MEETING MINUTES

WINTHROP COUNCIL ON AGING

Date: Thursday, September 10, 2026
Time: 10:30 AM
Location: Robert A. DeLeo Senior Center
35 Harvard Street, Winthrop, MA 02152

Present: Matt Rodes, Director, Council on Aging
Nicole Rizzotto, Assistant Director and Outreach Coordinator, Council on Aging
Linda Cronin, Chair
Heather Martin, Vice Chair
Kathy Driscoll, Secretary
Cynthia Huff, Member

Absent: Andrea DeSouza, Member

I. **Call to Order**

The Meeting was called to order by Linda Cronin, Chair - Council on Aging, at 10:34 AM.

II. **Approval of Minutes**

A Motion was made by Heather Martin and seconded by Cynthia Huff to approve the Minutes of the July 9, 2026, Council on Aging Meeting. The Minutes were approved.

III. **Programs Report**

A. Matt Rodes reported that the Friends of the Winthrop Council on Aging's Restaurant Night will take place on November 4. It will be held at LaSiesta and not at Hong Kong Dragon as originally planned as LaSiesta will let us book this early enough ahead of time to include it in our October newsletter. Regarding other Friends events, Cynthia Huff inquired as to whether there would be another Pasta Dinner scheduled. Matt reported that they are hoping to do this perhaps in March and August of 2027.

B. Matt Rodes reported that a coaster painting event hosted by "Paint the Town" is scheduled for Monday, September 21, from 3-5 PM. The cost per attendee is $20, and the Friends of the Winthrop Council on Aging will subsidize the rest of the cost. This event will be a "trial" to see what the interest in such an event would be and to decide if it is something that we would like to have again.

C. Matt Rodes reported that the Italian and Spanish classes are scheduled to resume after their summer breaks. The Italian class resumed on September 9. The Spanish class is currently scheduled to resume on September 15.

D. Matt Rodes reported that we are hoping to have the Pen Pal program with a fifth grade class from the Cummings School start up soon. To date, we have 13 people signed up for this and are hoping to have another 7 sign up.

E. Matt Rodes reported that there will be a pumpkin decorating class held on October 23, from 10-12. The decorated pumpkins will be used as decorations for our upcoming Halloween Party.

F. Matt Rodes reported that the cardio-drumming class continues to be very popular. As of now interested participants are able to sign up for a class a month ahead. As there is always a wait list for this class, next year, when all classes will be held twice a month, we may need to allow people to only sign up for one class a month in order to give other interested people on the wait list a chance.

G. Linda Cronin and Cynthia Huff suggested that we have an audiologist visit the Senior Center to give advice and tips on dealing with hearing loss. Matt reported that he had recently participated in a webinar on hard of hearing adults and thought this was a very good suggestion, indicating he may be able to reach out to the host of the webinar on this subject. There was a discussion on how sometimes the entertainment at our events is loud enough so that it is difficult for some people to hear conversations, and there were suggestions on perhaps having a quieter type of entertainment for some events. Matt suggested perhaps contacting someone from the Berklee School of Music in this regard.

H. Matt Rodes reported that he will also reach out to Cummings Physical Therapy to see about scheduling a fall prevention session.

I. Matt Rodes reported that Kevin Richman will be coming back next year to do another Game Show event which has been very popular.

J. Linda Cronin reported that she has been participating in Zoom meetings hosted by Care Dimensions regarding Alzheimer's and caregivers for Alzheimer's patients. She has been in touch with a woman named Mary Crowe in this regard. Matt indicated he had contacted Mary Crowe but had not yet heard back. He said that these Zoom meetings could be advertised in our monthly Newsletter and could perhaps be viewed at the Senior Center. He suggested this could perhaps be a Monday afternoon event, and if Mary Crowe/Care Dimensions were okay with it, perhaps WCAT could tape it.

K. Matt Rodes reported that our Deputy Fire Chief will be the guest speaker at this month's Coffee and Conversation on September 17 and will discuss fire safety issues and prevention. Cynthia Huff reported that the Red Cross also has a home fire safety session which can be viewed online.

L. Cynthia Huff reported that the recent Hands-On CPR training class was excellent and was very informative. This session was informational only and not a certification training class. We are still hoping to have a CPR certification training class here at the Senior Center.

IV. Outreach Report

There were no new updates to report.

V. Director's Report

A. Matt Rodes reviewed his "Director's Report" which he had distributed prior to our meeting, and there was a discussion on the topics raised. All agreed that the graph breakdown of attendance at various events in August 2026 was very informative and a great addition to the Report. Matt indicated that the category entitled "Community Meeting" pertains to Representative Jeff Turco's monthly walk-in sessions at the Senior Center. Matt stressed that it was important that everyone use their Senior Center membership card to sign in at the computer in the lobby so that participation at the various events can be recorded. Matt indicated that in total there were 183 individuals who visited the Senior Center during this time period, with some of them participating in more than one activity/event.

B. Matt Rodes reported that there is lot going on at the Senior Center. The National Grid Energy Fair was very successful and had a good turnout, with 30 people visiting the National Grid table for assistance with their energy bills. There were also other groups with tables at this Fair as well, such as CAPIC, Mass Save and Mass Unclaimed Money representatives, etc., and all were pleased with the Fair. We are hoping/planning to have another one in the winter and will plan for that one to take place on a Monday afternoon from 2PM to 6PM in order to allow interested people who are still working to attend as well as the Fair is open to the public. Matt reported that CAPIC will be at the Senior Center in October, November and December for any interested people to sign up for their services. Linda Cronin reported that the representative from Mass Save was very helpful with questions she had pertaining to home heating and insulation. The representative indicated that insulation in homes will drop down over time, leaving higher areas of a home colder than the lower levels which is why insulation may need to be replaced after several years. It was agreed that it could be helpful to have Mass Save return at some point for a single informational session.

C. Matt Rodes reported that there is a brief questionnaire in our lobby by which we hope to gain some insight as to what additional activities people might like to see here at the Senior Center. All are encouraged to fill out this questionnaire. Matt indicated there are some weekday gaps he would like to fill.

D. Matt Rodes reported that in 2027, we are going to try to schedule large events such as parties for the Tuesday after the second Monday of the month. This will allow time to set up for the events on the Monday afternoon as we are open until 6PM on Mondays. The exception to this will likely be October as we would like to schedule the Halloween Party closer to Halloween itself. Cardio-drumming will be held on the first and third Mondays of the month from 4-5 PM, and Movie Day will be on the fourth Monday of the month beginning at 3:30 PM.

E. Matt Rodes reported that Marc Wallerce, the owner of the Market Place, will be at the Senior Center for a coffee hour on October 14 at 1PM. He would like to hear feedback from people regarding his store and services. The Market Place is now offering a 15% discount on orders of $20 and over to all seniors on Wednesdays. The Market Place has been very helpful to the Senior Center for many of our events, and they continue to supply the pies we buy for our Thanksgiving pie giveaway.

F. Matt Rodes reported that our van transportation service continues to be very popular and highly utilized, with each month this year having more riders than the same month last year.

G. Matt Rodes reported that Carol Ferullo is resigning her position at the Senior Center, and her last day will be September 11.

H. Cynthia Huff expressed interest in hearing about the Conference on Aging that Matt and Nicole will be attending next month. Matt indicated these conferences are very useful and helpful, dealing with a wide range of topics and roundtable discussions. There are four sessions held each day as well as networking events, and he and Nicole agreed it is very helpful to talk to others in this field.

VI. Old Business

There were no old business updates to report.

VII. New Business

There was a Motion made by Cynthia Huff and seconded by Heather Martin to reappoint Judie VanKooiman for another term on the Board of the Mystic Valley Aging Services. The vote to reappoint was unanimous.

VIII. 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 11:29 AM. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 12, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Driscoll, Secretary, Winthrop Council on Aging

Adopted by the Board at the Meeting of
November 12, 2026

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Linda Cronin, Chair
Winthrop Council on Aging