

Northfield Council on Aging
Meeting Minutes: Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2023

Meeting called to order at 1:07 p.m.

Attendance: Jim Whitcomb (presiding), Pete Vearling, Betty Whitcomb, Colleen Letourneau, Meg Livingstone, Chris Harris, Debby Wiesen Kelly. **Absent:** Deb Lanou

Minutes: Based on a review of the minutes for Aug. 15, 2023, a motion to accept the minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Betty Whitcomb reported that everything that Colleen (director) gave her matched up with everything that Erin (town treasurer) gave her. It was moved and seconded to accept the treasurer's report and unanimously approved.

Chair's Report

In the absence of Chairman Deb Lanou, director Colleen Letourneau presented the Chair's report, as follows:

"Hear Here, Northfield": This project is underway; workers were putting in some of the speaker systems in the Senior Center. They will be back again tomorrow (Sept. 20) to lay the loop down and then nobody can be in this space until the flooring goes over it. They will come back at the end of the month to test the hearing loop. The new flooring will be picked up by Jim, Pete, and Frank (Froment) from Home Depot using two pickup trucks (to save the delivery fee) and delivered it to the Senior Center space inside the town hall.

Shed progress: Jim reports the exterior siding, windows and door are done, but they still have flower boxes, shelving and a ramp to build. Colleen showed us a handsome plaque thanking all who helped to build and fund the shed. This will be affixed to the front of the shed.

Contributions to Friends of Northfield Seniors: There was a conversation at the last Friends of Northfield Seniors meeting about board members contributing to the Friends, so that they have a financial vested interest in the organization. This is a voluntary donation. Checks may be made out to Friends of Northfield Seniors and mailed to David Kelly.

It was clarified that we (the board) cannot fundraise; However, as a nonprofit that is not part of town government, the Friends can fundraise for our benefit. But what we can do, individually, is write a check to "Friends of Northfield Seniors." They can use that money to buy things like a TV, outdoor furniture, games, activities, or services, etc., for the use by or benefit of Northfield Seniors. For example, if we do the memory cafe, the Friends could help pick up the tab for that.

Annual Conference: Deb Lanou and Colleen Letourneau will be attending the MCOA Annual Conference on Oct. 11-12 in Danvers.

MCOA grant opportunity: Colleen called our attention to a new grant opportunity from the Massachusetts Council on Aging. MCOA is using more than \$500,000 in state Service Incentive Grants (SIG) funds to provide direct grants to local councils in eight project areas. Of special interest to us is a grant of up to \$5,000 for Memory Cafe innovations and start-ups. Submissions are due by Nov. 9, 2023. Debby Wiesen Kelly offered to work with Colleen in completing this application.

Memory Cafe: Chris and Betty will be attending the Memory Cafe at the Greenfield Council on Aging in the Jon Zon Community Center at noon on Friday, Oct. 13. They will report back on what they learn.

Director's Report

Senior Center Updates: The first Happy Little Feet recess walk for the new school year is set for next Monday, Sept. 25. Meet at the Senior Center no later than 10:45 a.m. We will walk up to the school; and then the kids come out to join us for the activity. We have two Kindergarten classes (this year's and next year's) and we have bought them Happy Little Feet T-shirts. Robin will get them the shirts that morning; the teachers are buying their own T-shirts. We will entertain them in the pavilion and then walk them back to school.

New programs:

- In October there's going to be a flu and the new Covid **vaccine clinic**. You have to pre-register online. It's set for Thursday, Oct. 19, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- The Massachusetts Senior Medicare Patrol program will join us for a **Coffee Social** on Monday, Oct. 23, at 11 a.m. They will tell us about Medicare fraud and scams. The Coffee Social is 10 a.m. to noon; the program starts at 11 a.m.
- Roger Genest will lead a **Happy Feet Walk** on Oct. 16 that starts at the lower parking lot at the Marina restaurant in Brattleboro. We will walk the lower section of the West River Trail. Bring your own lunch and meet at 10 a.m. Length is approximately 2.5 miles each way, 5 miles total. Not suitable for people using a roller walker because it is dirt.
- Meet at the lower parking lot of Trinitarian Congregational Church for the **350th Anniversary Parade** on Sept. 30th at 11 a.m., wearing your Northfield Senior Center T-shirts. The parade starts at 1 p.m. We have one golf cart that Bill McGee is going to drive; Jeannette Tessier, Martha Morse and Genevieve Clark will ride in it. The Town graciously is lending one of their rental golf carts for our use.
- **Happy Little Feet** for October will be on a Tuesday, Halloween, Oct. 31st. Meet here at 9:45 a.m.
- Robin will be getting her ServSafe Certificate on Oct. 18. When that happens, we can begin serving (lunches) inside again, rather than the take-and-go lunches.
- Colleen has boxes of COVID tests from the town's Department of Public Health to give away.

Around town

Legislative update: No pertinent update.

Neighbors at Home: Betty reported on the Tree-50th project. Neighbors at Home is contributing \$400 toward this project. Most N@H members have re-upped their memberships. Financial aid is available. Ashleigh Lovett, vice president of N@H, is contributing a bio for our next Northfield Senior Center newsletter.

Friends of Northfield Seniors: Debby reported that the Friends will be holding a gift baskets raffle on parade day. A state license is required. You get it from the town clerk, for a \$10 fee.

A recent private tag sale in the pavilion netted \$130 for the Friends of Northfield Seniors.

CPC (Community Preservation Committee): Meg reported that this committee has not met in the past month.

Motion to adjourn made by Meg. The motion was seconded by Betty at 2:17 p.m., and unanimously approved.

Approved date: 10-24-2023

Approved by: Christine M. Harris