



# Watertown Council on Aging

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PATRICIA GOLD, *Chairperson*

CARYL LESLIE FOX  
*Director of Senior Services*

## Minutes of COA Board Meeting - October 12, 2011

Members present: Pat Gold, Mary Keenan, Will Twombly, Hagop Sarkissian, Mike Donham, and V.V. Martin.

Member excused absence: Dottie Fleming.

Staff members present: Caryl Fox, Debbie Dunn, Laura Gold, and Kathleen Wolf.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 by Chairperson Pat Gold.

### 1. Disability Commission Guest Speaker Carol Menton:

Our guest speaker, Carol Menton, is a member of the Watertown Commission on Disabilities which meets monthly. Ms. Menton also is employed as a case manager for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing. Carol Menton gave two important statistics: thirty percent of those over sixty-five have some hearing loss and forty-seven percent of those over seventy-four have hearing loss. Ms. Menton spoke about how the Watertown Commission could help the COA through the purchase of amplification devices, the use of "real-time captioning" for lectures (as was used at this Board meeting), and funding for the new Resource Guide into braille.

### 2. Minutes of Last Board Meeting:

Board members read over the minutes. Will Twombly noted a needed correction. Mr. Twombly made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and V.V. Martin seconded. Passed.

### 3. Financial Statements:

Members of the Board reviewed the September statements. Caryl Fox pointed out the high electrical costs so far this fiscal year. Mike Donham noted this is an on-going problem and that information from the energy study done last year may have a solution. A suggestion was made to let the Town Manager and the Town Council know that we would like the study results for the Senior Center as soon as it is available. Ms. Fox noted that after we publicized that the Pantry usage was high and that food prices have increased, the Pantry received many monetary and food donations.

### 4. Property Tax Work-off Program:

Caryl Fox has sent out forms to departments and interested seniors about the program which allows up to ten qualified seniors to work ninety-four hours for the Town to receive a seven hundred and fifty dollar reduction in a real estate bill.

### 5. Fuel Assistance and Other Resources:

The application process for seniors applying for the first time begins on November 1, 2011. Caryl Fox and Laura Gold assist people with the forms and Ms. Gold is available if home visits are needed. This is a federal program which, this year, has tightened both the application process and reduced the funding amounts. The Good Neighbor Fund, through the Salvation Army, is for people who are slightly over-income for the federal program.

6. Resource Guide:

The Resource Guide was not awarded Title III grant funding because Springwell funded only long-standing projects. The Friends of the COA has pledged five thousand dollars towards printing costs. If we decide to translate it into other languages, funding may be available through the Marshall Home Fund.

7. Thanks for help from Board members at Faire in the Square.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by Caryl Leslie Fox