

**ECOA Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 19, 2021**  
**8:30am**

**Present:** Rosemary Cunningham, Marvene O'Rourke, Heidi Boyd, John Dropick, Nancy Ignacio, Jay Sigler, Steven Miller; Administrator Lyndsay Famariss. **Absent:** Janice Belisle

The meeting was called to order by Board Chair Rosemary Cunningham at 8:29 am.

**Approval of the Minutes**

Rosemary asked if there were any amendments, questions or additions to the proposed minutes of February 19, 2021. Upon motion by Jay Sigler that was seconded by Heidi Boyd, the minutes were accepted unanimously.

The Board discussed the need to complete the annual evaluation of the ECOA Administrator. Rosemary asked that members fill out the evaluation form, send it to Rosemary and then Rosemary will meet with Lyndsay and it will be finalized to be passed along to Kim Lucas. Rosemary asked that this be completed by early April, if possible.

Rosemary has been in touch with Board members to formulate a nominating committee to nominate the chair and co-chair before June's board meeting. Marvene O'Rourke and John Dropick will work on this committee.

**Budget:**

Lyndsay reported on the YTD budget and asked if there were any questions or comments, to which the Board answered that there were not. Lyndsay reported that there's a meeting taking place on April 1 with the Town Administrator and several other department heads to develop a plan to share the cost of the cleaning service. Lyndsay reported that the money (\$3738.36) is now available to spend from the Food Security Infrastructure Grant, so she will be making the approved purchases soon. These are items we requested in the grant application for Covid-19 relief last summer.

**Administrator's report:**

Lyndsay asked the staff of ECOA to return to the building to work on March 15. The staff is very closely adhering to the CDC and state guidelines for office safety. Lyndsay reported that Sarah Kuh of Vineyard Health Care Access asked if they could use our building to host a community dental clinic in April. After consulting with BOH agent Matt Poole, we have developed a plan to execute this clinic in a safe way. It's our hope that this will be a successful event that will pave the way for future clinics (foot-, hearing- and wellness clinics, etc.) in our space with close BOH direction.

Lyndsay reported that the new Comcast phone system was installed in our building and that the staff is working to get acquainted with what we believe will be a helpful new addition to our IT infrastructure.

Lyndsay reported that the Martha's Vineyard Art Association has asked to use our kitchen for their July 17 event on the ECOA lawn. The board shared the Administrator's belief that this is not a request we can accommodate at this time due to the Covid-19 closures and the need to limit the public's use of the building for safety reasons.

Lyndsay shared that the new owners of the Harbor View Hotel/Kelley House have asked to meet and that she will be meeting with them directly after the Board meeting. She will report on this at April's Board meeting.

The response from the residents who took part in the AARP tax program has been exceptionally positive and Lyndsay thanked John Dropick, his wife Dorothy, and the other volunteers for their tireless work on this project.

Lyndsay updated the Board on the ECOA's continued role in the vaccine rollout and the improvement in the communication from MVH to our agency and the community. Stephen Miller asked about people who are homebound and Lyndsay shared with the board that our staff passes along those names to MVH staff, and the hospital sends a doctor to administer the shots. We have served about 20 people in this way.

Jay Sigler asked what signals we're waiting to hear from government agencies, etc. about the COA's re-opening. He expressed his concern that we are ready when the Governor gives his OK. Lyndsay shared that we are taking steps to prepare and that the other staff's reports will reflect on those advances.

#### **Director of Senior Services Report:**

Meris shared that she's working on a Volunteer Appreciation event, and that we will ask the volunteers to come to the building to pick up some goodies, likely mid-April.

She shared that the AARP Tax Prep program has just been completed, and we are now referring people in need of this service to Community Action Committee of Cape and the Islands. John Dropick added that the IRS extended the tax deadline to May 15<sup>th</sup>.

