

COMMISSION ON ELDER AFFAIRS

Minutes of October 24, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT: Theresa Eckstrom, Chair; Sandra Bisson; Robin Bahr Casey; Tom Cullinane; Meg Coffin; Njeri Gichohi; Matthew Fonseca; Paul Johnson; Nghia Le; Elizabeth Nguyen; Gail Schuyler; Richard Pinkes

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christopher Evans; Ursula Hanus

STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT: Amy Vogel Waters; Patty Hainsworth; Linda Wincek-Moore; Saeideh Mahdavisefat; Joy Rehfeld, Senior Companion Program

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

The Commission minutes of September 26, 2016 were approved as mailed. m/s/a

Theresa Eckstrom and Elizabeth Nguyen left the room while members discussed the portion of The Senior Center Committee minutes concerning Centro las Americas. After discussion, the Senior Center Committee minutes of October 11, 2016 were approved as mailed with a correction made to the upcoming meeting date. m/s/a

Joy Rehfeld gave a presentation on the Senior Companion Program as well as how it's different from RSVP. Both are sponsored by the same organization, Corporation for National and Community Service via Family Services of Worcester. The program promotes independent living and companions are age 55+, serving for 15-40 hours/week. Joy also answered questions from members.

Amy reported on the highlights of the goals and objectives report for October, including: State COA funding is level to FY'16; MA Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired received a grant to establish an assistive technology center in our computer lab; a new senior aide is assisting with the Latino Elder Club 60+; an Encore Fellow has started work to recommend improvements and resources for transportation; a new African American Elder Group coordinator was hired and there will be a reception for her and the outgoing coordinator on Thursday; Early voting will bring many people to the Senior Center.

Patty reported on today's health fair and noted that our recent multi-cultural pot luck seemed to be the best ever! She also reported on many upcoming programs as well as facility issues including HVAC, masonry, and changes in security and cleaning companies.

Linda reported that Open Enrollment period is very busy for SHINE counselors and staff; she discussed various student projects and the success of the first Diabetes Self-Management series held here.

Saeideh, a Boston College intern, reported on the Arab Elder Group (new name for Iraqi Elder Group).

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, Nov. 28, 2016 at 4:00 pm. The meeting adjourned.