

## Northfield, Mass. Council on Aging

### Meeting Minutes: Nov. 21, 2023

Meeting called to order at 12:07 p.m. at the Northfield Senior Center in the lower level of the Town Hall.

**Attendance:** Deb Lanou (Chair), Meg Livingstone, Debby Wiesen Kelly, Pete Vearling, Jim Whitcomb (Co-Chair), Colleen Letourneau (Director), Betty Whitcomb (Treasurer), Chris Harris (Secretary).

**Absent:** (none)

**Minutes:** Based on a review of the minutes for Oct. 24, 2023, there were no changes and a motion to accept the minutes was approved unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Betty Whitcomb's report was accepted without changes in a unanimous vote.

#### *Chair's Report*

Chair Deb Lanou reminded members to be alert for potential new board members, pointing out that you don't have to be a senior citizen to serve on the board. We are down one member, historically, but we are not out of compliance. Members whose terms are up for renewal will get a letter from the town.

**Plan events that utilize new hearing loops and amplification devices:** One suggestion is a movie day once a month during the winter. We would need to decide which app to sign up for to show the movies. This could be paid for by a stipend of \$50/month from the Friends of Northfield Seniors. Another option would be to buy a DVD player and show a DVD from the library's collection.

Another idea is to hold monthly breakfasts with speakers.

We're still in a holding pattern for completion of this townwide project. Northeast IT and Shanahan are still working on hooking up a system at the library and then Shanahan will send out the installers and coordinate a time to instruct the parties involved in each room in town as to how to use their specific devices and hearing systems.

#### *Director's Report*

Director Colleen Letourneau previewed new programming:

- Offer Tech Support twice a month, the second Monday from 10 to 11 a.m. and the fourth Thursday from 2 to 3 p.m.
- The Memory Cafe is going to be the fourth Wednesday, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. It will include lunch, entertainment, and or an activity.
- Starting in 2024, we are going to add a new lunch/brunch, the second Wednesday, at 12:30 p.m. of every month.
- One day will be left open for special programming; that will be the third Thursday, from 10:30 onward.



- Happy Feet will continue to be the second and fourth Monday. Starting in December, we're taking a winter hiatus from the "Happy Little Feet" programming.

**Report from LifePath luncheon event:** Colleen, Peter and Chris attended LifePath's Age and Dementia-Friendly Regional Action Plan launch event on Nov. 16th at the John W. Olver Transit Center. Within their eight domains of Livability, we have already accomplished three age and dementia friendly projects and programming: "Hear Here Northfield" (the hearing loop systems in three rooms in town including the senior center), the "Happy Little Feet" intergenerational program, digital literacy and technology (with Bernardston's Senior Center) and starting the fourth program, the Memory Café in December.

The director has completed the new format for the annual Council on Aging report to the town.

We are waiting to hear if we got the grant for the Memory Cafe. (Thanks were given to Deb and Debby for their support on the grant application process). Regardless of whether we get the grant, we will go ahead with our first Memory Cafe, set for Dec. 27, 2023.

The director will ask grant writer Mallory Sullivan to look for grants to support exercise programs, food for barbecues, entertainment for the Memory Cafe, and more.

Julie Fisher, Audiologist from Baystate Rehabilitation Care in Greenfield MA., is willing to do another hearing screening and talk for us, in late January or early February 2024.

*Around town*

**Legislative update:** Public Health is urging everyone to get their new Covid, flu and RSV vaccines.

**Neighbors at Home:** Chris gave a brief report from their last meeting.

**Friends of Northfield Seniors:** Debby reported that the Friends know that we are focused on a new project, the memory cafe, that they could help support with their fundraising.

**CPC (Community Preservation Committee):** Meg reported that the open town informational meeting was well attended, showing a lot of interest. They will look over applications for CPC money at their January meeting.

**Motion to adjourn:** Made and seconded at 1 p.m.

Approved date: 12-26-2024

Approved by: Christine M. Harris

Christine Harris, recording secretary.