

Council on Aging (COA) Advisory Board

Minutes from Meeting Monday August 10, 2026 at 9:00AM

At Lowell Senior Center

I .Roll Call/Sign - In: In attendance: Richard Demers, Frank Baskin, Maxine Farkas, Gilda James, Beverly Gonsalves (Recorder) Andy Hostetler, Erin Gendron & Judy Huber. Molyka Tieng absent. Kimberly Gagnon, Director. Molyka Tieng will not be attending to represent the Lowell Police Dept.. Maxine did hear from Molyka and she will need to submit her resignation from the Board.

II Pledge of Allegiance

III. Approval of the June 8, 2026 minutes: First by Judy, second by Maxine, all others were in favor.

IV. Director's Report: Tara Donnelly is back now as Receptionist in the Main Entrance area. The Senior Center is short staffed on the weekends. Kim has been working with Stephanie (our weekend chef) preparing meals on Saturday and Sunday.

Kim spoke about receiving the Grant for the Gym Room. She will ask for the remainder from the Friends Board.

S Kim also spoke about the Bicentennial Committee who will be paying for the food for the Outing on August 20th.

Chairperson's Report

Dick spoke about the Friends supporting and donating to the COA. Friends will be covering any additional costs for the event on August 20, which will be the tablecloths and condiments.

The August 20th Outing went extremely well. Our Director Kim Gagnon, Mayor Gitchier, City Manager Tom Golden, former Senator Steve Panagiotakos and several City Councilors were in attendance. A large keepsake piece was handed to everyone, showing the 200th anniversary for Lowell on one side and the 250th bicentennial for the Declaration of Independence on the other side.

Richard said that the next Friends Bingo for age 18 and over will be held on Sunday October 4. The June 9 th Bingo had a good showing and made under \$500.00. The 50-50 raffle made \$268.00, \$134.00 for Friends and \$134 for the winner.

VI Committee & Liaison Reports:

a. Grant updates: Maxine said the Senior Center is a worthy cause and she has a good working group. She has a person from a small farm in Chelmsford who be coming in to assist her after the harvest. Also, the anniversary of 911, 25 years will be coming up this year. Maxine also said that

someone cleaned up the decorations in the craft room and put them all on the art side. Frank asked if we need more storage room, Kim said yes, we do. We receive a lot of donations for the Health Unit which includes walkers, wheelchairs and other medical equipment, but we are running out of room there also. Kim would like a Kiosk, but where can we put it? Many times Maxine does not have a seat for someone in her classes. There is a demand for more room. Walgreens is still pending and there is not enough parking. Maxine said that there are 26,000 seniors in the city over the age of 60 who vote and the Senior Center has to be known for good and not negative reasons. The Senior Center is short staffed and no funding. Dick said that the TV's we used to have were a nice set-up and the Center is used for warming and cooling days. Kim said that we do not own the building and we need someone for tech. support. The question was asked about the cameras, when Kim and Aurora are not here who is in charge of them?

Liaison reports/connections with other local/regional agencies.

c. Healthy Aging Committee

Andy mentioned that the "HAPPY TO CHAT" is held on the first Friday of the month. Coffee and donuts are served and questions can be asked. An Age Friendly Bulletin is handed out. The "Never Too Old" slogan was used at the Folk Festival which went very well. The meeting for the Age Friendly is held on the fourth Monday of each month at 10 am.

d. Senior Center Working Group report. In 2023 Maxine raised \$42,000.00 for the Art Program. She wanted to show Friends how to raise money for the Senior Center. She has focused just on this Senior Center. She has offered free classes. She would like a room for the Art Program.

Richard said that the Senior Center should be available for the working people later in the day but it is not in the city budget. Maxine said that the money is not there, have to find it elsewhere. The Senior Center is short staffed.

7. Items for Discussion:

Old Business

a.

i. BHOAP Behavioral Health Outreach for the Aging Population, will have funding for the fourth year in a row.

b. ii Changes to Mass Health

Frank said that Mass has no money. Contact your State Reps. on the issues, Tara Hong, Vanna Howard and Rodney Elliot.

8. OTHER

9. Adjournment

First by Maxine second by Judy all others were in favor

Next meeting: Monday September 14, 2026 @ 9:00 AM