

Present: Chairperson Deb Lincoln, Vice-chairperson Jane Rabbitt, Betty DiGiacomo, Diane Nowd, Pete Lincoln, Judy Tarbell, Jim McGuigan, Susan O'Sullivan, Amanda Koeck COA Administrative Assistant

Absent: Director Susan Doherty, Cheryl Moisan

GUESTS: COA Liaison to the Eagle House Supporters Marilyn Talley, Select Board member Lou Franco, Lunenburg resident Cathy Beale

CALL TO ORDER: 9:30 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Ms. Rabbitt introduced Cathy Beale, who filled out a volunteer application indicating her interest in serving on the Council on Aging

MINUTES APPROVAL: Mr. Lincoln motioned to approve the minutes from the January 10, 2023 COA meeting, Mr. McGuigan seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Discussion: Communication with Lunenburg Residents:** Ms. Lincoln drew attention to the communication from Town Hall advising town employees not to advise people on how to file for abatements for their real estate taxes. Ms. Lincoln expressed her concern over how to communicate with those seniors who may need help, but don't use the internet to learn about services and workshops that are offered. Board members agreed they'd like to host a workshop at the Lunenburg Adult Activity Center informing property owners of how they could file an appeal if their abatement application is denied.

Ms. Lincoln also expressed her concern about the possibility of senior tax relief being a lower priority for the Assessor's Office because of the reaction to the recent real estate tax hike. Mr. Franco commented that senior tax relief is not a low priority for him, and that the sub-committee working on the issue is forming an article to be placed on the Warrant for Annual Town Meeting in May of 2023. Ms. Lincoln added that she read in the Board of Assessors meeting minutes that the town would need to hire more people to work on senior tax relief.

2. **Possible Warrant Article for May Town Meeting:** Ms. Lincoln recapped the Capital Planning meeting she and Ms. Doherty attended in December. The Capital Planning Committee opined they needed more information on the plan for the proposed parking lot in order to support it. The Capital Planning Committee suggested the COA get more information on the plan and then to put the request in as a Warrant Article to be voted on at Town Meeting.

Ms. Lincoln added that the Town Manager asked Ms. Doherty to scale back her FY24 budget request. Ms. Lincoln pointed out that the COA budget is low, compared to other departments in town, and that the COA relies heavily on grants and outside funding sources to operate. Ms. Lincoln opined that all COA employee salaries should be covered by the municipal budget, and not need to be funded by grants.

Mr. Lincoln motioned to allow the Chairperson to speak on behalf of the COA on the budget. Ms. O'Sullivan seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously.

CURRENT BUSINESS:

1. **Council on Aging Board Member Search:** The board thanked Ms. Beale for her interest in a position on the board. Ms. Lincoln reminded board members that there is still one more vacancy to be filled.

2. **COA Orientation Packet:** Ms. Lincoln suggested members go through their older information, and compare it to the draft packet.
3. **COA Board Members Town Email:** No report
4. **Lunenburg 300th Celebration:** Ms. Lincoln informed the board that she and Mr. Lincoln have been appointed to the 300th Anniversary Celebration committee. Board members agreed they'd like to create a float to display, and also would like to feature something at the Lunenburg Adult Activity Center each month to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the town.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: In the Director's absence, Ms. Koeck gave a report.

- COA FY24 Budget Adjustment: Ms. Koeck reported that the Town Manager did ask Ms. Doherty to scale back her budget requests, and the Director found several ways to shave her numbers down, then later that day, the Town Manager called back, and said that Ms. Doherty could actually keep her original budget requests. Ms. Koeck reviewed the highlights of the budget discussed at the last COA meeting.
- FY22 Annual Report: Ms. Koeck reported that the Director is working on the report.
- Capital Plan: see "Possible Town Warrant Article" above
- Building and Grounds Report: Ms. Koeck informed the board that a pipe froze and burst over a record setting low temperature weekend. The pipe was repaired, and some paperwork was lost.
- Upcoming Events: Ms. Koeck highlighted special events in February and March.

EAGLE HOUSE SUPPORTERS REPORT: Ms. Talley reported that the board has found someone to assist the treasurer of their board. 360 bags have been collected for the Epilepsy Foundation fundraiser. The foundation will be picking up the bags April 29, 2023, and the Supporters will need help loading the bags into the truck that day.

NOTICES AND COMMUNICATIONS: None

BOARD COMMENT: Mr. Lincoln asked if any furniture in Bucky's Corner was damaged due to the burst pipe. Ms. Koeck replied that luckily, the kitchen door was closed and there were no damages.

PUBLIC COMMENT none

ADJOURNMENT At 10:43 a.m. Mr. Lincoln motioned to adjourn, Ms. DiGiacomo seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.