Meris reported that she is working on getting an elder attorney on the calendar to work with residents. She is also hoping to get hearing-, wellness- (public health nurse) and foot-clinics set up for April or May, depending upon Board of Health approval. She announced that the nutrition talk with Josh Levy of Vineyard Nutrition will happen next month. Meris shared that she hopes to start an Anchors walking group that may be led by volunteers, though the feedback Meris received from Matt Poole, BOH agent, was that participants would need to maintain six feet of distance on the walk. She expressed her concern that this would render the benefits of being on a walk with others less effective from a socializing standpoint.

Marvene asked whether the BOH would amend the six feet rule as the school are doing. Meris responded that she is not sure that a shorter distance is likely to be adopted in the case of older adults, who are more at risk to Covid. Lyndsay and Meris chimed in that we will continue to ask the questions and make the plans that adhere to safety protocols, but also move us forward toward offering more programming whenever possible.

Jay asked a question about the dental clinic and who would be handling this clinic. Meris clarified that the clinic is hosted by Vineyard Smiles/Polished and Vineyard Health Care Access, and that our building is just being used as a community site. Those organizations will handle the scheduling and all the details of the clinic.

### **Outreach Report:**

Victoria Haeselbarth reported that the month has been a tough one with some serious cases in the outreach department. This resulted in our making five Protective Services reports in the past month. She gave an example of interventions our outreach staff took when a man who lives alone and who is declining in physical and mental health needed acute support and referrals.

Victoria offered another example of a long-time participant who had problems with a boiler that stopped working during a stretch of very cold weather. She elaborated on the ways that the Edgartown Police Department worked in conjunction with the ECOA to get resources in place for this Edgartown older resident.

Victoria's next example of the Outreach workers' caseload was about an ECOA participant who has been scammed out of \$50,000. Victoria shared the steps taken and the referrals made to try to support the woman and her caregivers to try to prevent this type of financial abuse from happening again.

Another case Victoria shared involved an initial call from the Edgartown Water Department about a concern about a resident's well-being, and it led Victoria to connect with a COA in Brooklyn, where the resident lives part of the year. The result was that a web of support was constructed between COAs and friends of the older adult to try to support her and keep her safe.

Victoria shared that another woman in her 90s is needing more personal care/assistance, despite her strong wishes to live alone. Victoria worked with local agencies and the woman's Health Care Proxy and family members to put additional supports in place for her.

Victoria reported that she feels, in general, that the local resources that have cropped up -for fuel assistance, for example- have made her job easier because of the fact that they are relatively easy to access and their response rate is fast.

Marvene asked Victoria about Protective Services' response to these filings, and Victoria reported that their response has been more helpful than in the past, but we still hope for a more consistent and comprehensive effort on their end to keep Edgartown vulnerable adults safe.

Lyndsay added that she feels that our staff will need to be a 'squeaky wheel' to keep the pressure on Protective Services to offer MV residents their consistent attention with a comprehensive response.

Katie Vieira joined the meeting and echoed Victoria's praised of the local supports available for fuel assistance. She updated the Board about the changes to our meals program, including the switch to a hybrid delivery and pick up model. Katie highlighted that this new model will not cut back on deliveries to those people who can't make the trip, but it will allow staff to see the people we're serving and help provide them with a small step back into the world in a safe and social distanced manner.

Katie pointed out that she has learned through her outreach work how difficult it is for some people to recognize when they are in an emergency situation- in her example, with their utilities. But the help is out there, and she is pleased when she can connect her outreach clients with support.

Katie reported that the Open Cupboard program has been in operation, though in a slightly different form, due to the pandemic and the seasonal challenges involved in delivering the goods from the Greater Boston Food Bank to MV.

**Friends of the ECOA Report:**

Janice was not present for this meeting, but Lyndsay thanked the Friends for their continued support.

**New Business:**

Rosemary asked if there were any new business, to which Marvene responded that her Board list is from 2019 and she could use an updated one. Lyndsay responded that she would pass along an updated Board list to everyone soon.

Lyndsay shared that the MCOA sent us 1500 cotton, reusable masks and offered them to Board members if they could use some.

Rosemary Cunningham adjourned the meeting at 9:28 am.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 16, 2021 at 8:30am.