

Council on Aging (COA) Advisory Board

Minutes from Meeting September 14, 2026 at 9:00am

at Lowell Senior Center

I .Roll Call/Sign - In: In attendance: Richard Demers, Maxine Farkas, Gilda James, Beverly Gonsalves (Recorder) & Andy Hostetler and COA Director Kimberly Gagnon. Molyka Tieng will not be representing the Lowell Police Station and will need to submit her resignation from the Board. Excused Frank Baskin, Erin Gendron & Judith Huber Also attending to address the Board is Lowell City Councilor Belinda Juran and Gladys Dieppa' Outreach Director.

II: Pledge of Allegiance:

III: Approval of the August Minutes: First by Maxine Farkas, second by Andrew Hostetler, all others were in favor.

IV. Director's Report: Tara is back as the front Receptionist in the Main Entrance area. The Senior Center is short staffed on the weekends. Neil is one of our weekend kitchen workers. LOA did get a grant for the gym equipment to replace the old with the new. The treadmill and other equipment is over twenty years old. An additional amount of \$2,500.00 is still needed to cover the cost of the equipment which will be requested from Friends of the LCOA.

V. Chairperson's Report: Richard requested for Councilor Juran to speak about the Homeless/ Unhoused issue. The City has no solution right now. Gladys spoke about the Unhoused issue and the procedures that are used for Outreach. There is a Navigator from CTI who comes in on Monday to interview the Unhoused, they are given a score and when an apartment becomes available the unhoused person with the highest score may get the apartment. Councilor Juran mentioned that CTI is preparing a woman's shelter with fifty beds on Andover St. which may be available in October. Eventually there may be a shelter for men. Contact Margo at CTI about funding. Gladys spoke about the procedures for Outreach when a homeless person comes in. Isaiah can be contacted at the Transitional Center on Middlesex St., if there is a bed available, Also, the Restoration Center at Research Center has a three day stay and transportation can be provided. Councilor Juran asked if Outreach has spoken to City Manager about this issue. She also said that she will bring a motion forward about the homeless issue, but to summarize, there is no effective approach at this time.

VI Committee & Liaison Reports:

a. Grant Updates: Grant Funding for the Art Class in November. On Saturday November 14, from one pm to 5 pm there will be a time for members to show their treasures to sell. The tables will be free and this will be an excellent opportunity to introduce people to the Senior

Center. The grant from the Lowell Cultural Society is open for \$5,000.00. The Knit and Crochet Group which meet on Tuesdays want to work with the Art Group.

b. Outreach Committee: Andy spoke about the Alliance Meeting on every other Wednesday. They have sheets and blankets to give to those in need. A quarterly bulletin has been prepared. The Good Neighbor Day is scheduled for Monday September 28, and Pen Pal Day second Wednesday in October for training and information.

c. Healthy Aging Committee:

d. Senior Center Working Group

The Senior Center closes at 3pm. People over sixty cannot access the Senior Center. We are not accessible for the seniors to attend. Councilor Juran proposal is to stay open one night a week.

VII Items for Discussion:

a. Old Business:

i. BHOAP Behavioral Health Outreach for Aging Population

ii. Changes to Mass Health

b. New Business

VIII Other Richard will discuss the BINGO held on Sunday October 4, 2026.

IX. Adjournment: First by Gilda second by Maxine, all others it was unanimous.

Next meeting: Monday October 19, 2026 @ 9 AM