

**Billerica Council on Aging
25 Concord Road, Billerica MA
Board Meeting Minutes**

March 12, 2025 5:30 pm

Present: Dan Burns, John Burrows, Richard Carroll, Phil Doiron, Mary Jones, Marguerite Massey, Joseph Marino, Bill Neeb, John Pellegrino, Mary Riley, Hemali Shah.

Absent: Barbara Flaherty, Mike Rosa

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM by Chair Richard Carroll, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for the sick and departed.

The minutes of the November 13, 2024, meeting was accepted as written M/Phil Doiron. S/ Dan Burns. Motion passed.

COA Director Hemali Shah reported on the following accomplishments within the six weeks since being hired.

- **Enhanced Facility Environment:** Improved the building's interior for a more welcoming and cleaner atmosphere.
- **Strengthened Financial Controls:** Streamlined the registration process to centralize cash handling through the front desk, ensuring better checks and balances.
- **Optimized Staff Roles:** Conducted individual meetings with staff to clarify roles and responsibilities, leading to task realignment for improved efficiency.
- **Improved Clinical Support:** Established a monthly clinical team meeting to address increasingly complex outreach cases, including the creation of an informed consent form for staff to expedite client assistance. Currently going through the approval process with legal counsel establishing an informed consent form. Permits staff to contact resources on their behalf.
- **Implemented Staff Safety Protocol:** Developed a "red folder" safety protocol to discreetly alert colleagues in potentially difficult client interaction.
- **Ensured Operational Continuity:** Managed payroll, updated account information, and resolved outstanding invoice and payment issues during an administrative staff absence.
- **Standardized Front Desk Procedures:** Created a time in/out procedure for the front desk to clearly communicate staff availability to volunteers and patrons.
- **Revised Patron Photo Policy:** Modified the photo policy to offer patrons a choice regarding photo consent, eliminating mandatory photos for membership and ensuring staff announce when photos are being taken.
- **Enhanced Security Measures:** Relocated the key box to the downstairs area and implemented a checkout/return system to prevent game theft. Secured the AV system controls with a locked box to prevent damage.

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Future Goals

Outreach

- **Expand Outreach Support:** Recruit a psychology, social work, sociology, or human services intern via Handshake (3-6 months) to assist with information and referral and application support, addressing the growing complexity of client cases.
- **Establish Financial Aid Program:** Develop a financial aid program (6-9 months) to provide one-time assistance for individuals in crisis (e.g., rent, utilities). This includes:
 - Creating a financial assessment form to determine eligibility.
 - Securing initial funding and pursuing additional community grants.
 - Clarifying payment procedures with the Town.
- **Implement Sand for Seniors Program:** Create a winter sand delivery program (6 months) for homebound seniors with limited support, including:
 - Establishing an eligibility process.
 - Setting a participant cap and obtaining approvals by November.
 - Collaborating with community organizations for volunteer delivery.
- **Train Outreach Staff:** Enhance knowledge of case management resources, ethics and HIPPA around case management:

Programs

- **Enhance Virtual Programming:** Apply for a SIG grant through MCOA (12 months) to upgrade building technology for virtual programming, including:
 - Funding for technology improvements.
 - Equipment loan program for patrons.
 - Technology training for patrons.
 - Expanding program offerings during winter months.
- **Foster Intergenerational Collaboration:** Partner with the Recreation Department to develop intergenerational and shared-space exercise programs, maximizing facility usage.

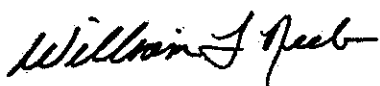
New Center Updates: No progress

Next meeting date April 9, 2025. M/Phil Doiron S/Bill Neeb / Motion passed.

Motion to adjourn made by Phil Doiron S/Mary Riley / Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted



William Neeb, Recording Secretary