

TOWN OF SHEFFIELD  
COUNCIL ON AGING  
July 21, 2017  
SHEFFIELD SENIOR CENTER  
6:00 pm

Board Members Present: Kathy Staropoli, Chairman  
Dorris Van Deusen  
David Steindler  
John Gilligan  
Richard Magenis  
David Smith Jr.  
Patricia Hardisty

Others Present: Jennifer Goewey, Executive Director  
Madonna Meagher, Assistant Director

Board Members Absent: Helen Johnston  
Michelle Harwood

Members of the Public: Claudia Martin

Chairman Staropoli called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

David Steindler moved to approve the July 11, 2017 minutes as presented, seconded by Richard Magenis. The motion carried unanimously.

**CHAIRMAN ITEMS:**

Chairman Staropoli gave a review and history on the Strategic Planning Sub-Committee in regards to the Executive Director salary, including the request of a one-time increase the Council on Aging (COA) requested in March of 2017 for FY18. She stated that the committee and the COA exhausted all attempts; and the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator did not recommend or approve the one time increase, bringing the Executive Director's salary to \$43,914.00. The approved amount for FY18 was \$38,235.00.

Discussion ensued regarding the position, including the increased responsibility of the transportation program, which the Board of Selectmen voted to implement in February by not renewing their contract with the Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation (SBETC). Director Goewey was hired in January while the transportation was still under contract with SBETC.

Executive Director announced that she has resigned as the Executive Director for the Council on Aging, her last day being August 8, 2017. Discussion ensued regarding the current salary, the

transportation program and the salary set for the next director. Miss Goewey expressed that she felt the Council on Aging Board justified the increase well, based on the nature of the position including being a department head; managing an outside building; the separate transportation program; and lastly services provided in relation to other town departments. She stated that she felt it was important to look toward the future and that it was not unreasonable for the salary to be set \$6,000 higher for the next person as a base, so that the Council on Aging and senior center could resume the same level of services currently provided and continue to grow.

Member John Gilligan stated that Director Goewey did an outstanding job, noting her enthusiasm and professionalism, noting that it will be hard to replace her.

Member David Steindler expressed his concern, one more of a fundamental nature, which is the cost of training and getting competent employees, and then losing them because the salaries are not competitive. He stated he was afraid that if the Board of Selectmen kept the salary the same moving forward, they will be in the same position in three years hiring someone new again.

Member David Smith Jr. stated to David Steindler that he was sitting at the table as a COA Board member and told Member Steindler not to stare him down. Smith also stated that Steindler went into town hall to intimidate people by pointing his finger, and he was not going to do that to him. Member Steindler expressed he did not intimidate anyone and heated discussion ensued.

Member Dorris Van Deusen expressed her heartfelt appreciation for all the work that Jenn has done for the center including all the grants she has written and received for the center. Member Van Deusen also mentioned that the Great Barrington elder transportation has full time drivers and a dedicated staff for creating the rides for seniors.

Chairman Staropoli encouraged board members to attend a working meeting with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the resignation, on Tuesday, July 25 at 3:00 pm at the Town Hall.

#### **MEMBER ITEMS:**

Member Richard Magenis expressed that losing Director Goewey as the center director would be a great loss to all. He thanked her for all she has done as Director.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Claudia Martin pointed out that the basket raffle will take place at the annual BBQ on July 27<sup>th</sup> at the Town Park, not at the Sheffield in Celebration as reported at the last COA board meeting.

Ms. Martin thanked Director Goewey for her service to the seniors in Sheffield and surrounding areas stating that it takes a long time to gain the trust of seniors. Ms. Martin stated that the population served by the Senior Center is different than that of the town library. Ms. Martin strongly supported the salary increase for a newly hired director and encouraged the board and the town administrators to get the "right fit" for the position even if it takes a bit more time to get the position staffed permanently. Ms. Martin was concerned that the routine at the center

be maintained. She asked if the COA or the Town Administration would be responsible to make sure staffing continues, that the building keep the hours the same and that routines are maintained so we don't move backward in our services.

John Gilligan moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 pm, seconded by David Steindler. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by,

Madonna Meagher  
Assistant to the Director

Documents Reviewed:  
Minutes