

**Minutes for COUNCIL ON AGING REMOTE MEETING
JANUARY 13, 2021 - 1:00 PM via ZoomGov**

PRESENT: COA Members: Yolanda Rodriguez, Nancy Heller, Barbara Scotto, Judith Chasin, Rita d'Entremont, Jean Doherty, Doris Toby Axlerod, John Mulhane, Fran Perler, Joyce Wishnick, Barbara Kean, Rosaline Lowe, William Wong, Paula Friedman **Public:** Rhonda Glyman (guest speaker), Mary Mindess, Nancy Daly, Ellen Zellner, Monique Richardson, Lydia Kaufman, Charlotte Millman, and other members of the public. **Staff:** Ruthann Dobek, Julie Washburn, Jessica Milley-Gee

WELCOME: Yolanda Rodriguez, COA Chair, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: Yolanda called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM

A NOTE RE: CHANGES TO FORMAT/ PRESENTATION: Jessica Milley-Gee reviewed small changes to the meeting format, including the use of the Speaker Spotlight function, mute/ unmute capabilities for meeting participants, and the options of using the chat function to send a question or comment to the host. Jessica reiterated the etiquette of muting when not actively speaking, and reviewed “raise hand” controls for both video and call-in participants. Jessica’s contact information was provided for those who have further questions or feedback regarding meeting protocol: Email: jmilleygee@brooklinema.gov Phone: 617-730-2759

OPEN DISCUSSION: The meeting was opened to participant discussion and topics not included on the agenda. No additional remarks or topics were offered.

CALL FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Yolanda informed participants that there is a call to recruit members to the Advisory Committee (Brookline’s Finance Committee). The Advisory Committee is Brookline’s finance committee. There are 30 seats, including 16 reserved for Town Meeting members and 14 at-large seats. Members are expected to attend committee and subcommittee meetings a total of approx. 25-30 times on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in advance of May Town Meeting, and 15-20 times in advance of November Town Meeting. Currently, meetings are held via Zoom. We will resume in-person meetings at Brookline Town Hall once it is safe, but members may attend in-person meetings remotely. For more information, see <https://www.brooklinema.gov/166/Advisory-Committee>. If you are able to commit the requisite time and are interested in being considered a seat on the Advisory Committee, please contact msandman@brooklinema.gov to fill out an Advisory Committee Information Sheet.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 9th, 2020 MEETING: A motion was passed and seconded to accept the minutes of the December 9th, 2020 meeting. No changes or comments were offered. It was unanimously voted to accept these minutes.

INTRODUCTION: Yolanda introduced the guest speaker for today: Rhonda Glyman, Executive Director of Hebrew SeniorLife | Center Communities of Brookline.

TOPIC: “Hebrew SeniorLife (HSL) | Center Communities of Brookline (CCB)’s Plans for New Housing and Expanded Senior Center on Centre Street”

Rhonda delivered a presentation accompanied by comprehensive slides.

[SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION SLIDES]

Nancy Daly gave an overview of working with HSL/CCB around fundraising goals for the Senior Center to secure dedicated and shared space within the HSL/ CCB Centre Street development. The estimate is currently \$5 million. Nancy explained the need to raise a significant portion of these funds before October 2021, which is when HSL/ CCB must submit their final plan as they seek state and federal funding for affordable housing units. Rhonda reiterated HSL/CCB's commitment to help secure this necessary funding through philanthropic means in partnership with Nancy Daly, Ruthann Dobek, and the Senior Center community.

Rhonda stated that HSL/ CCB is seeking input, ideas, concerns and suggestions from community members, and shared all relevant contact information (see final presentation slide). Rhonda welcomed questions from meeting participants.

Q: Why does Hebrew SeniorLife feel that the Town must contribute \$5 million to the development of (shared) expanded Senior Center space as opposed to HSL making the contribution? With an influx of senior residents, there will be a greater burden placed on the Senior Center. HSL is requesting from the Town approval for rezoning for this project. Developers typically give a community benefit in order to be considered for rezoning—why must the Town make a contribution toward this project when the project is a community-developer benefit?

Rhonda stated that HSL/CCB is prepared and excited to make community contributions including but not limited to land, the addition of affordable housing units, and resident services. As a mission-driven organization, HSL/CBB does not have the funding to both meet the needs of its residents across the greater-Boston area, and to fund the expanded Senior Center project. The Town of Brookline is not being asked to provide funding, but rather to partner with the organization and the Senior Center community to raise the necessary funds.

Q: Are there any plans in the programming within this development that will encourage intergenerational activities?

Rhonda revealed that “multigenerational programming” will be a key component, with both designated indoor and outdoor spaces. There are currently over 75 distinct and separate multigenerational programs across HSL communities.

Q: What is the average amount of wait-time for an individual seeking low-income housing in this development?

Rhonda said that the wait-time would vary depending on the level of affordability needed. There are several levels. The deeper the need, the longer the wait time tends to be. The 45 additional units HSL/ CCB hopes to build will not be within the lowest tier of affordability, though HSL/ CBB has Section 8 housing available at other locations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

No Springwell, Nominating, Recreation, Redesign, or Pedestrian-Friendly Lighting Report today.

Budget Report – Ruthann Dobek reported that the Budget Committee will be holding a remote meeting on Wednesday, February 17th at 1:00 PM via Zoom. All are encouraged to attend. Joining information will be mailed and emailed to the COA board.

