

Notes from concurrent meeting with
Selectboard
Sept. 26, 2022
Town Offices
7:08 p.m.

The meeting was called to order a 7:08 p.m.

In attendance: Mary Glabach, Robbie Milner, Andrea Zimmerman, Linda Baker, Gilda Galvis, Kathy Fritz, Michèle Higgins from the COA. Others included: Bill Glabach, Kathy DiMatteo, Glenn Caffery, Michele Giarusso, John Higgins, Vanessa Russell, Ginger Robinson, Beth Kuzdeba, Martha Hopewell, Recorder reporter.

Michèle read a letter to the Selectboard - see attached - telling them that we feel that we have been relegated to second class status with the label "Interim."

Kathy DiMatteo was displeased with the tone of the letter. Glenn and Kathy both seemed to have trouble understanding the impact on us of that word and noted that they had, in fact, questioned the establishment of other committees. Michèle pointed out to them that they had not done that in their meetings because she attends their meetings and this topic had not come up and that, therefore, there was no way to know that they had questioned others. Kathy agreed that it had not come up in their meetings. No other committee, however, had "interim" appointments. We expressed concern that the word implied possible immediate dismissal. We were told that they had no intention of dissolving the COA and assured us that we were appointed for a full year and that they would take away the word "interim." There was, however, no vote to do so.

In response to why they had not acted on our list of staggered appointments, they said that they intended that for the next fiscal year, something we had not heard before. The main reason is that there is executive session information which will impact their decision. Andrea asked what the executive session was about, and Gilda said that this was about her. Glenn stated that they could not discuss this other than to say they there was information that would be presented in an executive session. Kathy said that they would not know when "until they knew."

Sue Howarth said that it would be a shame if the COA dissolved over this and strongly pointed out that if that happened, there would be nothing for Leyden's seniors. Robbie Milner said that it was an affront to what we do and places a black cloud over us.

Our portion of the meeting adjourned at 7:37, but we decided to discuss this further at our meeting next Tuesday, October 4.

Respectfully submitted,

Michèle Higgins, Chair/Secretary

attachment: letter to SB re: "interim" appointments, read at Selectboard meeting

The COA, a group of volunteers, is here this evening to ask how long you intend to keep us in second class status as interim appointments to the Leyden Council on Aging. You have given various reasons for not changing our status from "interim" to "regular" status which we have always had.

The first reason that you gave for appointing us as "interim" was that you wanted to learn whether there had ever been a Town Meeting vote to establish a Council on Aging despite the fact that the Council receives money from the State and despite the fact that you have not requested or wondered about this for any of the other Town committees. That vote was provided to you. Then you wondered where the minutes of that Town Meeting vote were to see what the vote count was. It is my understanding that that information has been provided to you.

Kathy, you came to our COA meeting on Aug. 2 and asked us to choose terms so that we could have staggered three year terms. We did that. You asked me to email you with that information. I did. At that meeting, you also said that there was enough evidence to appoint us a "regular" Council members. At a subsequent Selectboard meeting where the SB appointed other committees and when it was clear that you were going to ignore the COA, i reminded you of what you had told us at our Aug. 2 meeting. You mumbled something about looking into the staggered terms. It is now September 26, and we are still "interim" members. While you did fill our vacancy, you have appointed all other committees, but the COA is the only committee which you

have kept as “interim” members and the only committee whose establishment you have questioned.

Why are you singling this group of volunteers out? Why are you keeping us as second class committee members? We are here tonight as a committee to be immediately appointed for the terms already provided to you per your request or an explanation as to why this decision cannot be made tonight.