

**SALEM COUNCIL ON AGING
Minutes of Regular Meeting**

Date and Time: May 18, 2022 at 5:17 P.M.

Meeting Location: Via Zoom

Members Present: Lynda Coffill (LC, Chair), John Russell (JR, Vice-Chair), Kristin Macek (KM), Patricia Small (PS), Abigail Butt (AB)

Also Present: Teresa Arnold (TA, Director of the COA)

Absent: George Barbuzzi (GB)
Leville McClain (City Council Liaison)

Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Meeting Called to Order

LC called the meeting to order at 5:17 P.M.

LC stated that pursuant to Governor Baker's directive on 3/12/20 which supported certain provisions of Chapter 30A, Section 20, there are strict limitations regarding gatherings, so this meeting is being conducted via Zoom. The public and persons who would like to listen may do so by dialing in. All votes taken shall be by roll call.

Roll call was then taken.

A motion was made by JR to approve the April 2022 Minutes, seconded by PS, roll call was taken, and passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Subsidized Sr. Housing Update:

LC stated that there were a couple of things to go over and bring to the Board's attention. She stated that Lee Fort Terrace was down to 50 units. PS asked if that was less. LC said there are 50 units now. A land lease with the City for 99 years will be signed as well as a contract for affordable housing for the same length of time. There are 65 people project-based vouchers being held by the Salem Housing Authority and they have preference. A

tenant selection plan will be developed and maintained by Beacon Properties. No one will be left homeless. Beacon Properties, Salem Housing Authority and a third party will see that all people find housing. The formula now is extremely low, low, and moderate income. LC stated that we needed to know the formula for low and area median income.

PS said hopefully moderate income is 60% of AMI or less.

LC advised there will be 66 one-bedroom units, 34 two-bedroom units and 24 three-bedroom units. She said there was a lot of neighborhood opposition and that traffic is a concern.

KM said the traffic study was done in February. LC advised it had been updated. KM said that is not including summer traffic.

LC advised the permitting process will continue over the next year, construction in August 2023 and opens in the winter of 2025. She advised that they are still saying it is 100% affordable.

JR asked KM if she had received a flier that was circulating. She said she had and that it was a scare tactic stating five stores not two-three as proposed. She said it definitely outsizes anything in the area. She stated that the traffic study may fall in line with construction and building on Webb and Derby Streets. She further stated that there is a meeting on May 25th concerning a wind farm.

LC said Councilor Jeff Cohen and Councilor Andy Varela were very much in favor. She said the most opposition was from the Willows.

KM said she was concerned that Beacon Properties will control the leasing process and it will be privatized. LC said Beacon Properties is a for profit corporation. She said originally 250 were units proposed, now 123 units and it was supposed to be mixed-generational. 50 units will be elderly and handicapped. LC said she wants to know what the formula is.

PS said they keep saying they need more one-bedroom units, but the elderly and people living with disabilities may need two bedrooms for caregivers. AB said she agreed about the two-bedroom units and stated, "single bedroom" is code for "no families" and easier to get approved.

LC said Scott Grover was the attorney and he presented a schematic of the number of waivers they are asking for and wanted to know if the Planning Board was questioning any of those. She said people are not happy in the neighborhood and were not giving up.

JR said it was a good thing that LC was on the Salem for All Ages CLC Engagement Committee to ensure COA Board authority. There were questions about the fitness center. They want seniors as safe as can be and trained in CPR. TA said the fitness room is monitored by volunteers.

There was talk about the newsletter survey and it was noted that the results were overwhelmingly positive.

TA said on the committee were three retirees from Salem State, two CLC staff; Kathy McCarthy and TA, the City library director, Dominick Pangallo from the Mayor's office, LC and Fred Norton. TA said some of the folks were key influencers in the community. She further stated that she has a good working relationship with the committee and that she is educating them as to what we have done in the past and how we continue to add new programs to attract new participants.

PS said one of the ways to incorporate new programs, suggestions and ideas was to form a quality improvement committee.

New Business:

PS asked if it was figured out how to do close captions on movies shown at the COA. TA said they were looking into this.

LC advised the Board that she had been appointed for another three years.

LC asked the Board's permission to reach out to Beacon Properties.

A motion was made, and all unanimously agreed to have LC reach out to Beacon Properties.

Friends Update - JR said they talked about the Lee Fort Terrace project. He said they had to remind the Friends Board that as a group, the Friends did not support or not support the project, but that they are the fundraising arm of the COA.

The Annual Appeal went out and it is up to \$15,000.00. JR said the emailing and printing was expensive. Some time in late summer they will be putting together a Facebook fundraiser. AB asked if the Friends board had a Paypal account. JR said no. AB suggested Paypal and to allow a QR code to be put in the newsletter and on the website to make donations. AB further asked if the Friends bought an ad in the newsletter. TA advised no.

JR stated that the Fathers' Day barbeque will be on June 16th and that there would be a Heritage Days barbeque. Both would be at the CLC. It was suggested to charge \$5.00 to make sure people show up.

JR stated that they were trying to get new cushions in the Great Room which would need to be cleanable and that they were looking at pricing to get them reupholstered.