Select Board Report – Nancy Heller reported that she is heading the Centre Street Zoning Committee for the Select Board in the HSL/ CCB development process. The Zoning Committee will hold meetings that are open to

the public—those interested in receiving relevant information should reach out to Nancy at nheller@brooklinema.gov with name, phone number, and address. Nancy explained that the Centre Street project will have to go before the Advisory Committee, after which it will go to Town Meeting for approval.

Nancy revealed that the Select Board, joining with the Public Library Board of Trustees, appointed Kristin Hung and Matthew Shakespeare to fill the vacancies left by Vivien Goldman and Puja Mehta.

School Committee Report – Barbara Scotto provided a review of the Committee’s first meeting of 2021 on January 6th. Much time was devoted to the topic of COVID-19, as well as the various school projects in process. Barbara revealed that due to COVID-19, overall enrollment in Brookline Public Schools has decreased by 996 students. The Committee also discussed the budget for Brookline Adult Community Education, and the current search for a new superintendent of Brookline schools.

Report from the Director: Ruthann Dobek

1. UPDATE ON COVID-19

Ruthann gave an update on the current status/ impact of COVID-19 in Brookline and beyond. A vaccine is forthcoming, but local, state, and country-wide infection numbers continue to surge. Safety and vigilance is urged.

The Brookline Health Department is holding a COVID-19 Vaccine Brookline Update Webinar- **TUESDAY, FEB 2nd at 7:00 PM**. For more information or to register: www.brooklinema.gov/health

2. WARM ITEMS PROJECT

Ruthann made a call for warm items (new/ very gently used/ handmade) to be donated to the Senior Center. The Center will be continuing to collect and distribute donations throughout the cold winter months.

3. HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ELLIE KAPLAN

Ruthann wished longtime Brookline resident and Senior Center supporter, Ellie Kaplan, a Happy Birthday. Ellie turned 100 on January 10th.

4. TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

The Senior Center will continue to offer its subsidized rideshare programs and medical transportation program. Those interested should contact Maria Foster directly at mfoster@brooklinema.gov or 617-730-2644.

5. BROOKLINE BAZAAR

The Senior Center’s online gift shop—Brookline Bazaar—continues to do well, and has currently raised over \$1800 in revenue to directly support programming at the Senior Center. To visit the shop, go to: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/BrooklineBazaar> If you are interested in making a donation to the shop, please contact jmilleygee@brooklinema.gov for more information.

6. UPDATE ON PROGRAMS

Julie Washburn gave an overview of upcoming programming:

- A. “Engage! A Morning of Making a Difference”, **MLK Day, MONDAY, JAN 18th**
- B. Katharine Esty, **TUESDAY, JAN 19 at 2:00 PM** (link in January Senior News & Events)
- C. Building A Better Brookline- **TUESDAY, JAN 26th 2-3:15 PM**
- D. Alternative Transportation Options and Exploring Driver Retirement while Maintaining Independence with the RMV, **WEDNESDAY JANUARY 27th @ 1:30 PM**

Join a 60-minute webinar offered by the TRIPPS and the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV focuses on how to find and access transportation services in the Greater Boston neighborhoods). Joining information is below:

Topic: Alternative Transportation Options and Exploring Driver Retirement while Maintaining Independence

Zoom link:

<https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/j/1611787284?pwd=ZDRQMzkyYjNNTlZlb21wWEkxR2pCUT09>

Meeting ID: 161 178 7284

Passcode: 1cgL0fyp

Dial by your location

+1 646 828 7666 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 161 178 7284

Passcode: 75465488

E. “**Proxy Plus**” Massachusetts Health Decisions, a nonprofit organization and publisher of the Health Care Proxy for 30 years, invites you to a 3-part workshop on getting the most out of your Health Care Proxy. It will be held **Tuesday, February 16; Friday, Feb. 19, and Tuesday, Feb. 23, from 11:00 - Noon each day.** See the February edition of Senior News & Events for more information.

7. UPDATE ON ANNUAL APPEAL

Ruthann thanked all who have generously donated to help make up for the budget deficit. Jessica Milley-Gee read a letter sent from Denise Renaghan of Bay State Federal Charitable Organization that accompanied their \$750 grant in response to the Senior Center’s year-end appeal.

8. UPDATE ON GRANT PROPOSALS

Ruthann said that the TRIPPS program (Maria Foster) has received an opportunity for funding (\$66,400) through the Mass Department of Transportation’s Community Transit Grant Program.

Additionally, Brookline Community Foundation (<http://www.brooklinecommunity.org>) has provided a grant (\$12,142) to the Brookline Senior Center in support of food insecurity programs. The Brookline Community Foundation (BCF) creates opportunity and promotes equity through the transformative power of giving. To support this mission, each year BCF makes grants that address needs and opportunities in the community, encourage collaborations and partnerships to better serve the town and our residents, and strengthen local non profits.

9. PATRICIA BURNS’ RETIREMENT

Ruthann revealed that Senior Center Volunteer Coordinator Patricia Burns will be retiring at the end of January 2021, and wished her well. Patricia first came to the Senior Center as part of the Tax Work-Off Program, and later filled the Volunteer Coordinator position, among a host of other roles and responsibilities.

10. JAMIE’S BABY

Ruthann announced the arrival of COA staff member Jamie Jensen’s baby, Lucy Iris, born on December 4th. Jamie and Lucy are doing well, and Jamie will return from her maternity leave mid-February.

NEXT MEETING: The COA does not meet formally in February. The next formal COA remote meeting will be **March 10th, 2021** at 1:00 PM with guest speaker Erin Chute Gallentine, Brookline’s new Public Works Commissioner. Joining information is forthcoming.

A motion was made for the meeting to be adjourned at 2:17 PM. It was so moved and seconded.

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Milley-Gee