

Ashley Speliotis

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: [REDACTED]
To: Ashley Speliotis
Subject: Statement of Interest - Council on Aging

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Hi Ashley (if I may),

I'm writing to express my interest in the Council on Aging position. I'd be grateful for the chance to serve this wonderful community, and hope that my skills can be of service to you and the committee.

About me: I'm an immigrant to the US - I've lived all over the world and have been lucky enough to have made Somerville my home. In all the places I've been, I've never lived in a community as warm and welcoming as this one and I'm so grateful for it. I live on Summer street with my husband and daughter Zamira, who is nearly one.

Skills/ Experience: In my professional capacity, I work as a science diplomat for the British Consulate. I have extensive experience overseeing large projects with significant budgets etc, and working with diverse communities toward common goals. I work closely with city, state and national governments, so I have some minor exposure to the public context in which the committee operates. I am also honoured to serve on the Board of Trustees for a large international aid organisation - our fundraising campaign has just raised over \$3.5 million in aid funding for Ukraine. (The organisation's primary platform includes serving older communities, and this has been eye-opening for me.) Being a trustee has been a great learning curve and very rewarding, and has taught me an enormous amount which I hope might be helpful to the committee.

Some other background: Clearly, I'm not one of the people the committee aims to serve, not being over 60 myself (I'm 37). But I feel very strongly that working toward a community that actively involves seniors in everything we do is to the betterment of us all. First and foremost, we would be remiss not to be consciously trying to tap into the energy, skills, experience and insight of this sector. These folks are a huge resource for Somerville. I'm grateful for all they already do, like the amazing events (I'm going to the poet laureate one!) and I would love the opportunity to learn more from them. Secondly, where services are concerned, working to ensure that resources are available is paramount to a functioning community. Someone described it to me as being a community that has empathy, not for the 'other,' but for our future selves. We all need to see ourselves as actually part of the senior community, not separate from it.

Ashley, I'd be honoured to help if I can be of service. I hope you have plenty of applicants, though! And if there are other ways I can help/get involved, I'd be glad to do that too.

All my best and have a great week!

Ronit