



**TOWN OF SHREWSBURY**  
**Council on Aging**  
Shrewsbury Senior Center  
98 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

Council on Aging Meeting  
August 11, 2021

1. Motion to accept minutes of June meeting; unanimous vote to accept. Judy abstained.
2. Financial reports review
  - a. Hollie reported that other town departments have not closed FY21 yet, so she has not had the opportunity to review the financial reports.
3. Introduction of Judy Goodstein, new Council on Aging member. Welcome to Judy!
4. Introduction of new Outreach Coordinator, Renee D'Argento, who started on August 2.
  - a. Renee has a Human Services background and a broad base of experiences.
  - b. Renee is currently connecting with our outside agencies. In September, she will provide outreach at the Shrewsbury Public Library.
  - c. An intern from Quinsigamond Community College (Lukas Kuhn) will begin 2 days a week to provide support to Renee
5. Director's Report:
  - a. **Grief and Loss Support Group update:**
    - i. Hollie met with the psychologists who have run the program. They request a change in the direction of the program. They are requesting compensation for their time and services at the Senior Center. They are proposing a **structured Grief and Loss Support Group**. It would be open to 10 people for a period of 12 weeks, and it would be run by one of the psychologists. There would be 2 cycles, one in the fall and one in the spring. The annual cost would be \$5400. The money would come from the Gift Fund. Discussion about how to pay for the fee. Should we cut our portion of the cost in half and ask participants to pay a portion? Discussion and concern about asking participants to pay. Question was raised- is Grief/Loss therapy covered by insurance? Senior Center can't pay \$5400. *Hollie's request is to table the Structured proposal and ask the psychologists for a more detailed Open Group proposal.*
  - b. **Memory Café:** Hollie met with the Director of the program. Decline in participants was discussed as well as suggestions to enhance participation. Hollie asked the COA Board if we would support raising the \$2000 annual stipend to \$4000, which is was originally, pre-pandemic. With additional funds, more enhancements can be provided to participants to enrich the experience. **Motion to increase stipend for Memory Café to \$4000. Money will come from Gift Account. Motion carried unanimously.**
  - c. **Veterans' Luncheon:** in order to honor our veterans, Hollie is proposing a luncheon on Nov. 10. She is looking for a venue to provide a luncheon for 50

veterans and one guest each. The selection of veterans will be decided by Mike Perna and Justin Souza. The Veterans' Group will provide entertainment. Discussion about location- at the Senior Center or at a restaurant. *Conclusion- luncheon to be held at the Senior Center with catering provided by a local catering company or by one of the schools in the area with a culinary arts program.*

- d. FY'22 Goals- COA members received copies of the staff goals. No questions. Hollie plans to create 3 new Strategic Plan goals each year. No questions.
- e. FY'22 Special Grant activities- The goal is to enhance and improve the existing activities. Discussion about the possibility of adding a vending machine to the other food and drink options available. Hollie is getting details. The raised garden beds are successful! Many benefits to Shrewsbury seniors have come from it. Hollie is proposing a fall drive- a **blanket and gift card drive**. Donations would be accepted from September through December. The September newsletter will provide details.
- f. Grants:
  - i. Nutrition program- 5 microwaves are still available. 45 have been distributed to senior citizens!
  - ii. Taxi livery grant has been extended to March 31, 2022. We can use the service during business hours now as well, and it will be free of charge to riders!
  - iii. Winter Streets- Hollie is coordinating with the schools to find the locations of the benches. The DPW will build the benches and they will be installed.
  - iv. AARP Yahoo grant- we did not get that grant. Hollie will resubmit during the next open cycle.
- g. Transportation Fares and Ridership
  - i. WRTA will advise on ridership rules. Masks are mandatory.
  - ii. Question- COA vans do not seem to be used a lot. Explanation that due to COVID, summer, etc, ridership is down. Also WRTA vans have to be used before the COA vans.
  - iii. Question- is the Senior Center going to be used as a cooling station during the current heat wave? Hollie will check and inform the Board.
  - iv. Question from Hollie- should we buy air conditioners for our seniors to help alleviate the heat? Help with installation would be provided. It was suggested to check into the regulations at The Towers. Hollie will investigate the details.
- h. New business
  - i. The COA will need a Vice Chair and a Recording Secretary. It is suggested to postpone the elections for a few months because of the new members.
- i. Meeting adjourned at 11:03am.