournment:

Yvette asked for a Motion to Adjourn (Kathy moved; Carmen seconded). Motion was approved unanimously. Next Meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2023 at 2:00 PM. Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Alexander