

COA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes 1/14/2026

Attendees: Elaine Hyland, Beatrice Taggart, Susan Murray, Christopher Eddington, Marion (Missy) Rapoza, Rosemary Clark, Holly Rose (ex-officio)

Absent: Gene Santorelli, Susan Mann

The meeting was called to order with a Pledge of Allegiance.

1. The minutes of 12/10/25 were reviewed and unanimously accepted.
2. Marion (Missy) Rapoza presented the Treasurers Report.
 - The chart showed all spending from 7/1/2025 – 12/31/2025.
 - No changes to the COA Accounts Index.
 - Three accounts have deficits: COA Coordinator, COA Assistant Director, and Van Drivers. Missy met with the Town Administrator and Town Accountant to discuss.
 - The Town Coordinator was posted, then hired at a higher hourly rate than voted on at Town Meeting. This led to a \$3,429.63 deficit. We are not sure how this happened. Holly was not involved in this job posting. The FY27 budget will request this account to be funded at the current higher rate.
 - The vans were used more in 2025 than previously. This led to a \$2,454.36 deficit.
 - We have no COA Assistant Director, nor have we ever. We are unsure how the \$1,695.99 deficit occurred. Missy will look into it and let us know at the next meeting what happened.
 - The grants are in good shape.
 - The \$17,052.47 Rides Tech reimbursable grant has been spent. We just received the paperwork needed to request reimbursement.
 - The Modernization reimbursable grant is halfway spent. The money spent so far went to IKEA furniture to help with storage and desks. The mobile desk has freed up a lot of space.
 - The Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.
3. Missy presented her investigation into the cost of food.
 - Missy used data from a MA institution to determine the cost per resident of providing three meals/day plus snack. She came up with \$9.37-\$11.36 per resident per day. Holly felt this was an incredibly small amount.
 - Our cost for food is on average \$7.11 per person. This is calculated by looking at all the COA activities that provide food, and the number of unique individuals that attend. This looked only at food purchased from Demoulas, Stanneys, and Sara's Pizza. It did not include snacks which are available daily.
 - Holly has difficulty to plan and budget food.
 - Events are planned for 30. And by the end, all food is either gone or sent home with those that need.
 - The Newsletter does not mention food at the events because we don't have the capacity for all those that might come.
 - We want to supply quality food and make sure it is there for those that need it so restricting the budget would be difficult.

4. We reviewed the FY27 Budget request.

- The budget was submitted to Finance Committee on Dec 31.
- Holly met with the town accountant and revised it on 1/13/26.
- Overall budget has increased from \$278,722.33 in FY26 to \$359,282.60 in FY27. This is an increase of \$80,560.27.
- Reasons for the increase are as follows:
 - COA Coordinator increased by \$4,340.96 to reflect the correct hourly rate.
 - COA PT Principal Clerk increased by \$12,937.16. This reflects 3 PT Principal Clerks (one being the Alternate)
 - The Outreach Coordinator was moved from the Formula Grant into the Town Budget \$8,778.87.
 - Clerk (Union Position) is a new position started at \$59,129.96. This position was not requested by the COA. This is a position requested by the town created specifically for this employee. It may not stay in the budget.
- Holly will go before the Finance Committee on Jan 22. She will have a line-by-line explainer for everything.
- FY27 Revised budget was unanimously approved.

5. Holly discussed the difficulty in knowing what grant money we have and don't have yet. When grant funding comes in, there has been a delay in us receiving that information from the Town Treasurer's office. We have received \$19,800 from the Keenan Grant. We are not using this for food since we already have good funding.

6. Holly discussed her efforts to get more food in for the seniors.

- Golden Pacific will be supplying a boxed meal at \$8 per box once per month (individuals private pay).
- J&S Jamaicans will be hosting 1 meal per month as a donation (30 meals).
- Holly is working with South Shore Elder Services to provide a true Grab & Go every Tuesday. They would drop off meals for this event.

