

Ayer COA Board Monthly Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 10:00 AM
Meeting Held via Zoom per Covid Requirements
Minutes compiled by Janine Nichipor, Clerk

In Attendance:

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



Agenda for March Meeting

1. Call to Order
2. Approve Minutes – Feb. 8, September 9, 2021
3. Director's report
4. Update from building committee
5. Take aways from MCOA meeting
6. Ayer website–COA workable?
7. Old business–Mission Statement from annual report
8. New Business
9. Adjourn

1. Meeting called to order at 10:05 AM by Carolyn McCreary, Chairperson

- We are meeting via Zoom due to current Covid restrictions.

2. Approve Minutes – Feb. 8, September 9, 2021

- Sept. 9 minutes approved.
- Feb. 8 minutes need to resend to Carolyn.

3. Director's Report – Quick review

- This may be the last all-virtual meeting due to Covid—Town is moving to hybrid April 1st after a trial period. Virtual meetings are limited by time slots available on Town's Zoom. Could opt out of Zoom?
- DC: Can we run on our own Zoom? CK: Yes, but hybrid is more complicated.
- JN: Could we supplement with personal Zoom? In the past we included a member who was out sick on Zoom. KP said that was her personal Zoom.
- DC: Interested in our own Town Zoom account so that after July 1st (new Fiscal Year) we can Zoom without having to have Town IT run it. CK: Select Board is addressing this in upcoming meeting.
- KP: reported we have spent Covid money on 30 meals to clients, which we used due to limitations on kitchen. 6 more meals were made from frozen left-overs. She is budgeting for food.
- Need backup drivers to put in budget for when Sam is on vacation in April.

- Robert Hammond Estate made a donation earmarked for the COA in memory of Bob, a past COA Board member. Does Board know how we might spend? Suggestions going forward.
- DC: Asked how the fund is accessed. Katie explained different ways: invoicing, Town credit card, petty cash, etc.
- DC: If we have an active "Friends of COA" could access directly. KP: She would like a Friends organization to help pay for things. Friends can raise money, not COA Board.
- DC: Pointed out solace in having a donation to the COA and not directed elsewhere.
- KP: Noted that "earmarks" do direct to COA.
- CM: Pointed out to spend money rather than lose to inflation.
- KP: Upcoming budget meeting—all are invited to attend via Zoom.
- Reviewed statistics going up on attendance.
- Reviewed upcoming activities in Newsletter.
- A driver from Shirley will cover our van, so we do not need to post/hire for short term.
- Reviewed kitchen renovations have been cut down, so funding per meal is going up. MOC meals not popular. Hot meals that come in and they warm are better. Meals on Wheels sends out a hot, cold, and frozen meals.
- DC and KP reviewed the hiring process after July 1, 2022 for new Fiscal Year.

4. Update from Building Committee

- DC: Site selection deadline now looking by Oct., not April.
- W. Main St.: there was much discussion on this site. Committee gave \$3,000 to review cleanup costs outlook from now going forward. Report to committee due at April 6 meeting. DC talked with Laurie Nehring from PACE on environmental concerns. Town Manager Robert Pontbriand has assured that Town will do due diligence and that it is hard to find a "perfect" spot with parking, size of lot, no environmental issues.
- We can mention general areas and streets that are under consideration publicly, but not specific addresses until they are official.
- JN: Is interested in the Ayer portion of Devens and Town Manager's office is reaching out to Mass. Development. Problem is there is a transition in Real Estate there. We are doing an RFP process to find more sites. Biggest concern is with client and staff safety at sites.
- DC: Environmental report may not be detailed enough. CM: concurred.
- KP: Report may not be-all, end-all but will allow us to keep W. Main on or off table. Will indicate chemical and cost. New Center needs to be safe.
- JN: Concerned about time if we piggyback environmental hazard project onto ours.
- CT: Very concerned about the PR with trying to get public on board with that site.
- CM: All of us could lobby for this.
- KP: Our action is to begin to develop strategy on how to move forward. Community Development Office, Abacus, and COA will lead. Need to include stakeholders, community groups, how to speak, who will speak, talking points, and create standard talking points to present cohesive information without deviations or wrong information.
- JN: That's great—a Fact Sheet would be helpful.
- DC: Abacus Report in Feasibility Study (pages 16-19) has results of the earlier survey. Create talking points, costs. Will wait on including site until site chosen.

- KP: She can upload Feasibility Study, but need a one-page ready to go.
- DC: Distill down the Feasibility Report for useful facts. We need to expand our offerings from just food and transportation.
- JN: Pointed out that numbers are going up. There are limitations on space and misconceptions on who the Senior Center serves.

5. Take aways from MCOA Meeting

- No one got to attend. JN tried to register the day-of and system would not let her.

6. Ayer website – COA workable?

- KP: Update on Ayer website. Template from State and can't change the structure. Some distinctions added, such as COA Board terms, email link to chairperson, easy links between COA and COA Board. COA link is under Departments.
- JN: Good to have our names on website and in Newsletters going forward as contact persons for new Senior Center building project.
- KP: Says that she uses COA Newsletter as most accessible public face. There is not much information on website. She refers to newsletter. Newsletter link is on website.
- JN: "Junior Seniors" expression on the different needs of different age groups. Younger seniors may be more computer savvy.
- CM: Is using Dropbox as a backup. JN: Has trouble accessing and adding to the Dropbox; permissions issues. DC : Advocated for Dropbox, but man not be working out. The idea was for a single repository for access. Helpful with editing/back-and-forth. CM: will work with C.K. for DropBox or Google Docs to use.

7. Old business—Mission Statement from annual report

- CM: Brought up COA Mission Statement that Sister Paula gave Janine, who edited it. Katie added to it and submitted a longer version for the Annual Report.
- Sister Paula thinks the Mission Statement should talk about who we are, not how we do it. Sister Paula will submit a revision. She read it to us. Copies to Board needed.
- CM: Will get a scan from Katie and we will talk about it next month—the text and where else to put it.

8. New Business

- JN: According to Town COA online information, some appointments are up soon. Janine would like to continue. Carly will look into the dates and process.
- CM: Will not renew. She cannot give the time it deserves. We need to think about who we would like as a replacement. CM will continue to work to advocate for the new Senior Center.
- KP: Noted that hybrid meetings will be helpful if she wants to stay up to date with COA.
- DC: Would like to see public at our meetings. Hearing from the public would be helpful. Is it typical for Boards to have public attend?
- CM: Planning Board, Select Board and others have interested parties and others may have interested people from time to time.
- JN: Wondered if we should specifically invite people.

- Sister Paula: All the time on the COA Board [she is the most senior member], the first item was always "Public Input." We only had two times with public attending our Board meetings. Historically we may not have had much public input, but would be good to include the public.
- KP: Add to the Agenda "Public Input." She can add to Newsletter as well.
- Wrapping up discussion: when to have next meeting, advocacy for new building, JN looking to settle into a day/time for meetings to avoid scheduling conflicts. CM: said Town Zoom has limited time slots; we want to meet after the Building Committee meets; there are other Board conflicts; possible regular time slots such as second Tuesday.

9. Adjourned 11:37 PM

- Next meeting suggested for Tuesday, April 12 in Select Board Room and on Zoom.
- Carolyn to verify and will post Agenda with time/date on Town website.

Carolyn McCreary