**Council on Aging of Williamsburg and Haydenville**

**Minutes of the Meeting of February 21,** **2024**

**Present:** Toni Boughton**,** Daria D'Arienzo, Chris Flory, Dianne Martin, Maureen O'Brien; Staff: Joy Cross Moore; Director Melissa Wilson. Guests: Marie Kelly- Calderone, Steve Calderone. Quorum was met. Meeting called to order at 12:24 p.m.

**Introductions and welcome to guests.**

**Minutes:** Motion to amend the Minutes of the Meeting of January 17, 2024. (Seconded) Motion to accept Minutes of the Meeting of January 17, 2024 as amended (Seconded).

**Director's Report:**

**Programs and Events:**

* **Members of the Williamsburg Planning Board and Becky Basch of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission** will be present at the Senior Center on Monday, January 26, 2024 to solicit input from seniors to the Comprehensive Plan for the Town's future. Williamsburg has a population of 40% over 60 years of age.
* The group brainstormed topics that might be included:  
   Services to age in place  
   Help to procure durable medical equipment  
   Better access to personal care attendants:  
                              Overnight help  
                              Informal labor-shoveling, raking leaves, moving heavy items  
         Financing for in-house meals at the senior center  
   Increased access to transportation, especially for long distance medical rides  
   Increased help with transportation in general  
   Increased access to PVTA: more frequent and more rural routes  
   Increased accessibility to affordable housing
* **Tech Connect Workshop: *Cutting the Cable Cord*** on Saturday, April 20th from 11a.m-12p.m. at Meekins Library: presentation of tips for seniors about replacing cable television with streaming services, etc. Jointly sponsored by the Williamsburg Senior Center, Northern Hilltown Consortium Technology Grant, and Meekins Library.
* Sing Along on Thursday, April 25th: *Nourishment for the Soul* will take place after the congregate meal with Patrick Callinan.
* Transportation: is "wheeling along" according to Joy Moore.

**Old Business:**

* **The *Living Well* newsletter** will lose its SIG funding after July, 2024. The Williamsburg Senior Center will continue to produce a four-page edition (without regional insert), will promote the digital version, and provide printed copies at Meekins and other frequented locations. Discussion of getting printed copies to more rural, very elderly, and non-tech-user seniors will continue.
* **Congregate Meals:**
* A Highland Valley Elder Services representative met with Director Melissa Wilson regarding the continued provision of congregate meals on Tuesdays, Weds. Friday meals are currently delivered. If the numbers of Tuesday and Weds. participants doesn't increase, HVES will stop delivering meals to the Senior Center.
* Therefore the Senior Center will promote free "Grab and Go" lunches on Tues and Weds. for 60+. There is no fee, (instead, a suggestion for donation), and no income requirement, but meals must be ordered ahead of the date of delivery.
* Discussion:
* The Senior Center produces a well-attended in-house congregate meal on Mondays and Thursdays using money from the Formula Grant and with the help of volunteers.
* Questions were raised about the legality of such an outcome. The program was initially instituted by law in part to address seniors' isolation.
* Group consensus is that there is a need to bring in more, not less, food resources to the community.
* Long term planning is underway to possibly provide simple home made lunches on Tuesday and Weds.
* The Director is considering adding four-or five more paid hours to workers and supplies for congregate meals using Formula Grant money.
* Thanks were offered to the Staff, especially Tamar Smith and volunteers Tina Thomas, Toni Boughton and Mark Oliver for their hard work to produce home cooked meals.

**New Business**: tabled

**Motion to adjourn**. (Seconded). The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

**The next meeting** of the Williamsburg-Haydenville Council on Aging Boardwill beheld at **12:15 on Weds. March 20, 2024 at the Town Offices in Haydenville, MA.**