

**COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
DIRECTOR'S REPORT
MARCH 2026**

SUBMITTED TO: Jill Goldsmith, Town Manager
SUBMITTED BY: Leah LaCross, Director of Community Services

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Pending an affirmative vote for warrant article #15 at the Annual Town Meeting in May, moving preparations have begun with the staff of both divisions of Community Services. Both the Director and Deputy Director of Community Services have been conducting meetings with various staff members of both divisions to integrate schedules, plan for tours and open houses for Center for Active Living (CFAL) participants at the Community Center.

On March 13th, the CFAL Building Working Group (BWG) met to discuss a formal *Communication Plan* that includes public forums on multiple dates where members of the Professional Project Team and the BWG inform the public about the proposed CFAL Renovation and Expansion Project.

The *Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee* had their first meeting on March 18th. The kick-off meeting allowed staff to meet members of the BSC Group, which is the organization facilitating the drafting of the plan.

The *Employee Engagement Committee* met on March 19th to discuss the success of the 2nd Annual Employee Art Show held at the CFAL and to begin planning spring and summer employee events.

On March 20th, I had the pleasure of speaking to the *Chatham Men's Club* and providing education about all of the services offered by the Community Services Department.

Danielle James, Program Aide in the Ryder's Cove Respite Program, celebrated her one-year anniversary with the Town on March 4th.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINICIAN / CLINICAL SERVICES:

In the month of March, the Behavioral Health Clinician had a total of 148 duplicated contacts and 25 unduplicated contacts. This included client consultations with outside and inside providers, phone outreach, individual meetings, police follow-up contacts, and incoming client calls.

The Clinician also continued to participate in monthly crisis intervention team meetings with the towns of Orleans and Dennis, present to the Chatham Police Department's Citizens Academy, the Library Staff, and the Chatham's Men's Group, and hold open office hours at the

Community Center. To stay on top of current co-response trends, the clinician also participated in Section 12 Training, as well as monthly training with the Massachusetts Co Response Clinician Team.

COA DIVISION:

DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT:

Incoming call volume this month remained within expected ranges, with normal fluctuations throughout the month. The reasons for calls were consistent with established patterns, primarily involving routine inquiries and standard service needs. No notable increases or decreases in specific call categories were identified, indicating stable community demand and engagement.

Total number of calls in March: **592**

Transportation: ~182

CFAL Programs: ~154

SHINE: ~38

Outreach Resources: ~71

Adult Supportive Day Program: ~12

Community Events: ~0

CFAL Renovation: ~2

Administrative/ Miscellaneous: ~51

AARP: ~82

OUTREACH:

In the month of March, the Outreach Coordinator had 329 separate interactions with 146 individuals. This includes 146 phone interactions and 97 office visits. *Healthy Meals in Motion* served 34 households and added one new family this month. March also saw a significant increase in supportive services referrals, and assistance with financial programs like EAEDC, SNAP and Social Security.

TRANSPORTATION:

In March, as winter conditions eased and snow gave way to rain, the Center for Active Living's (CFAL) Transportation Program resumed full operations, resulting in a notable increase in service usage. We provided 50 more round-trip rides compared to the November 2025 – February 2026 monthly average, with growth observed across nearly all service categories, including an additional 20 round-trip medical rides. Our grocery shopping trips to Stop & Shop also averaged nine participants per outing. Transportation was coordinated for our Chatham Better Together program, bringing participants to the Wingbeats Recording Studio in Brewster. As a final note, in select cases, drivers were able to accommodate same-day pharmacy stops following medical appointments, depending on scheduling availability; when this was not feasible, additional transportation was arranged through the CFAL.

	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
CFAL Programs:	9	12	24
Grocery Access:			
Stop and Shop Trip	26	30	35
Chatham Village Market Deliveries	13	10	13
Healthy Meals in Motion	6	6	6
Medical Appointments:	38	39	59
Orlean Supportive Day:	21 (3 Participants)	15 (3 Participants)	24 (3 Participants)
Personal Errands:	17	7	14
Prescription Deliveries:	6	3	9
Ryders Cove Respite :	22 (2 Participants)	17 (3 Participants)	19 (3 Participants)

Please note: All rides listed above are round-trip rides (to and from the scheduled destination), except for Grocery Access, Healthy Meals in Motion, and Prescription Deliveries.

