Senior Center Board Minutes – December 9, 2021

*Present: Doug Field, Franklin Wickland, Janice Wright (Ashfield); Ellen Eller, Joanne Soroka (Buckland); Suzanne E. Bishop, Nance E. Brewer, Sylvia Smith, Penny Spearance (Shelburne); Amanda Joao (Director); Patricia Perlman (Senior Center Foundation/SCF).*

Chair Doug Field called the meeting to order at 3:00. Joanne Soroka moved to accept the November minutes with correction; Wayne Wickland seconded the motion, which passed with one abstention.

In her Treasurer’s report Sue Bishop said expenses are “on track” and we are in a good position going into spring. The Center’s new freezer is expected to arrive Monday.

Director Amanda Joao asked that we all look at our printouts of the proposed FY23 Budget and call or email her with any ideas and suggestions so that we can discuss it at our next meeting. She said the Masons will be increasing our rent from its current $7500 per month. She reported that the Holiday Meal, sponsored by Greenfield Savings Bank, served 75 people. There was also discussion of current telephone and email scams targeting seniors.

Amanda reported that the January/February newsletter is coming out soon, and people have requested more virtual contact. The Center’s entry computers need upgrades, we need another van driver and Leanne Dowd helped a lot of people with re-enrollment.

Committee Reports: Doug Field said the Ashfield Board of Health has pretty much shut down the COA due to COVID concerns surrounding potential meeting places.

Expansion Committee Chair Sylvia Smith reported that after reviewing the proposed District agreement the select boards want more information about some sections, especially finance. The working group hopes to have a draft that will go to independent legal review, and then the select boards can have their own legal reviews. Sylvia said we can have public hearings via Zoom and, perhaps, we can get something to Annual Town Meetings.

In her SCF report, Nance E. Brewer said we have $252,949.91 in total assets. The fall mailing brought in $3000 so far and more is expected. The board discussed the need to emphasize that the District won’t cost the towns money, but rather will make us eligible for more grants and donations. Trish Perlman added that the SCF board paid $2000 for the new freezer and $7000 for computer upgrades. The SCF is looking for more fun fundraising ideas and she noted that it would be helpful to know the Center’s Board members’ vision for the future.

Doug mentioned the newly raised idea of renting the first floor of Sue Samoriski’s building next door for $1300 per month as an interim way to expand our facility. It was suggested we might be able to rent with an option to buy, although without the District we have no authority to do so. Amanda noted that the staff was not in favor of the idea for various reasons, including the difficulties of splitting personnel and the added costs. Trish said the SCF board did not vote on the idea at this time. Doug will see if Margaret Payne can arrange for some of us to tour the building.

There was no Old Business or New Business.

The meeting adjourned at 3:52. Next Meeting: Thursday, January 13, at 3:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Eller