

COMMISSION ON ELDER AFFAIRS

Minutes of September 23, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robin Bahr Casey, Chair; Meg Coffin; Paul Franco; Elizabeth Nguyen; Chizoma Nosike; Mariana O'Brien; Richard Pinkes; Cathy Rao; Richard Shea; Caroline Sullivan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Fran Langille; Nancy Greenberg; Nghia Le; Paul Johnson

STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT: Amy Vogel Waters, Patty Hainsworth, Linda Wincek-Moore, John P. Haran, MD, PhD, Clinical Director of the Center for Microbiome Research

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Commission minutes of June 24, 2019 were approved as distributed. m/s/a Senior Center Committee 9/10/19 Report to the Commission was approved as distributed. m/s/a

John P. Haran, MD, PhD, Clinical Director of the Center for Microbiome Research was introduced and spoke about his research study on the connection between gut health and brain health. While the study has been focusing on nursing home residents, he has begun to recruit participants at the Senior Center. He answered questions from those present.

Robin announced that the Mass Council on Aging has selected Amy Waters to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award at their upcoming Fall Conference 10/3/19 at Danvers, MA. She also noted that the Commission terms of Paul Johnson & Meg Coffin will end on Oct. 30. Nghia Le, Dick Pinkes and Cathy Rao are up for reappointment at the same time.

Amy gave the Director's Report, updating members on the status of the goals and objectives as well as performance indicators which were presented to the City Council at the end of fiscal year 2019. Her report included: Friends has accepted donations from Harvard Pilgrim for grounds work, Central Mass Agency on Aging for new Domino Club and Griswold Foundation for the osteoporosis prevention program. They also paid for the billiard table to be upgraded. Students, volunteers and Senior Aides worked at the senior center during the summer helping staff. The part-time receptionist has left and a full time receptionist should be in place by 9/30. The African American Elder Group Coordinator passed away suddenly on 8/1 and the hiring process has begun. The city's Diversity Office provided training to help with the Club 60 Latino group dynamic. Annual performance appraisals are being done. The city is working on a pay equity study. The Division of Energy and Asset Management has awarded a contract for the renovation of the parking lot as well as to demolish the Anderson Building. There is no schedule for this work yet. The City has a license agreement with Worcester Academy for the senior center to use 40 parking spaces across the street if needed during the renovation. The costs of these projects impacts the funds available to make the new fitness center. The Mass Works grant has been extended to June 2020, so work should be done by then. The bid for redevelopment of the old building has not gone out yet. Amy and Yung will conduct a presentation at the MCOA Fall conference on making a senior center multi-cultural. Flu clinics have begun at the senior center.

Patty reported on Building Services and the dementia programs as well as the following: The Multi-Cultural pot luck will be held on 10/18. She spoke about upcoming programs and a new Caregiver

Support Group starting. Blue Cross/Blue Shield along with the Regional Environmental Council built 3 raised beds for the senior center community garden.

Linda reported on the following: Outreach activities, including efforts at WHA housing complexes. Open enrollment for Medicare recipients is starting in October. An LGBTQ social group will be starting on Oct. 22nd and then the 3rd Tuesday of every month. Outreach continues for SNAP benefits. Amelia Houghton, the Public Health Nurse, is working with Worcester State Nursing students and Mass. College of Pharmacy students; they are mainly learning about working with diverse cultures.

The next meeting was confirmed for Mon. Oct. 28, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned.