

West County Senior Services District Board of Managers

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MINUTES

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 — 11:00 a.m. — Senior Center in Shelburne Falls and Zoom [Z]

Board of Managers (BOM) members: Present – Sylvia Smith, Shelburne Council on Aging (COA) rep., chair; Amy Shapiro, Ashfield, vicechair; Janice Fleuriel, Buckland COA rep., secretary; Christine Baronas, Shelburne; Regina Purinton, Buckland; Absent – Todd Olanyk, Ashfield COA rep.

Senior Center Consortium (consortium) members present: Juli Moreno, Senior Center Director; Janice Wright (chair, board of directors); Suzanne E. Bishop (treasurer, board of directors)

Community attendee(s): Bob Dean, FRCOG Director of Municipal Services

1. **Call to order:** Sylvia convened the meeting at 11:02 a.m.
2. **Minutes of 9/06/24 meeting:** Move to approve - Christine; Second - Janice; passed unanimously.

3. Transition Planning

a) FY 26 Budget discussion with Senior Center Consortium Chair and Treasurer

Sylvia invited Janice W. and Suzanne to be part of the budget discussion process for the West County Senior Services District, which will take effect July 1, 2025.

Juli distributed a draft FY26 budget template (not all data crunched yet), with yellow highlighted rows showing which costs are moving from administration by the Town of Shelburne to WCSSD (Shelburne admin fee, telephone, heat, electricity, propane, cleaning/snow removal). Discussion:

- **Budget format:**

- Amy suggested having a column in the multi-page budget showing the cost of the transition for costs no longer administered by Shelburne, and assumptions justifying these in case of questions.

Action: Juli will create an operations page highlighting cost differences due to the transition.

- Amy suggested having an Actual vs. Proposed column for regular review.

Action: Juli will show utilization vs. remaining percentage of funds as she does for Shelburne.

- **Accountant/Treasurer:**

- Julie said Shelburne treasurer Angel Bragdon confirmed that 15 hours is the estimated weekly total for these tasks; the group discussed whether a bid/job ad could estimate lower (e.g., half that).

- Janice W. asked if there is a ballpark figure yet for these fees; the group provided the general estimates Bob had obtained on his earlier inquiries.

Action: Bob will work on incorporating a number for accountant and treasurer fees.

- **Utilities:**

- Amy asked about the possibility of Shelburne still extending a discount as a pass-through. Juli asked if this is possible legally. Bob said it would be—it would need to be a contract agreement.
- Sylvia asked about joining FRCOG. Bob said this is possible—there is a per-bid fee.
- Regina asked if FRCOG has a contract for propane. Bob said they don't. Juli said it is only for hot water and the Senior Center currently has a 5-month credit.
- Juli said that paying for phone individually would be \$280/month vs. \$800/year under Shelburne (amounting to \$2,560 more/year).
- Sylvia suggested putting in what's needed and exploring ways to back costs down if needed.

- **Legal consulting:**

- Bob suggested adding a line with \$1500.
- Amy suggested \$2500, based on \$250/hour X 10 hours, or roughly 3 consults at 3 hours.

- **Lease:**

- Suzanne asked about approaching the Masons again to reduce the lease costs. Juli said this could be revisited; the latest lease was revised to 1 year (6/1/24-6/30/25), and the Greenfield Masons may be merging into this Shelburne group and using the building a few times a month.
- Regina asked if the lease contract covers if we were to be displaced.

Action: Juli will provide a copy of the lease for BOM review.

- **Owned property insurance:**

- Regina asked if the senior center currently has this. Juli said liability is currently under Shelburne, including for non-FRTA staff travel (FRTA drivers are covered under FRTA).

Action: Juli will add lines for owned property and liability insurance.

- **Contingencies/stabilization fund:**

- Bob asked if the budget should include this.
- Regina asked if Senior Center Foundation money would cover these kinds of expenses. Janice W. suggested this might be able to be put towards some programming or operations costs.
- Sylvia suggested looking into putting unspent senior center expansion funds into this.
- Amy suggested taking 2% of town revenues to earmark towards this fund.

Action: Juli will add a \$15,000 Stabilization Fund line to be split between the town assessments.

- **Salaries:**

- Sylvia asked if salaries are based on the town COLA (cost of living adjustment).
- Bob said FRCOG uses the CPI (consumer price index) to determine the COLA. Juli said the CPI seems like a good idea going forward.

Action: Juli will put 3-4% for COLA for now.

b) Personnel policy continued update:

- Juli is continuing work on this and will send out an update when it's ready for another review.
- Sylvia suggested asking Penny Spearance (Shelburne COA) to help with review.

Action: Janice reviewed some of what Juli distributed at the 10/2 meeting, and will give Juli her markup.

c) District accountant and treasurer draft RFPs

- Bob reported that he, Juli, and Amy worked on an Accountant RFP draft:
 - An RFP has to be for a total contract of over \$50,000, so for district purposes this would mean probably a 3-year contract.
 - For just 1 year, we could go with a state bid contract and invite bids. Amy asked about posting a maximum bid. Bob said it's not required but would weed out high-cost bids.
 - Hiring directly would probably cost the least.
 - A software vendor would probably need a maximum of 3 months to implement the new software.
 - Amy suggested increasing the fiscal costs by 20% from the current costs.

Action: Bob will review past quotes and research the procurement and state contract options.

Action: Juli will speak with Dara at FRCOG, the accountant for Shelburne, about a ballpark figure.

Action: Juli will create separate budget lines for an accountant and treasurer.

d) Transition Plan VOTE to submit to Selectboards

- Sylvia reported that all 3 towns had no changes to recommend to the Transition Plan. Sylvia and Bob drafted a follow-up email to send to the selectboards with attachments: clean copy of the Transition Plan; suggested motion language based on the Act to vote approval of the Plan.
- Sylvia read the suggested motion language for the board to revise/approve. Janice moved to approve; Regina seconded; passed unanimously.

Action: Sylvia will send the email with attachments to each selectboard, requesting that they vote at their next scheduled meeting.

e) Any other updates:

Action: Sylvia and Juli will be connecting with contacts at Dept. of Elder Affairs and Mass. COA.

Action: BOM members will track their hours between meetings; Juli will input BOM time for tracking.

4. **Public Comment:** None.

5. **Next meeting:** Friday, November 8, 2024, Senior Center and Zoom

6. **Adjourn:** Move - Janice; Second - Amy. Passed unanimously. Sylvia adjourned the meeting at 12:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Janice Fleuriel, Secretary