

NOTICE OF MEETING TOWN OF HEATH

**Council on Aging
JRMC, Rm 135
February 12, 2026 1:00-2:30 p.m.**

AGENDA

Call meeting to order

Review agenda

Review and approve minutes 1/15/26, 1/28/26

Follow up notes: 1/15: April date for Lynn Feldman and CORI check for Kathy Stocz (Lyra); Planning group chair (Sue); domain point details (all members).
1/28: nurse letter (Sue); patio proposal (Margaret)

SPC Report

Annual Report

Finance Committee request

Action Plan Domain 5-8 revisions

Other Business That Could Not Be Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance

Next meeting

Adjourn

NOTE: Any of the items of business listed above or other business that could not be anticipated at the time of posting may involve decisive action on the part of the Council on Aging.

The listing of matters is those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Posted on Tuesday, February 10 at 10:30 a.m. by Margaret H. Freeman

Heath Council on Aging 2025 Annual Report

Age and Dementia Friendly Community

Lyra Johnson-Fuller is completing the AARP's required six hourly online classes. We still need one more person to do so.

The Council continued to work throughout the year on preparing the Heath Action Plan for LifePath's eight domains. Goals and actions were identified for the first four domains:

Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings.

Domain 2- Transportation.

Domain 3-Housing.

Domain 4-Social Participation.

Plans were started for a board-wide emergency planning group to identify needs and ways to meet them. An idea was introduced to create an outdoor patio area in front of the senior room with tables for seating.

The Council expresses gratitude to Gene and Cindy Garland for donating a window air conditioner for the senior room, and to Pat McGahan for her work on the COA town website.

Finances

The Council continued to work on the handling of accounts, and a need for more fund raising was identified. The following grants were awarded:

Fred Wells Trust: \$1,000 for foot clinic.

Heath Cultural Council: \$280 for a beginner's painting workshop.

Renewal of two LifePath grants: \$1500 for the foot clinic; \$2,241 for the chef's senior meal wages.

The F26 Budget proposal due January 29 was completed as follows: Expenses: \$250; Operating Account: \$500; COA Stipends: \$1750; Foot Clinic: \$1500; Meals Revolving Fund: cap for \$10,000.

Activities

The Council received positive evaluations for the monthly senior meals. It was decided to hold a meal in December for the November/December holiday season. The red chairs originally purchased for the senior meals in the Community Hall were cleaned and moved to the municipal cafeteria. The monthly brownbag lunches continued in the senior room, and the open senior room every Saturday during library hours for intergenerational socializing and refreshments. The Council offered a walk-safe program in JRMC, and co-sponsored the annual winter solstice celebration with the Heath Public Library.

Further activities included"

a weekly taichiquan class and bi-monthly Needle/Arts group;

a well-attended spring natural history walk in the Cook State Forest and a fall hike in Rowe with Bill Lattrell;

egg decorating and silk painting with Sue Draxler and scrapbooking workshop with Eileen Lively supported by the Heath Cultural Council, with an additional beeswax workshop with Eileen Lively; a grief support group;

a veterans' informational meeting in September and celebration on Veterans Day with Heath representative Gene Garland.

By request, a weekly men's group was started on Fridays. In May, the Council hosted an ice-cream social for the Heath Library story-hour children and all ages. Regular articles appeared in the *Heath Herald*, monthly flyers circulated to inform residents of activities, and announcements sent to those on the Council's email list. At the end of the year, the Rowe Council on Aging reached out to Heath to suggest joint activities, and two members attended the Rowe meeting to confirm our agreement to pursue them.

Donations were gratefully received to support our activities.

And, with thanks to our Senior Program Coordinator, the Council won first prize for its Heath Fair display!

