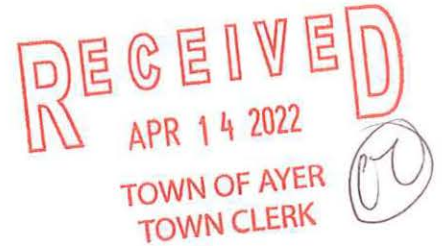


Ayer COA Board Monthly Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 11:00 AM
Meeting Held via Zoom per Covid Requirements
Minutes compiled by Janine Nichipor, Clerk

In Attendance:

COA Director Katie Petrossi
Carolyn McCreary, Chairperson
Janine Nichipor, Clerk
Dennis Curran, Board Member
Carole Tillis, Board Member
Town of Ayer IT



Agenda for February Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Approve Minutes - Dec. 7, Dec. 21, Jan. 11
3. Director's report
4. Next steps for kitchen after capital planning committee decision
5. Annual report - due Feb 28 Send your part to Katie
6. New Center Update
7. Boards and Commissions: Know Your Responsibilities training on Thursday, February 24, 2022 (4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.). - see email
8. Branding - Name: Ayer Senior Center - sample logos
9. Old business
10. New Business
11. Adjourn

1. **Meeting called to order at 11:09 AM by Carolyn McCreary, Chairperson**
 - We are meeting via Zoom due to current Covid restrictions.
2. **Approve Minutes – Dec. 7, Dec. 21, Jan. 11**
 - Janine re-sent minutes to COA Board to individual town emails as COABoard email has not been reaching everyone. She cannot access DropBox. Carolyn said she needs to add permissions.
 - Minutes approved for the three dates.
3. **Director's Report**
 - Highlights of Director's Report given by Director Katie Petrossi, including update on Center kitchen.
 - It came up that we don't know if the Director's Report is public information or for the Board and Town officials only. It has not been attached to the minutes for posting.
4. **Next steps for kitchen after capital planning committee decision**
 - Kitchen update: based on the additional costs for the kitchen, Katie will revise Director's Report. The costs kept rising to meet various codes (for example sink, stove, fire suppression) and became too high. We will scale back on the proposal and reduce the

costs. We are balancing usefulness of the current kitchen with plans for our new Senior Center.

- As a result of the kitchen renovation not proceeding and updated information from the Board of Health, next year's proposed food budget and Nutrition Coordinator hours may need to be modified. Katie will research and get back to the Board.
- Katie is looking for meal suggestions that fit within the criteria for temporary permit meals and the fire prevention guidelines – ones that do not require browning the meat on the stove. This could include such things as casseroles and baked chicken.
- Carolyn asked if we are allowed to do potluck meals?
- Katie said she can check with Brigitte at the Board of Health and thinks we might be allowed to.
- March 16 is the date for next meeting regarding the budget.
- Katie has been keeping statistics on people coming to the Senior Center and attendance is rising. She notes that the Center is becoming part of people's routine.
- Going forward, Katie is looking at what activities are well attended and what have low or no attendance. She will take off events that no one attends.
- MART van continues this much-needed service.
- Dennis asked about why the budget for the kitchen didn't go through. Katie explained that the original cost of \$35,000 - \$50,000 was okay, but when they looked at making the kitchen fully certified, the cost kept rising. In the end the cost demands outweighed the few years that we expect to be in the current Center. We will just do the minimum now.
- Katie talked about the cost of lunch to clients and that some will be \$3.00 - \$5.00. Janine mentioned that in the past the fee was called a "donation" so that those who had a hardship could still attend and she hoped this would continue.

5. Annual report - due Feb 28 Send your part to Katie

- Carolyn and Sister Paula will work on this year's COA entry to Ayer Annual Report.
- Janine sent an email to the COA Board with last year's Annual Report entry and the original Mission Statement and a revised Mission Statement.
- If room, the Mission Statement may go into the Annual Report. It may be appropriate for the website and for the Newsletter. [More discussion below under Branding.]

