

MEETING MINUTES

WINTHROP COUNCIL ON AGING

Date: Thursday, January 9, 2025
Time: 10:30 AM
Location: Robert A. DeLeo Senior Center
35 Harvard Street, Winthrop, MA 02152

Present: Matt Rodes, Director, Council on Aging
Alice Haskell, Chair, Council on Aging
Linda Cronin
Kathy Driscoll
Cynthia Huff
Heather Martin

Absent: Mary Vitale

Call to order at 10:34 AM by Matt Rodes, Director, Winthrop Council on Aging

I. Approval of Minutes

A Motion to approve the Minutes of the December 12, 2024, meeting was made by Cynthia Huff and seconded by Linda Cronin. Minutes were approved.

II. Announcements

Matt Rodes announced that he had run into Kathy Dixon who sends her regards to all.

III. Director's Comments

A. Matt Rodes reported that Assistant Director/Outreach Coordinator Kaylee Burgess has accepted another job and will be leaving the Senior Center on Friday, January 10, 2025. The position has been reposted, with the deadline being January 20, 2025. Matt will schedule interviews once the deadline has passed. He indicated that the rest of the staff has been very helpful during this time period.

B. Matt Rodes reported that we have many special events scheduled through June and provided several Program updates:

1. Matt reported that CAPIC Fuel Assistance representatives will be at the Senior Center on January 22, February 24 and March 10. Their presence on January 22 will be part of the National Grid Energy Exposition. They will be at the Senior Center from 9:30 – 12:00 on February 24 and March 10.

- 2. Matt reported that National Grid will be conducting an Energy Exposition on January 22 from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. There will be additional agencies in attendance to assist with such things as CAPIC, SNAP benefits, rental assistance, etc. This event will be open to the public.**
- 3. Matt reported that our Valentine's Day Pizza Party scheduled for February 11 is already waitlisted. Howie Conley will be the entertainment for this event. There was a brief discussion on the possibility of having the first week of sign-up for any events be for Senior Center paid members before opening it up to others.**
- 4. Matt Rodes and Alice Haskell both reported that the Elks would like to sponsor our Holiday Party for us again.**
- 5. Matt reported that our St. Patrick's Day Party scheduled for March 11 will likely be sponsored by Rep. Jeff Turco and Sen. Lydia Edwards. We are still waiting for confirmation on this. The entertainment for this event will be Roger Tincknell.**
- 6. Matt reported that our Spring Health Fair is scheduled for Thursday, April 17. This event will once again be organized by Kirsten Kilburn. Flyers will be going out soon. Vendor tables will be available for \$150. Businesses such as the Market Place which donate many items to the Center will be given a table for free.**
- 7. Matt reported that our Mothers' Day Ice Cream Social will be held on Tuesday, May 6. The Singing Grandpops will be the entertainment. We are looking for an ice cream sponsor for this event; Matt asked Alice Haskell if she could ask Twist & Shake for ice cream donations.**
- 8. Matt reported that we have a game show event scheduled for June 3. Snacks will be provided at this event.**
- 9. Matt indicated that the Friends of the Winthrop Council on Aging may conduct an indoor yard sale.**
- 10. Matt reported that the CLEAR Team will be conducting monthly meetings at the Senior Center. He provided handouts pertaining to winter weather/emergency preparedness that were presented at their January 8 meeting. Their next meeting will be on Wednesday, February 12. They will be discussing social isolation in older adults and will be making cards to send to people who may be homebound. They are hoping to have a good number of attendees who would be interested in helping with these cards.**
- 11. Matt reported that Rose Kaye has a meeting on Monday, January 13, with a woman who is interested in providing free Reiki sessions at the Senior Center.**
- 12. Matt reported that Pete Solomon, our former Spanish teacher, had contacted him to express interest in teaching the class again now that he is retired.**

