**Council on Aging Building Advisory Committee**

**Minutes 11/14/2023**

Attendees: Elaine Hyland, Susan Murray, Patty Conway, Cindy Brennan

Absent: Catherine (Katie) Goldrick, Christopher Eddington, Tiffany Sheehan

1. Minutes unanimously approved.
2. We discussed the Habeeb and Associates recommendations for usage of the JFK space for the COA.

* Elaine, Cindy, Peter Morin, the interim Town Administrator, and Steve and Liz of Habeeb and Associates met.
* Habeeb presented their architectural renditions of the JFK with the COA occupying the left side of the building (when looking at it from the front ~ former gym area) as requested OPTION A.
* The COA comprised about 15,000 sq ft of the 44,000 sq ft of space available.
* On Dec 6, Habeeb and Associates will present this plan to the Selectboard.
* Patty is concerned about parking. There seems to be very little senior dedicated parking.
* Patty pointed out that the game rooms are adjacent to the multipurpose space. Is that acceptable? Is there a way to separate the spaces?
* We will bring our questions up to Habeeb and Associates at the Selectboard meeting.

1. We discussed funding for the new COA.

* Cindy, Elaine, and Jean Douglas (a COA member) plan to meet with Representative Mariano. They will explain to him what we are doing and what we would like in hopes of getting some state funding.
* When Senator Keenen came to town, Elaine gave him our information packet, again hoping to be on his radar when seeking funding.
* Patty thought we should contact Representative Cusack as well and inform him of our situation.

4. Massachusetts Council on Aging was offering $500,000 in grant money slated for 8 different COA components. Since it will be a while before our new COA is built, we applied for the Senior Center Modernization portion of the grant. Elaine, Cindy, and Jean got in all the required documentation asking for $25,000! We will find out by November 30, 2023. The money must be spent by June 30, 2024.

* We highlighted the square footage and seating capacity vs the number of seniors we serve. We are at capacity!
* One idea to improve the situation is to knock the wall of the current COA space out another 15-20ft. Plus, our doorways are not ADA compliant.

5. We have an article on the Special Town Meeting warrant, Article 10, the Establishment of COA Building Account.

* The article requests that the $48,000 currently held in the Capital Stabilization Fund (for improving or building a new COA) be moved to a building account that can be accessed by the Selectboard and the COA Building Advisory Committee.
* Creating this new account will allow us to access the money without the need to go to Town Meeting. (Money in the Stabilization Fund on the other hand requires a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting for it to be disbursed).
* Elaine will speak at the Special Town Meeting on November 27, 2023.

6. Our original Citizens Petition asking that the $48,000 in the Capital Stabilization Fund be earmarked for COA use was found to be worded inadequately for our needs.

* We had written a Citizens Petition for the Special Town Meeting and got 119 (110 certified) signatures to get it on the warrant.
* After much discussion, it turns out the language in the original CP did not give us the flexibility we needed to access the $48,000 that Article 10 would give us.
* The Selectboard put Article 10, on the warrant and thus it did not need any signatures.

7. Our original signed Citizen’s Petition is not in the warrant.

* By law, Chapter 39, Section 10, all Citizen’s Petitions must be placed in the warrant even if not being acted upon. We were not aware the CP was omitted from the Warrant.
* Since the warrant has already been printed and distributed, Patty indicated she would contact the State for guidance to see if the SB can perhaps provide a separate supplemental hand-out of the Citizens Petition at the STM on 11/27/23.

8. We are still looking for members to join the COA Building Advisory Board. The positions are being advertised on HCAM.

* We have thus far received one letter of interest.

9. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, December 19, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Murray - Secretary