

Council on Aging Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, June 7, 2024

Present: Pina Mingace, Marian Bremer, Edna Murray, Daisy Monsalve, Tania Mederios, Ellen Ellis, Brad Bortner

Council on Aging Staff Present: Ashley Speliotis, Connie Lorenti

Location: This meeting was held in person at the Holland Street Senior Center, located at 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144. These meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

The Council's primary responsibility is to advise the Council on Aging in the promotion and implementation of programs and services to address the needs of the community's elder population.

1. Call to order: 11:00am
2. Approval of Minutes
 - Minutes approved by Marian Bremer, seconded by Pina Mingace
3. New Business
 - Introduction of new board members.
 - New Board Members, Ellen Ellis, Tania Mederos and Brad Bortner introduced. Brad has not been sworn in as of yet and will observe, but not vote at today's meeting.
 - Presentation from Jake Taber, from Mass Senior Action.
 - Mass Senior Action is an advocacy group for seniors in Massachusetts. There is a local chapter for senior residents of Somerville and Cambridge who meet monthly at the Senior Center in Central Square. Each month

Council on Aging Board of Directors

they have speakers who educate regarding senior issues and they also advocate on behalf of seniors on Beacon Hill. Most recently, they advocated to expand benefits under MassHealth by reducing the asset limit on Mass Health Buy which pays for the MCR Part B premium. Mass Senior Action is now hoping to go to local senior centers and other locations to educate seniors that they may be eligible for this benefit.

- Questions for Jake included: How much resistance was felt? Jake shared they packed the State House with people and spoke with their legislative delegation to share how this expansion would impact seniors.

Would seniors be eligible if they have MCR and a private secondary insurance? Eligibility would be dependent on your income.

- Vote to proceed with having Mass Senior Action present to the senior community: Yays 6 Nays 0

➤ Presentation from Keri Beckerman from Rev Clinics.

- Rev Clinic is a marijuana dispensary with locations in Cambridge and Somerville for over 7 years. They have a production facility in Fitchberg. Keri and her associates (Andrew and Brab) spoke about the benefits of medicinal marijuana and the connections they have to providers. Spoke of their wide range of products and creams. None of their products are covered by insurance but they do have discount programs. Barb spoke about her own experience using medical cannabis and shared people over 65 are the largest user group, primarily for pain and sleep concerns.
 - Questions included: Clarification regarding discounts, regarding allergies, and asking to clarify negative side effects. Rev Clinic spoke again of close work with their clinicians and spoke about price range from \$4 to \$70.
 - Vote to proceed with inviting the dispensary to present to the senior center community: Yays 0, Nays 6

➤ Vote to cancel or change the next meeting scheduled for July 5, 2024.

- Following discussion, board elected to vote on changing meeting to July 12, 2024
 - Yays 6, Nays 0.

Council on Aging Board of Directors

4. Director's Report

- Overview of responsibilities of the Board. Reviewed Robert's Rules and provided overview of responsibilities of an advisory board. Reviewed conflict of interest.
- Update regarding Carbon Free Somerville. Now that the meeting is scheduled for July 12th, they will be invited to present on this date.
- Somerville Alliance for Safe Streets reached out again to see if the Board would like assistance with a walk study. Vote occurred, Yays 1, Nays 5.
- The Somerville Office of Sustainability and Environment will be presenting to the Senior Center on August 2, 2024 at 11am to discuss the proposed Rental Registry.

5. Meeting Adjourned: 12:33pm.

6. Next Meeting: July 12, 2024 at 11:00am.