Sue Lively, chair; Margaret Freeman, secretary; Anne Emmet; Donna Hyttinen; Cathy Tallen
Lyra Johnson-Fuller, Senior Program Coordinator

Finance Committee request

The Finance Committee has fielded some calls from a concerned Heath senior citizen with questions about 1) how the tax rate is calculated, 2) why FinCom did not warn citizens it would be increasing, and 3) what we can do about it. As you know from your time in service on the Select Board, the Finance Committee has little control over the variables affecting the tax rate and making predictions with any specificity is risky. Two of our committee members have tried to explain the variables and the Finance Committee's role and responsibility, but the person does not seem appeased. This person is also highly agitated about the MLB and how it is operating and why the Finance Committee isn't providing better oversight.

I recommended this person get an audience with the Select Board to determine what action they could take to improve their situation and the other seniors they claim to represent. It seems to me this person wants someone else to champion their fight. This is not my fight, and I wouldn't have the bandwidth to lead the charge even if it were. However, I do care about Heath seniors and I do care about citizens being accurately informed. To that end, I was wondering if the Council on Aging would want to set up any informational meetings for their members where Ned and I would come and address the group on the role of the Finance Committee, how taxes are levied, how the tax rate is calculated, and answer any questions we can related to the operating costs of the town and the work of the MLB.

Dena Briggs
FY26 Heath Finance Committee Chair

Action Plan 1/26 Draft

Domain 1: Outdoor spaces and Buildings

Goal 1: Upgrade Heath Municipal Building ADA accessibility

Action 1: Seek grants to install automatic doors at the main entrance

Action 2: Repair curb in front of main entrance handicapped parking area

Step 1: Send written request to Select Board

Step 2: Assist, as practical, in seeking funding for this work

Domain 2: Transportation

Goal 1: Seek solutions for existing transportation challenges

Action 1: Update existing pamphlet for accuracy

Action 2: Identify ways to disseminate information to residents needing transportation assistance

Action 3: Survey other local communities to see how they have addressed this issue

Domain 3: Housing

Goal 1: Assist residents to age in place

Action 1: Gather information about different support programs to help seniors remain in their homes

Action 2: Format the information in an easy-to-read reference guide

Action 3: Distribute information to local seniors

Domain 4: Social Participation

Goal 1: Offer socializing activities that meet the needs of town seniors

Action 1: Identify needs and interests of current residents

Action 2: Create and post a schedule of planned activities for the coming year

Goal 2: Offer intergenerational activities through collaboration with other town entities

Action 1: Continue the collaboration with the Heath Free Public Library

Action 2: Reach out to other town groups such as Union Church, Historical Society, Agricultural Society, etc.

Goal 3: Explore the need for isolated seniors to receive regular contacts from a neighbor or Heath resident

Action 1: Contact town groups such as Fire Department, Board of Health, town nurse, to clarify what they already offer.

Action 2: Identify specific individuals currently in need

Action 3: Identify individuals interested in offering support

Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Goal 1 Offer intergenerational activities through collaboration with other town entities

Action 1: Continue the collaboration with the Heath Free Public Library

Action 2: Reach out to other town groups such as Union Church, Historical Society, Agricultural Society, etc., to clarify what they offer and ways we might work together

Goal 2: identify ways to offer isolated seniors access to social activities

Action 1: Continue to explore options to address transportation issues

Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Goal 1: Maximize opportunities for seniors to participate in town events

Action 1: Support town communications regarding town events

Action 2: Post volunteer needs on our website, and in written communications as appropriate.

Domain 7: Communication and Information

Goal 1: Assist to maximize outreach with Town communications

Action 1: Include postings of Town events in COA communications to the public

Action 2: Assure easy access to information by having pamphlets available in several locations, both paper and digital

Action3: Share information regarding reverse 911 contacts for town emergencies

Goal 2: Increase digital literacy.

Action 1: Create listing of resources for seniors to access for the assistance they need, i.e. local library

Domain 8: Health Services and County Support

Goal: Make health and wellness resources available to the town

Action 1: Develop list of health and wellness resources available to towns people

Action 2: Offer at least one health and wellness related event annually

Action 3: Support local clinics

Action 4 Support maintaining the town nurse position