

Harvard Council on Aging
Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Present: Bruce Dolimount, Hank Fitek, Victoria Hayao, Fran
Maiore, Carl Sciple, Deb Thomson, Cathy Walker, Beth Williams
COA Director Debbie Thompson, recorder Connie Larrabee,
Minuteman representative Pam Frederick, Friends of the
Council on Aging treasurer Sharon Briggs, School Supt. Linda
Dwight, Selectwoman Alice von Loesecke
Absent: Carol Lee Tonge

The meeting was convened at 4 p.m. at Hildreth House

The minutes of the February 20, 2018 board meeting were
approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report - Bruce Dolimount

The account balances are as follows:

Revolving Funds	\$ 8,455.34
MART	14,316.72
Payroll	40,738.66
Gift account	62,709.11
Formula grant	10,596.88 received – 40% spent

Director's Report

The outreach department is aware of at least two families
where adult children over the age of 50 or 60 are living with
elderly parents who've been caring for them for years. The
children are unable to live on their own but the parent(s) are
reaching an age where they will no longer be able to provide
the support their children require. The COA is trying to find

out how many families are in this position, and see what help we can provide.

Debbie has updated the monthly MART report to reflect “direct” and “indirect” costs, as required by MART. The new report has been forwarded to Tim Bragan. The MART contract with its member towns will soon be finalized after months of difficult negotiations.

The annual St. Patrick’s Day lunch on March 15 was a rousing success. Sixty-six seniors enjoyed a great meal cooked by Chef Bill Ference and served by members of the Lions Club, COA staff, and other volunteers. The entertainment included a storyteller, paid for by the Friends of the COA.

Friends of the Council on Aging – Sharon Briggs

There was no FCOA meeting this month because of a snowstorm. There will be an annual meeting at the end of May, and the FCOA is hoping to have a guest speaker.

Housing @ Hildreth – Hank Fitek

There was no Housing@Hildreth meeting this month. At the April 17 board meeting, the COA board will discuss the citizen’s petition requiring that some affordable units be included in the proposed development, and decide whether to take a position on the issue at Annual Town Meeting.

Debbie reported that a resident had asked whether the COA is a contact point for getting on a waiting list for proposed senior housing. Lacking a housing authority, which many other towns have, she referred the caller to the selectmen or the Housing@Hildreth Committee.

Buildings and Grounds – Bruce Dolimount

Bruce reported that some men at the weekly men’s coffee asked if window shades could be installed to block the morning

sun on the east-facing side of the living room. Board members were not receptive to the idea.

Minuteman Senior Services – Pam Frederick

Pam reported on a legislative luncheon where the subject was protective services. She said at least 10 percent of seniors need protective services at some point and the program showed how difficult it is to manage these cases. Legislators at the luncheon said the program was effective in giving them “faces to put with the figures” when they consider funding for protective services.

Phase 2 Progress – Carl Sciple

Board members briefly discussed preparations for Annual Town Meeting. They agreed on the importance of developing a strategy to explain the need for the COA’s \$40,000 request for architectural services. Victoria will work on an outline of important points.

Hildreth Elementary School Building Project

School Superintendent Linda Dwight and Selectwoman Alice von Loesecke gave a brief presentation about the HES building plan and recent progress in mitigating the tax impact of the project and other projects – including Hildreth House expansion - on the town’s five-year capital plan. Although town officials have not settled on a final plan, their goal is to “flatten out” debt payments during the early peak period when the debt will be highest. A final financing plan is expected in April.

New Business

Senior tax programs: The board had a brief discussion about how to publicize current programs for senior tax relief. There has been a conversation on NextDoor Harvard about the \$8-

per-hour pay rate for the tax work-off program, and a perception that the town is taking advantage of people who work in the program. One suggestion is to raise the total appropriation for tax work-off to \$15,000, and raise the pay rate to \$10 per hour. The program is funded by agreement of the selectmen and the assessors, so that's where the final decision rests.

Victoria suggested that tax relief information could be effectively distributed by including it in the property tax bill envelope. Deb will follow up with Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro to see if that might be possible.

Debbie asked if the COA is interested in marching in the July 4 parade again this year. Several board members said they could do it: Fran, Cathy, Deb, Carl, Beth, and Victoria.

Connie's term as a COA alternate member expired in January. The board will recommend her reappointment for another year.

The board meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.
The next meeting of the COA Board of Directors is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17, 2018 at 4 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Larrabee, recorder