PROGRAMMING:

March was another busy month at the Center for Active Living (CFAL). We hosted 85 programs for members aged 60 and older, in addition to offering 30 volunteer opportunities. Of this month's programming, 42% were social and/or recreational, 38% focused on health and wellness, and 18% were educational in nature.

Our volunteers donated 117 hours of service, and our student intern contributed an additional 52 hours, bringing the total to 169 hours of service. Using the current estimated national value of volunteer time (approximately \$33.49 per hour), this represents a total in-kind contribution of approximately \$5,660.

We served 358 unduplicated participants in March, with an average daily attendance of 41 members of the community-

representing a 5% increase from the previous month. This increase is typical of this time of year as many residents are returning from winter relocations. Among our most well-attended programs were the annual *"Corned Beef and Cabbage Luncheon"* celebrating St. Patrick's Day, our collaborative *"Legacy Podcasting"* program with Cape Media Center, and *"Golden Oldies"*, our classic movie series, which was successfully expanded to a weekly offering during the winter months.



Chatham Better Together Participants enjoy lunch at Laurino's Tavern

RYDER'S COVE RESPITE PROGRAM:

The program continued to run smoothly throughout March, supporting seven participants, with a new application received. Pending a successful transition, a start date is anticipated shortly thereafter. Early impressions suggest a positive and comfortable fit within the group.

The Respite Day program was awarded an *\$800 Community Engagement Grant* from the *Women's Club of Chatham* to support arts programming. This grant will fund approximately three months of art activities. Creative art remains a cornerstone of the program, offering opportunities for self-expression while supporting memory recall, fine motor skills, and emotional well-being.

Furthering our wellness programming, we are pleased to introduce a new initiative designed for participants experiencing cognitive decline and early-stage dementia. Lauren, a certified yoga and Reiki practitioner, will bring a gentle, compassionate, and highly personalized approach to wellness. We anticipate that she will begin twice-monthly sessions in April, where she will focus on mindful movement, mobility, and guided relaxation, all thoughtfully adapted to ensure comfort, accessibility, and meaningful participation for every individual.

Attendance remained high at 96%, reflecting consistent participation and the trust families place in our program.



Dr. Carl

The program was also honored to celebrate one participant's 100th birthday this month—a truly meaningful and memorable occasion for our community.



Birthday Wishes for our Town's newest Centenarian!

COUNCIL ON AGING BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

The Council on Aging Board of Directors met on March 16th. FY 27 Goals and Objectives were finalized and approved, and the Committee discussed the meeting schedule for the upcoming year. Alexis Weglarz, Department Coordinator for the CFAL was asked to speak about the transportation services offered, and she discussed the weekly shopping trips available to residents. The Chair gave an update on the CFAL Building Working Group, including the Chatham CFAL Draft Master Plan Schedule and the draft CFAL Proposed Renovation Project Communication Plan.

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE:

The Human Services Committee held a very brief meeting on March 9th to discuss the upcoming year's meeting schedule.

RECREATION AND BEACHES DIVISION:

PARK Program

The PARK Afterschool Program is for students in grades 3-7 to have a safe, fun, and engaging afterschool experience. It is also the intent of the program to foster a sense of community and to forge new and lasting friendships among the students attending the program.

	December	January	February	March
Monthly Attendance	615	710	328	743
Money Collected	\$6,800	\$9,010	\$4,305	\$4159
Average Daily Attendance	41	36	33	34

March PARK Special Events: PARK egg hunt, PARK candy hunt, PARK bunny, chick and duck hunt

Programming

Adults:

Winter Night Pickleball- 192 Participants, Winter Indoor Pickleball Mon-Fri- 322 Participants, Winter Adult Basketball- 25 participants, Pickleball Lessons- 12 participants, Yoga with Jackie!-

22 Participants, Winter Floor Hockey- 30 Participants, Winter Badminton- 8 participants, Fun and Functional Fitness- 23 participants, Fly Casting- 20 participants

Youth

March Family Karate-10 participants, March Family Tai Chi-4 Participants, Grades 3-4 Boys Basketball- 1 team (14 participants), Grades 5-6 Boys Basketball- 1 team (10 participants), Grades 1-2 Basketball – 4 teams 21 participants, Kindergarten Basketball- 5 participants, Pre-School Basketball- 9 participants,

Employee Development/Enrichment/Other

On Thursday March 12th, Sue Frederick (Recreation Coordinator) and Sharon Stark (Recreation Supervisor) attended the Cape Cod Tech job fair. The job fair is held during the students' lunch period for the entire school.

On Tuesday March 31st, Aimee Howell (Community Services Deputy Director) attended the lower cape MRPA sports meeting in Eastham. A wrap up of the lower cape's basketball league was discussed at the meeting along with the upcoming Lower Cape softball season.

Community Center Use

Aerobics Room – 63 reservations

Fun & Functional fitness, Chatham Tai Chi, Lite Fitness with Susan Hunter, Full body Fitness with Rachel, CFAL Chair Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Community Mahjong, Restorative Yoga, CFAL Strong at Heart, Friday Night Family Karate, Friday Night Family Tai Chi, Heisig Belly Dance.

Club Room – 35 Reservations

AARP Tax Aide, Behavioral Health Innovators, Women's Club Stitchers, Chatham Democratic Town Committee, Men's weekly discussion group, Bolus card games, Women's Club Board Meeting, Public Ceremonies Committee, Friends of Chatham Waterways, What Now/Mary Byrne, Chatham Chamber of Commerce, Chatham Cemetery Committee, First Night Chatham

Conference Room – 17 Reservations

Chatham/Harwich Fiber Arts, Chatham Republican Town Committee, Chatham Garden Club Board meeting, Friends of Trees, Chatham Orpheum Theatre, Chatham Men's Club, Ecumenical Council for the Homeless, Chatham Independence Day Parade Committee, Chatham Golf Advisory Committee, Chatham Parks & Recreation Commission, Chatham Bikeways Committee, Chatham Platform Tennis.

Gymnasium – 90 Reservations

Mo/We/Fr pickleball 10-12, Adult pick-up Badminton, Adult pick-up basketball, CFAL indoor walking group, Tu/Th pickleball 8-10, Tu/Th pickleball 10-12, Tues night pickleball 7-9, Rec Basketball games, Advanced pickleball lessons, We/Fr pickleball 8-10, Thurs. Night pickleball 5:30-7, adult Floor Hockey, Fly Casting, Sat. night pickleball 6-8, Grades 5 & 6 basketball practice, open gym.

Large Meeting Room – 18 Reservations

Collins Fund raiser, Friends and Gardeners Movie Day, Chatham Men’s Club, USCG Flotilla training, A Celtic Celebration Concert, Chatham Garden Club, Chatham Conservation Foundation, Chatham Historical Society, Chatham/Harwich Hospital Auxiliary, Friends of Pleasant Bay.

Serving Room – 22 Reservations

Mahjong private group, Chatham Drama Guild, Bogardus meeting, Collins Fundraiser, Men’s Club of Chatham, Community Mahjong, Women’s Club of Chatham, Chatham Garden Club, Meditation Circle, Bolus card games, Men’s Club discussion group, Chatham/Harwich Hospital Auxiliary.

Fitness Room Access Scans

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Total
January	43	58	141	121	128	187	135	813
February	39	58	92	104	119	108	106	626
March	68	147	149	99	125	150	107	845

Active Fitness Room Memberships: Family Members- 508 Individual Members- 183

Parks & Recreation Commission

The Parks & Recreation Commission met Monday March 23rd, and discussed the following topics: facility use requests, bench donations, Open Space and Recreation Plan updates, South Chatham playground condition, Middle School tennis courts conditions, beach staff updates, and CFAL project update.

Golf Advisory Committee

The Golf Committee met on Thursday March 19th and discussed the following topics: chain link fence repairs, irrigation software purchase, tree damage/concerns around the course, sand trap improvement list, invasive species condition update.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah LaCross

Leah LaCross, MPA
Director of Community Services