7. We discussed possible Capital Expenditures.

- Holly wants to sit with Elaine to answer a packet of questions for Capital Planning. It is due back at the time of the Finance Committee meeting (1/22/26).
- Water heater, furnace, roof, and shed are possible projects. Of these, we are greatly in need of a roof and a shed, with the roof being the priority.
- Ceiling tiles that need it will be fixed.
- Bea felt the roof should be done before the floor.
- The floor is not ADA compliant and is thus an immediate issue. We already have funding for this, whereas funding for the roof must be requested through Capital Planning.
- Missy suggested we do the parking lot in conjunction with the library.
- The town has emergency funds in case the furnace breaks.
- Missy suggested that using the smaller rooms requires a space heater may help our chances for a new heating system.

8. We discussed the policies and procedures.

- Holly is compiling a list of policies and procedures needed. Much of her information comes from the Directors Conference about Policy that she attended.
- She would like someone to be on a committee to help develop the COA Board as well as the COA Operational Policies & Procedures.
- Everything must go through town hall and legal before we can adopt them.

9. We reviewed the mission statement.

- Chris used AI to develop a mission statement which was handed out.
- It was brought up that we do help residents under 60 with SNAP, SHINE, and fuel assistance, perhaps this should be added somehow.
- Additionally, under 60 and disabled can use our vans.
- Sue requested the earlier versions of the mission statement.
- We will review it and discuss it at the next meeting.

10. We reviewed December Stats

- Doing well. Some stats include 19 unique individuals in Exercise, 64 individuals attended the Christmas party. Total unique individuals coming to events for December was 135.

11. The Holiday Party was Fabulous.

- Ran smoothly and the food was fabulous.
- We ran out of pastries this year. Last year everyone got a slice of cake. We will go to that again next year.
- There was a lot of criticism on Facebook about having the Christmas Party out of town and having it cost so much. We told Holly not to be concerned with that since some people on Facebook tend to have bad things to say about everything.
- Holly explained that we don't have the large space in town that the place in Rockland has.
- We paid for three people that couldn't afford the ticket price.
- Elaine asked if we should supplement the cost next year. Holly said we paid for the rental of the space and the transport. People paid only for the food.
- Missy said Buddy the Elf was inappropriate. But Holly had taken care of that issue that night.
- Missy suggested we hire a waitress for those with canes or other difficulties walking. Some people were unable to get their own food due to being unable to hold a tray while using a walker or cane. It was suggested that we all volunteer next year to help those people. Everyone agreed.

12. Elaine updated us on the status of the newly Town Meeting approved COA bylaws.

- The new bylaws needed to be submitted to the State within 30 days of the Special Town meeting (11/19/25). They were not.
- Elaine tried to take care of it, but the Town Hall was closed.
- Elaine was told they didn't go in because they needed to be typed up. Elaine said both she and legal had word documents. So, she sent in her word document to the Town Clerk on 1/13/26 to be sent to the state. She is hoping the document is now on its way to the state. The state has up to 90 days to review/approve.
- Elaine has cautioned us there is a time-frame issue which could possibly delay the state approval process if the Town Clerk's office is late in submitting the by-laws to them. If not approved, we will need to start the process again.

13. Holly gave an update on Helpsy.

- Helpsy is supposed to be giving us money when they pick up the donations from our site. They haven't been. Holly sent the case to legal and received a letter from them for her to review. She will look into it.

14. Missy requested that the COA Newsletter continue to have a request for new board members, just in case the bylaws are not approved.

15. Holly updated us on her meeting with Senator Warrens Office.

- Holly, Amy and Elaine attended a meeting with Jonathan from Senator Warrens office on 1/12/2026.
- The meeting went very well. There might be \$4-\$5 million for us to receive if we go after it.
- Senator Warrens office said they would help us in our pursuit of grants and will work with us to get money for this effort.
- Holly said it would be helpful if we had letters of support from the town.
- It would also be helpful if we combine with something else, for example, a new library with COA.
- We are keeping options open. Everything is a possibility from using the JFK, to Maple on Franklin, to purchasing land and building something new.

16. Holly is looking for ideas on how best to use the back room.

- They will be putting a nice 4 ft kitchen table in there to replace the 5 ft table.
- The chairs with arms cannot be used in that space because they can't move on the carpet.
- An Audio Book Club will be starting soon in the back room.
- Ideas such as puzzles and crafts were brought up. But those have already been tried and are not much of a draw. We will continue to think of things.

17. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, 2/11/2026 at 3:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Murray – COA Board Clerk