13. Matt reported that the Senior Center was contacted by a woman who expressed interest in teaching ceramics now that our original ceramics teacher can no longer do this. She is interested in using clay to make and mold ceramic creations.
 14. Matt reported that he is hoping to recruit someone to do tax preparation. This may not be able to happen until 2026. He is hoping to arrange this through CAPIC.
 15. Matt is working on adding a monthly brunch to our schedule. The plan is to have this take place on Tuesdays, after the exercise class. He indicated he knows a person who may be interested in doing the cooking for this event.
 16. Matt reported that we still have no SHINE Counselor, and we are waiting for Mystic Valley Elder Services to train a new Counselor. He indicated he may ask for two Counselors.
 17. Matt reported that a representative from the MBTA Mobility Center will be at the Senior Center on January 21 to provide information on accessibility, Senior Passes, Passes for the vision impaired, etc.
- C. Matt Rodes reported that all four of our Grant Applications for this year have been approved. One Grant will go for Roger Tincknell, the St. Patrick's Day Party entertainment; one Grant will go for a Delvena Theater production of "Mangia, Meatballs and Murder" (date to be decided); and the other two will go for two Hip Hop Line Dance for Seniors sessions – one session will be Chair Hip Hop and the other will be Line Dancing.
- D. Matt Rodes provided updates on our trips. He reported that the meeting with Best of Times on January 8 was well-attended. There was a discussion on how to sign up and to pay for trips. There is a form which must be filled out for each trip; the form and information will be in an upcoming Bulletin, and forms are available at the Senior Center. Matt reported that all staff have been trained in how to fill out the form and how to pay for the trips and are available to help anyone who has any questions. Matt reported that a similar meeting with Cheryl Tobey of All Around New England is scheduled for Friday, February 7, at 11 AM.
- E. Matt Rodes provided an update on our Van Transportation Program. He reported that beginning in February, the van will be available for transport between 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM. Due to the shorter Friday hours, he indicated that Friday trips will likely be more local trips, and he indicated that the Market Basket shopping day may move to Friday. Matt reported that there were 2,646 rides in 2024, almost 1,000 more than in 2023 due to the Grant we received. We have used \$2,700 of the \$5,000 Grant money. We will offer free local rides again this year and will look into obtaining the Grant again for future years. Matt also reported that we are hoping to schedule some van repair/maintenance work in the next couple of weeks (check rotors/brakes/tires/wheelchair lift/lift door clip).

- F. Matt Rodes reported that we are continuing to receive donations from our Annual Mailing. To date, we have received \$16,000 - \$17,000 in donations. We received \$18,000 in 2023.
- G. Matt Rodes provided some updates on the building/facility. He reported that the heat in our large activity room has gone out a few times. Rich Cifuni has come by to reset this each time, as it must be reset from the roof. Rich will keep an eye on this. Matt reported that an electrical issue has caused the handicap buttons to the Women's Restroom to not work, and this will be addressed. A draft from a door near the kitchen has been fixed. Matt also reported that the Town Manager said the parklet would be removed from our parking lot and that the broken/missing curbing would be repaired/replaced.
- H. Matt Rodes reported that he is looking to grow volunteer opportunities at the Senior Center, both for outreach and programming. He is thinking about having a volunteer to work in the office to help the office staff.
- I. Matt Rodes reported that he is currently working on the FY26 budget. The Fiscal Year begins in July. He indicated that depending on the override vote, it may need to be redone. He reported that he is requesting funding to increase Sheila's and Pat's hours to a combined 40 hour week so that the Senior Center can stay open until 4:00. He also indicated he is thinking of having the Senior Center stay open later one night a week, as he has had requests from people who would be interested in an evening fitness class, and the Friends of the Winthrop Council on Aging could host dinners.
- J. Matt Rodes indicated he is thinking of changing the layout of the Senior Center Newsletter to show the activities in calendar form rather than in a list. He also indicated that perhaps Newsletters could show a "save the date" for future event sign-ups.

IV. Adjournment

There being no further business, a Motion to Adjourn was made by Cynthia Huff and seconded by Heather Martin. The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 AM. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 13, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted
Kathy Driscoll, Secretary, Winthrop Council on Aging

Adopted by the Board at the meeting of
February 13, 2025

Alice Haskell, Chair
Winthrop Council on Aging