

COA Minutes - March 22, 2023

Present - Polly Ryan, Shirley Todd, Susan Honneus, Ann Irvine, Mary Potter, Bonnie Phillips

Meeting was called to order at 10 AM.

Minutes of the February meeting were approved.

Responses to the Consortium Technology Survey have been tallied and Plainfield had 75 responses out of 273 surveys (27%). Overall, the hilltowns responded at a rate of 33%. The Consortium considers this a very good response rate. In answer to the question about Plainfield's over-60 population, Polly informed us it is 50%.

Peg Whalen is looking for volunteers to expand her technology guidance services to more people, but she would like to first train them to be better teachers. Shirley highly recommends use of Peg's services, praising her plain, clear, patient instruction.

The HVES (Highland Valley Elder Services) grant needs to be spent. The April-May multi-generational event will be cross boxing. The March event was cancelled due to lack of participants, so that \$600 will be applied to the April-May event.

Polly has requested a \$1500 increase in the Town budget for the COA. When she reviewed the figures we were covering shortfalls in our budget with donation funds collected at our luncheons.

Barbara Westwood has volunteered to send birthday cards to seniors.

Polly has not yet spoken with Brian Hawthorne about getting our COA minutes on the town website. Right now, she is still learning from Peg Whalen how to do a better job when approaching this task.

Future activities for post-luncheon programs: In April there will be a fire safety demonstration; in May, Morris dancers will entertain us, hopefully outside if the weather permits.

Elaine Sidney has volunteered to prepare Chicken Cacciatore for our April luncheon. Other assignments are as follows: salad - Sue H.; garlic bread - Bonnie; pasta - Polly; grated Parmesan cheese - Shirley; dessert - Mary.

Assignments for May's luncheon - pork roast - Polly; applesauce - Bonnie; roasted potatoes - Mary; veggie - Shirley; dessert - Sue H.

Polly reports that "Dementia Friends" is going well but she would like to see more participants. The first session had 5, the second had 2. We are in agreement that this service is needed here, and we discussed ways to get more participation, including dropping the word "dementia" from the title. It is a word with some stigma attached and many might be reluctant to place themselves in that category. The next session will explore the physiology and diagnosis of dementia.

Polly will go through the corrections to the Senior Resource Folders that Susan Pearson has turned over to her.

Ann read a letter she composed for all of us to sign which supports funding for our COA monthly newsletter. The Office of Elder Affairs cut the funding, but we hope to get political help in making it a line item in the state budget. Ann's letter was persuasive, clear, and forceful and very well received by the Board.

Polly will get in touch with the contact people to arrange a presentation about "Medical Alert" devices for an after-lunch program. Other programs could center on various aspects of Elder Law. Once we choose which aspect we would like, we will invite someone to come to talk about it.

Meeting adjourned at 11:03.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Potter