JR said that Diane Ayers would be leaving the Friends board and that they will struggle to find good quality members.

He stated that the Luau would be on July 14th at the pavilion at Winter Island. He said they were looking to serve Chinese finger foods. He said someone would be playing the ukulele and maybe someone would be giving hula lessons. Island drinks would be served. They were estimating 100 people at \$50.00 per person. JR said they would be sending out a “Save the Date” document.

LC advised that Eluid Alcalá was in front of the City Council for membership. AB said in relation to this, she called Susan Carp, who lives locally and works for the Massachusetts Councils on Aging for advice and leads on potential board members. Susan said we were on the right track but felt strongly that we make sure that we are not passive about Board recruitment and that everybody is working together. AB said she then called Mr. Alcalá who is very involved in the community and the aging workforce for leads on potential board members. He himself stated an interest and applied.

Director’s Report:

Social Services:

Our Bridgewater State student intern, Dalton Fitzgerald, finished Friday, May 6th. She was a great asset to the department. During the first semester, Dalton shadowed and learned about some specific topics. During the second semester, she was able to see her own clients and assisted with Charlie Cards, SNAP, Fuel Assistance, the Lifeline free cell phone program and RMV issues. She also assisted with our Behavioral Health surveys and promoted the File of Life.

We have selected a Salem State student for the next internship starting in September.

In April, 288 seniors were serviced 899 times for many various issues. This past heating season, Social Services assisted 74 seniors 165 times with their fuel assistance application, appeals, problems, billing issues, etc.

Nutrition:

We are excited to be hosting “Cooking with Tina & Tessie” again this Wednesday @ 10:15 am in the Café where they will be demonstrating the preparation of Baklava. Last month for the first demonstration, we had 22 people attend. The sisters are very entertaining and had a lively interactive Q & A with the participants. They will return on June 15th.

Today we had our first “Live Music Friday” as Felipe Simbajon serenaded our guests singing and playing his guitar in the Great Room from 10:30 am until lunch time. He is a new volunteer in our program.

We continue to be challenged by a 25% “no-show” and are thinking of ways to reduce this and are in conversations with Annie O’Shea as Transportation shares some of this.

Programs/Activities:

Cinco de Mayo was a great hit. The Salem Rotary Club sponsored this event. Our van drivers worked late so that we could provide transportation to those who needed it.

We celebrated Mother's Day on the 6th. It was a time to celebrate all mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters and special others.

Senator Joan Lovely lead the monthly Wellness Walk on the Common on May 11th.

On Tuesday, May 24th, local audiologists, Dr. Joan McCormack and Dr. Taylor Chabot from Atlantic Hearing Care and North Shore Hearing Foundation will be here for a free hearing screening.

We are working with Beeyond Travel to host a virtual presentation on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem on Wednesday, May 25th.

Transportation:

Transportation saw a slight dip in ridership in April. Transportation continues to be vigilant in protecting seniors and drivers while on the van. Masks are strongly recommended.

We have posted a new driver position through the HR Department due to changes in staffing. Arthur Jalbert will be on a 6-month hiatus, and George Lugo is also on an extended leave. Transportation also provides services for a scholarship program run by Sail Salem to teach Salem children to sail and swim.

Due to lack of interest, our weekly trips to the mall and Trader Joe's have been reduced to once a month.

Memory Cafés/Health and Wellness:

Memory Cafés for the next few months will be themed under the topic of Stress Management starting with a May 26th program with the Back Yard Growers of Gloucester. Participants will leave with a grow bag and seedlings to encourage them to connect more with nature and relax. The Salem CLC Raised Bed Garden project will kick off the same day, as volunteers and participants of the Memory Café work together to plant seedlings for the season.

Kelley Annese, who spearheads the Memory Café has also begun creating a special Wellness & Stress Management website specifically for folks with memory loss. This website will include free videos and resources for folks with memory loss and their caregivers. We are hosting a caregiver support group the second Thursday of the month at 5:30 pm and planning a caregiver retreat for late summer or early fall.

The latest video of *Cooking with Kerry* is almost complete and will be featured on Facebook, as well as on the upcoming website. This month, Kerry Murphy from the Health Department speaks about the importance of hydration for health and wellness.

Kitchen:

We have learned that we will be awarded ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) funds for enhancement of our kitchen to address healthier options, food choices and ensure food security for seniors and others. Terry will meet with Trish and appropriate building officials from the city and keep the Board apprised of progress

Collaboration with Salem Food Pantry:

We are in talks with Robyn Burns from the Food Pantry to be a host site on Tuesday mornings, once a month, starting June 7th.

Reframing Aging Event June 3rd:

AgeSpan will present *Reframing Aging* at the CLC on Friday, June 3rd at 8:30 am.

CLC Engagement Committee:

This committee meets monthly as a subcommittee of Salem for All Ages. The goal of this group is to make more people aware of CLC/COA offerings. Lynda Coffill, Kathy McCarthy, and Teresa Arnold are part of this committee.

There being no further business:

A motion to adjourn was made by JR, AB seconded, roll call was taken and passed unanimously.

Next Board Meeting: June 15, 2022, via Zoom.

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk