

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, September 4, 2026

Present: Pina Mingace, Daisy Monsalve, Leslie Hergert, Dan Cronin, Ellen Ellis, Marian Bremer, Chris Lindgren, Brad Bortner, Neeraj Wadhera

Council on Aging Staff present: Ashley Speliotis, Michelle Deutsch

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 older population.

1. Call to order: 11:03am
2. Approval of Minutes
 - Minutes approved by Brad Bortner, seconded by Marian Bremer.
3. New Business
 - Potential Waymo Pilot Program.
 - Chris re-introduced the idea of the Board reaching out to Waymo who has a potential pilot program in Somerville. Shares her sister used a Waymo in San Fransico and Waymo is now mapping the Somerville area. Waymo has potential pilot programs which could provide free rides and education. Board shares this may be a good idea due to limited parking, and a good program for those who need infrequent rides. Board also said that some seniors may fear the technology, and that this program may hurt taxi services. They also spoke about issues of safety and the need for technology training. Board also voiced concern about whether seniors would be able to navigate a Waymo, or if they need assistance, say for an assistive device or with opening the trunk. Discussion also focused on the liability of who would run the program and the liability if the Waymo was in an accident. Further discussion focused on potential cost of the program which is unknown at this time.
 - Board reviewed that further research would be needed as it is unclear if there is a grant/pilot program that can be applied too and if there is an application for the program available at this time.

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- Tufts Intergenerational Program
 - The COA was approached by Tufts to propose projects for engineering students to solve. Projects that were proposed were: Help to open single serve fruit cups, help our low vision group by making an app that would identify medications, create an app that would create videos/tools that would be used to assist seniors when using their phones.
 - Students will have six weeks to work on their projects and will then present them to the COA. We will know by mid-September if students have selected any of these projects.
 - The Board was asked to think of additional topics as Tufts would like this to be an ongoing partnership.

4. Directors Report

- Senior Picnic
 - The Senior Picnic will be held next week. Board members are invited to join to help at the COA table, registration, taking pictures and helping seniors to their seats.
- Postcards
 - The postcard that the Board created was handed out and will be brought to the picnic.

5. Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 12:01pm

6. Next Meeting: October 2, 2026 at 11:00am