

## **COA Minutes March 15, 2022**

**Called to order at: 13:04**

**Attendance:** Frank, Jim, Betty, Tony, Deb, Debbie, Judie, Howard, Jinx, Colleen

### **Minutes**

The February minutes were submitted for approval. There were no questions nor discussion.

Frank moved that they be approved; Jim seconded.

The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report was submitted for approval, followed by discussion. We came ahead in the breakfast and lunch fund. Tony has talked to Erin, the town accountant, about the program used by the town to keep its books. She is unhappy with it and wishes that we would adopt the program used in other towns. There were questions about the line items that show a negative amount. Tony explained how he set up his spreadsheet. Tony will eventually sit down with Erin and get everything clarified. Frank noted that all the lines that show a negative balance are the ones where no starting balance is recorded and he speculated that entering a starting balance would eliminate the negatives. Colleen assures us that her books come out exactly right, so we are truly OK. The Title III exercise grant is now exhausted. Both Colleen's and Erin's figures show negative \$391, but the amount is actually \$0. Colleen will begin to use the exercise fund, which has in the neighborhood of \$2000 - \$3000 on the next statement. Colleen provided an explanation uses of the Fred Wells money, which is down to approximately \$190. The Formula Grant has approximately \$8000. Tony stated that Colleen is exceedingly careful, thorough, and thoughtful in keeping the books.

Frank moved to accept the report; Betty seconded.

Treasurer's report approved unanimously.

### **Chair's Report:**

Frank mentioned the difference between Bylaws and Policies and Procedures. Bylaws need approval by the select board, and then be submitted at the town meeting. There is no physical copy of our current bylaws. Colleen and Frank looked all over for it, but with no luck. What is now titled



Policies and Procedures is actually our old bylaws whose name was changed at some point. Frank suggests that we change the name back to bylaws, make some minor corrections and submit to the select board, then town. We can then put more detail into a separate document called Policies and Procedures that we can edit without town oversight. Tony asked why we cannot put everything under the heading of Policies and Procedures. Frank and Colleen explained that the MCOA mandates that each COA have bylaws and that we need to have bylaws on file with the town. Frank provided some examples to highlight the differences between bylaws and Policies and Procedures. The bylaws do need to be amended, but we can pull some items out of the bylaws and put them under the jurisdiction of Policies and Procedures. The bottom line is that we need bylaws, so we will proceed with amending bylaws and then creating a new document referred to as Policies and Procedures.

We will aim to have revisions to bylaws done by June, to be voted on in the July meeting.

There was a question about what would be removed from the bylaws. Frank's examples were liaisons and committees. These should not be written in stone, they should be fluid.

COVID update: The town has lifted its mask mandate, but the Senior Center is still requiring them.

**Friends:** Jinx provided an update from the recent Friends meeting. There are plans for a concert at the golf course in July, with a minimal admission fee, perhaps \$2 per individual, \$5 for a family. There are also plans for a 60's concert in August. Another possible activity would be a bus trip to Marblehead or to the White Mountains. The Marblehead trip would cost approximately \$32 per person. Frank suggested that bus trip should add \$5 or so to price so that it can be a fund raiser, too. The next Friends meeting is scheduled for April 19th.

**CPC:** Deb attended her first meeting. There was only one request, from the Historical Society to remove mold from the building and to do some much needed painting. Northfield does not have a housing authority, so many grants that are typically handled through housing authority are handled by the CPC and thus are in a state of limbo. The CPC is looking into this situation and what can be done. Deb read from a document to explain what housing authorities do. How do we get more affordable housing in



Northfield? Tony explained how the town's planning board works and if they could address the issue of affordable housing. There was speculation as to whether Lifepath might be able to help with this.

### **Director's Report:**

Happy Feet continues to grow. Colleen had a request from some people who cannot join us on Monday mornings, but would love to take part. Colleen may add a third walk and tie this into Walk Massachusetts.

Lifepath surveys: Colleen has 10 more to deliver to Nour. She has sent out some more via email. The response has been successful, with over 1700 respondents in total. Colleen explained how the results of the survey will help us with grants.

MCOA walk challenge-last year we placed 3rd and received \$250 from the MCOA. We will partner with NES this year. Deb and Frank may both look into this. We hope also to partner with the Rec Commission. We discussed the challenge. Betty and Karen Boudreau hope to plan a kick-off gathering on May 1st. We discussed having tee shirts made with the Happy Feet logo

Frank made a motion for teeshirts, up to \$400. Judie seconded. Frank revised his motion for up to \$500 for clothing with the Happy Feet and MCOA Walk MA logo. Jinx asked whether the MCOA will be giving out swag again this year. We do not know. We also talked about jackets or baseball caps instead of tee shirts. Frank referred to the website for information on how to organize.

There are two new programs for our seniors. One is a Veterans' Support agent. The other is a drop in health clinic once a month.

Second session from Lifepath focused on transportation options. Some rides are available for Lifepath clients. They can take you to social visits, doctor's appointments, shopping. FRTA offers more limited rides. Colleen asks us to encourage people to use FRTA services more. Tony mentioned that transportation requests are the most common for N@H.

We discussed how transportation in general, not just for seniors, is a serious regional issue for Franklin County.

Other: work order for maintenance, nuts and bolts sorts of things. Maybe a magnetic sign on the back with a new logo to welcome. If we can decide upon a design by 4/30 Colleen has a \$10 off coupon. We can make one for the Senior Center and one perhaps for Walk MA, maybe with Senior Center hours. Colleen asked Jinx to work on a design.



**Legislation:** Nothing new

**N@H:** Annual meeting in June at Four Star. We discussed different activities that promote social contact, including Walk Massachusetts. There will be a brunch for members and volunteers at Zeke's. Work on transferring online files to Google Workspace for non-profits.

**Other Items**

There will be a Veteran and Dependent Benefit presentation, 4/28 from 1 - 2:30, to be held at Erving Senior Center  
1 - 2:30. We need to let them know by 4/13.

Colleen is planning a volunteer recognition event that will be held on June 9 at Four Star Farm.

Jinx and Deb want to extend TED Talks.

Betty moved to adjourn. Judie seconded it.  
14:48

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Whitcomb