6. New Center Update

- Dennis summarized what went on in the last Ayer Senior Center Building Committee meeting held on Feb. 2, 2022. Location is the main topic now along with environmental remediation of the West Main Street site. That site had been tabled after Town Meeting. We can talk about general areas of new locations that the committee is considering.
- Dennis has contacted Laurie Nehring of PACE to address environmental concerns before we go to Town Meeting. Laurie mentioned the contamination of the W. Main Street site is very serious in type and amount of contamination.
- Town Engineer is looking to hire a consultant to analyze the data that already exists at State level. More testing may not be necessary at this time, but an expert is needed to interpret the data that exists.
- Dennis said we need 1 – 1 ½ acres at least.

- Dennis, Katie, and Janine have looked at other sites under consideration. Some look promising.
- Town Manager Robert Pontbriand has talked with Mass. Development regarding parcels in the "Ayer footprint" of Devens.
- Decision needed on whether we can use W. Main St. or move forward with another parcel. The key is can W. Main St. be remediated well enough? At what cost?
- A deadline of 60 days to move forward is a "heavy lift" per Dennis, and most agreed.
- Carolyn asked if the Town Meeting is the deadline. Katie replied that it's a goal toward moving forward.
- Janine is appreciative that the Town Manager is talking with Mass. Development. This is promising and could lead to getting a low-cost Devens parcel in the Ayer portion of Devens. We are getting nearer the time when Ayer and other towns will get their portion of Devens back as Devens has not become a town.
- Janine advocated to do what is best for our clients and not piggy-back other urban renewal or remediation projects onto our building project. If it works out, fine, but it shouldn't be a priority. The Center is our priority.
- Carolyn noted it is up to us to prepare for Town Meeting, and as part of that reach out to potential objectors and supporters.
- Dennis said Laurie Nehring is willing to come to a COA meeting.

7. Boards and Commissions: Know Your Responsibilities training on Thursday, February 24, 2022 (4:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.). - see email

- Carolyn asked who might be planning on attending this training?
- Janine asked if it was recommended and Katie said that MCOA training is very helpful. She highly recommends the training as most of us are only on a town board for brief periods and rules change.
- Yes for Dennis and Carole and Janine to attend.

8. Branding - Name: Ayer Senior Center - sample logos

- We have agreed on the official name as: Ayer Senior Center.
- We approved the updated Mission Statement that Janine sent to COA Board. She reworked the wording from Sister Paula's draft from 2019.
- Where to use the Mission Statement? Dennis suggested the COA town website and Annual Report. Katie agreed website and perhaps COA Newsletter.
- Might also want to incorporate a "motto". Dennis updated first line of Janine's word diagram. This could be used in Newsletter and other places:

Community
Opportunities
Activities

- Logos will take more time and will look at next time. Carole was looking over Janine's drafts and said they looked good. We need to make choices on image, color or black-and-white, signs, and more.

9. Old Business [and]

10. New Business

- Dennis brought up the topic of cost in the Senior Center Building Project and asked about the budgeting process. There's the land, the building, and the unexpected. Perhaps we should look at what other places have done? Janine mentioned Harvard and Groton's recent Senior Center projects.
- Katie said that each town has factors on land and until we have a site selection, we will need to discuss cost later.
- Janine thought that when we get down to 2-3 sites, we might want to look at the costs. Millions of dollars in site remediation vs. perhaps getting a parcel donated could help make the final decision.
- Dennis is thinking about the cost, goal of Senior Center, and thinking ahead to Town Meeting. We want to be able to handle questions on the cost.
- Katie thinks that in one or two more Building Committee meetings we will know more about the extent of remediation needed at W. Main St. and can consider costs of that and 1 other site.
- Janine asked where we were on the RFP (Request for Proposal)?
- Katie will need to follow up via email before the next meeting. Some think we need to narrow search, and not broaden. She said she likes to try all the furniture before buying and some of us agreed.
- Janine thought we still might find a place that no one has thought about.

10. Adjourned 12:11 PM

- Next meeting would fall on Tuesday, March 1 at 2:00 on Zoom.
- Carolyn should verify.

Carolyn McCreary