

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE KILLINGWORTH
COMMITTEE ON AGING
Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
Killingworth Town Hall

Members in Attendance: Joan Gay, Bill Joyce, Joyce Mason, Margaret Tobelman and Ex-officio Member, Mercedes Ricculti, Municipal Agent for the Elderly

Members Absent: Cheryl Fine

Visitors: Sandy Allard, Eric Nunes, Selectman, Amy Roberts-Perry (Arrived at 5:34 p.m.), Michelle Puzzo, Executive Director, UR Community Cares and Jamie Sciascia (Via Remote),

Called to Order: The meeting was Called to Order at 5:30 p.m. by Joan Gay, Chair

Roll Call: Chair Gay took a Roll Call of all Members and Visitors in Attendance at the Committee on Aging Meeting tonight.

Guest Speaker - Michelle Puzzo, Executive Director, UR Community Cares:

Michelle Puzzo, the Executive Director and Founder of UR Community Cares, a non-profit organization started in 2019, provided the Committee on Aging and Visitors with a brief overview of the four different programs they offer: Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Cycling Without Age, Tech Center and Directory for the Blind/Vision Impaired. Michelle Puzzo explained how the Neighbor to Neighbor program works in terms of volunteers/participants. UR Community Cares uses secure web-based technology to match local Volunteers with Community Members (age 70 and over or age 18 and over with a physical disability) who need free at-home support. Household chores, yard work, local transportation and companionship visits are requested and pre-scheduled online. All participants are background checked. Michelle Puzzo is requesting support from the Committee on Aging. Funds needed would be \$100.00 for each Participant and Volunteer.

Michelle noted that she has received from the Sun Corporation a \$500.00 donation thus far. Bill Joyce confirmed that this is specifically set aside for the residents of the Beechwood Community. Michelle suggested that in order to move forward with the program, and as a starting point, a \$2,000 donation would be sufficient. She explained to the Committee once the funding is secured for the Town of Killingworth, a background check would be conducted by Michelle for each volunteer/participant.

Michelle will forward to Chair Gay the UR Community Cares pamphlet for more information. Michelle Puzzo can be reached directly at 860-430-4557 and you can also find more information location on the website <https://urcommunitycares.org>

Selectman Nunes spoke briefly about being a member of the Lions Club and inviting Michelle Puzzo to give a presentation to the Board of Directors soon, hopefully to gain all inclusive donations to the Town of Killingworth Seniors beyond the Beechwood Community.

Chair Gay thanked Michele Puzzo for coming to the Committee on Aging and for her presentation.

Chair Gay will add onto the Agenda the UR Community Cares - “Stamp of Approval” for the next Committee on Aging meeting.

Communications:

Chair Gay summarized the UR Community Cares Newsletter about the stigma around aging which was provided by Nancy McCormick and sent to the Committee. Chair Gay will send the newsletter to Selectman Nunes and Amy-Roberts Perry.

Chair Gay reported that Alli Behnke, from Youth and Family Services, sent an email regarding the Awareness Program Collaboration for the Haddam Senior Center and the Committee on Aging and suggested working together in terms of volunteers for yard work for Seniors as a starting point to make a connection. Chair Gay responded back to Alli seeking more details before the Committee commits to anything further. Alli also stated they are looking to promote a Health Awareness Program in May.

Chair Gay reported that AllThingsKillingworth.com printed the Summary of the Committee’s Survey. Chair Gay also sent all the comments to the Beechwood Community.

Approval of Minutes from the February 28, 2024 Meeting:

Motion #1 - Bill Joyce *Moved* and Joyce Mason *Seconded* a motion to approve the Minutes from the Committee on Aging meeting that was held on February 28, 2024 as presented.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Mason, B. Joyce, M. Tobelman

Motion unanimously passed (4-0-0).

Approval of Clerk Invoice:

Chair Gay reported that Clerk Sciascia will provide an invoice at their next Committee on Aging Meeting scheduled for April 24, 2024.

Election of Secretary:

Chair Gay is seeking a volunteer for their open Secretary position on the Committee. Chair Gay gave a brief overview of what the position entails. After Committee discussion, the position was left vacant for now.

Report from Municipal Agent for the Elderly - Mercedes Riccuiti:

Mercedes Riccuiti reported that she circulated a short reminder about the upcoming Renters Rebate program in The Source, AllThingsKillingworth.com, Killingworth StompingGrounds and HK News but received no responses to date. Mercedes also reported that with the Fuel Assistance program she received approximately 60 customers that signed up.

2024-2025 Budget:

Chair Gay reported that the Board of Selectmen approved \$2,000 for the Committee on Aging for the 2024/2025 Town Budget. Chair Gay also updated the Committee that she was informed

that a Committee cannot hire a Clerk in order to record the meeting minutes, this available not Roll Call.....only for Town Commissions. She was also informed that the clerking amount is covered partially through the Committee support line in the Board of Selectmen portion of the budget. The COA proposed amount of \$27,170 for the Senior Program Coordinator was not included.

Communications Strategy:

Chair Gay reported that the Communication Strategy had been circulated to everyone. She thanked Mercedes Riccuiti and Bill Joyce for all their hard work with putting it together to give the Committee a starting point. Chair Gay asked the Committee for a consensus on how to proceed forward.

Communications Strategy:

Motion #2 - Bill Joyce *Moved* and Margaret Tobelman *Seconded* a motion to accept the Communications Strategy as presented.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Mason, B. Joyce, M. Tobelman

Motion unanimously passed (4-0-0).

Next Steps - Programs/Activities:

Due to time, since the Next Steps - Programs/Activities would be a lengthy discussion, and there is a Board of Selectmen meeting scheduled at 7:00 p.m., she suggested a postponement of this topic until the next regular meeting.

Motion #3 - Chair Joan Gay *Moved* and Joyce Mason *Seconded* a motion to postpone the Next Steps, Programs/Activities set forth on the Agenda as Item #11 until the next regular Committee on Aging meeting scheduled for April 24, 2024.

Voting to Approve: J. Gay, J. Mason, B. Joyce, M. Tobelman

Motion unanimously passed (4-0-0).

Old Business: None:

New Business:

The Committee had a discussion in length regarding the UR Community Cares program and whether they will commit to it which includes seeking donations from surrounding businesses. The Committee Members provided their input, some stating how it would be a valuable program, especially with homebound and living Community members on wheelchairs, others Committee Members seeked more information and questioned if this program could potentially overlap with The Estuary as far as funding. Also, a question was raised as to how much the Town would be willing to donate to the Seniors of Killingworth for the program.

Next Meeting: April 24, 2024:

Chair Gay stated at the next Committee on Aging meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 24th Clerk Sciascia will provide a status in terms of what funds have been utilized thus far for Clerk Services. Also, the Committee will need to secure a business contract signed by the Board of Selectmen, as well as seek donations from surrounding businesses in order for the Community Care program to get up and running.

Adjournment:

Chair Gay adjourned the meeting at approximately 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jamie Sciascia
Clerk