

LAURIE CASOLARI, Chairperson
Drewey Darnell, Vice-Chairperson
Linda Young, Secretary

LESLIE HENNESSEY, Director

SHCOA Board of Directors Meeting February 10, 2020

Present: Laurie Casolari, Chair, Mary Boulais, Karen Buscemi, Liane Pueschel, Drewey Darnell, Allyson Garcia, Rita Starzyk

Absent: Carol Constant, Linda Young

Guests: Bruce Forcier, Kim Prough

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Chair Casolari. Roll Call was taken.

Open Forum-The question was raised as to what was being done to fill the 3 open positions on the BOD. Leslie has mentioned the vacancies to some of the more active members of the COA and is encouraging support for those who are interested. Applications for the position are on line.

Minutes of January meeting were unanimously approved.

New Business- Census 2020—Leslie stressed the importance of the Census for South Hadley residents. In the 2010 Census 4,084 seniors were counted in South Hadley. Our yearly Formula Grant is based on that number. The Governor allocated \$12/senior for the Formula Grant funding 2019-2020 which comes to \$49,000. The State allocation can go up or down, but the Governor said it will not go below \$12. It is estimated that the senior population is now 5,244. If all seniors are counted in the Census, this would bring an additional \$13,980 per year for a new total of \$49,008 for the grant funds for 2020-2030.

Also, for every person in South Hadley not counted in the Census (regardless of age), South Hadley would lose \$2,372 per person/ per year for 10 years. Information gathered from the Census determines the allocation of funds for highways, schools, water, etc. Some residents fear giving out personal information or that government will get involved in their situation. They need to be reassured that the Census is only for data collection, that there is no charge, and that no personal or political information is asked. Several informational programs regarding the Census will be presented at the COA. Zoraia de Jesus Barros from our Regional Census Partner will address issues concerning the census, will provide handouts of questions posed on the census, and explain why they are being asked. Zoraia will be at the COA for detailed sessions on 2/14, 2/24, 3/9 and again in April (date to be determined).

Leslie provided an informational sheet on the Census to the BOD so they can be better prepared to answer any questions if approached. Information will also appear in the Golden Chronicle, posters will be displayed, informational booklets will be at the desks of those who answer the phone at the COA, and staff has been trained regarding the Census. Post cards will be mailed to the public in mid-March reminding them to complete the Census.

April 1st is the official kick-off of National Census Day. There will be events at the COA throughout the day from 8AM -7PM.....food, entertainment and raffles. Board members are encouraged to 'drop in' during the day.

Ann Andras will be contacting the Housing Authority for outreach to homebound seniors and a letter will be sent to seniors who participate in the Meals on Wheels program regarding the Census. Volunteers will be available to go out and help a resident if called to do so. Laptops, phones, iPads can be used to complete the Census. It was suggested that information be placed in the Chronicle advising people that the Census is addressed to the Head of the Household, has an identifying number, is all done on line, and is sent to the Federal government and not the town. There will be a picnic in June....as a last effort to promote completion of the Census. 'Cheat sheets' with consolidated info will be available for staff use. Groundbreaking ceremony for the new center will take place in mid-April. The abatement will begin on 2/13 and will take approximately 5 weeks. The groundbreaking will then take place. The building is still on schedule to be completed on time. A few dignitaries will be invited to speak at the ceremony. A reception will follow at St. Theresa's. The possibility of donors was discussed (e.g. buy a brick). The question was also raised as to whether a reception should be considered at the opening of the new center. No determination was made.

Alzheimer's Gala—April 25th at the Log Cabin

"Painting the Face on Alzheimer's"

The Pioneer Valley Friends are honoring Rachel Tierney and her husband Jim at this event. Rachel lives in South Hadley, is very active in promoting Dementia Friendly Communities and cared for her husband who had Alzheimer's for 10 years. Karen Buscemi approached the BOD to request permission to congratulate Rachel and make a personal donation to the event in the form of a Sponsorship in the name of the Board of Directors of the COA. Karen's request was approved as it is not coming directly from the COA, which would not be allowed. Karen is willing to absorb the cost, but if anyone would like to contribute toward the Sponsorship, please contact Karen.

Old Business The Friends of South Hadley Elderly Kim Prough gave an update on upcoming events at the COA.

On 2/14 the Dan Kane singers will perform at the Valentine's Day luncheon. There will be raffles and giveaways from The Friends.

On 3/19 there will be a specialty luncheon from 11AM to 1:30PM in an effort to boost membership numbers. The luncheon will be catered by Loomis and will cost \$5 per person. Hardship money will be available. There will be group singing. The Grand Colleen and Grand Marshall will be in attendance.

There has been an increase in membership in the Friends...200 have joined. 50% of this total are new members with no history of prior membership. Volunteer forms will be made available at community events.

Director's Report

Attendance numbers are coming up each month, but they are not as good as on Dayton Street. Between the period of 11/1/19 and 1/30/20 there were 29 new people as compared to the same time frame of the previous year where there were 52. The Memory Café will be up and running in the summer.

NEW! Karaoke Club which is very popular.

On Thursday, there will be a 4 minute segment on Mass Appeal on 'Corn Hole' at The South Hadley COA. Leslie will speak to the benefits of the game (balance, hand/eye coordination, social aspect). Video and pictures will be presented during the demonstration.

At the end of the meeting, it was suggested that we take photos/time lapse photography when construction begins on the new center and post on the website. This is being taken under consideration.

Next Meeting March 9 @ 4:30PM

Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30PM

Respectfully submitted,
Liane Pueschel