

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

**Date and Time:** April 15, 2020 at 5:17 P.M.

**Meeting Location:** Via Zoom

**Members Present:** Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), John Russell (JR), Julie Carver (JC), Donna Clifford (DC), Abigail Butt, (AB), Alice Williams (AW), George Barbuzzi (GB) and Kristin Macek (KM)

**Members Absent:** Elaine Heredeen (EH)

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

**Clerk:** Kathleen Fitzgerald

**Meeting Called to Order**

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

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.

LC then welcomes new Board Member, Kristin Macek.

KM stated that she received a letter dated 3/20/20 advising her of her appointment and stated she needed to go before the Clerk to be sworn in. She said she would reach out to see if she can be sworn in remotely. LC advised that until she is sworn in, she could not vote as a Board Member.

LC asked KM to tell the Board a little about herself. KM advised that she is currently working at Addison Gilbert Hospital. Her team is staffed by social workers, pharmacy and recovery workers who try to get people support services. She is now working remotely and prior to this, worked for Senior Care Options and before that with PACE. Her career in social work has been for 15 years. She said she was thrilled to be a Board Member.

Motion made by JR to approve the February Minutes, seconded by AB. There were no oppositions and no abstentions and passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

Community Partnership Act. Proposal extended through April 29<sup>th</sup>. LC advised that there is now collaboration between the COA, Salem Housing Authority and the Planning Department for the purpose of providing grant funding for people who are facing eviction. She said that these are federal funds so we cannot just earmark them for the elderly. The proposal was amended to include more money for those people evicted after the Covid-19 quarantine is over. Looking for \$75,000.00 with a \$360.00 per month cap. There are 17 families involved.

A vote is needed to amend the application to include Covid-19.

AB moved to approve, seconded by AW and passed unanimously.

**Friends Update:** JR stated that they would not be having meetings via Zoom but by email. He stated they were going to have a tough time coming up with more needed funds.

Easter Dinner was not held by the Moose this year, but Brothers Taverna put meals together and \$880.00 was approved by the Friends for 70 meals.

There will not be a pasta dinner this year so that would account for a loss of \$5,000.00-\$6,000.00 and because of that loss, JR stated the Friends would have to do some make-up fundraising. He stated that they would wait and see if the pasta dinner could be done at a later date at the COA.

JR advised that the Friends annual appeal usually nets about \$10,000.00-\$11,000.00 and the Friends realize about \$7,000.00-\$8,000.00 after expenses. He said it was important to reach out now because people are willing to give right now. He said they were expecting a lot more need in the future, so they need to stay on top of it.

LC asked about another comedy night. JR said he hoped to run it again possibly in September. Comedy Night this past year raised about \$6,000.00 which was pure profit.

AB asked if the annual appeal was sent to businesses. JR said they tried that in the past and it was not successful.

AB advised that Waters & Brown gives a lot of money. She said that another thing happening is that area Friends of the Council on Aging have started working together because everyone is different and maybe, by reaching out we could learn some lessons. TA stated that there has been a lot more sharing and that she learned that Peabody does very well with fundraising.

TA stated that she would like to carve out time in her schedule so she could be more external. She advised that in previous positions, she had spoken with Kiwanis and Rotary as they are influencers in the community and can open up some doors. JR said when you do speak to them you have 10 minutes, so you have to get your message out quickly.

AB said she is going through Serve Safe training and that if the Friends needed to utilize her training skills for something like the pasta dinner, she was willing to help.

TA asked AB if her community was paying for her to go through the training because there is a cost. JR said he would pay his own way. DC advised she was also Serve Safe trained.

JR advised that it would cost \$1,200.00 for a new sink which has been approved.

LC asked that status of a generator. JR advised that cost would be about \$30,000.00-\$35,000.00 and they were looking at pricing. He said we should talk with the City about sharing the cost with the Friends.

### **Director's Report:**

**Transportation** – There is a hold on hiring a dispatcher due to Covid-19 and reduction in service. TA will be attending a virtual meeting on May 5<sup>th</sup> hosted by MASS DOT to learn about applying for a new van. She advised that the older drivers have not been working since March 16<sup>th</sup> due to Covid-19. TA further stated that as of April 8<sup>th</sup>, transportation to grocery stores was stopped, but rides to necessary medical appointments were still happening

**Social Services** – As of March 18<sup>th</sup>:

- 67 durable medical pieces have been taken from our “lending closet”
- 57 fuel applications
- 12 SNAP applications
- 29 senior housing applications
- 45 MassHealth applications/recertifications
- 21 RMV Near Me (assistance with applying online for various RMV issues)

Greater Boston Food Bank was held on April 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> headed by Joe Ericksberg, Social Services, staff and community volunteers. Food was distributed to 82 individuals in lieu of people coming into the CLC. The social work team worked to transition our congregate meal participants to Meals on Wheels and all were transitioned by Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

The social work team, Kathy McCarthy and TA are working on pairing volunteer shoppers with seniors as we are encouraging them to stay at home. We are working closely with Salem Together as requests come in.

The COA team has furnished the Mayor's office with a breakdown by age of those 65+ so that wellness check-in calls could be made by Salem Together volunteers. The COA Social Workers are calling those known to us who are most vulnerable.

TA advised she was working the Kerry Murphy from the Health Department and Kelly Annese from Jewish Friend and Children Services to recruit volunteers to deliver packaged meals made by ROOT to seniors in housing who opted to receive a few meals a week.

**Nutrition:** Congregate meals have not been served since March 13<sup>th</sup>. All who are food insecure were transitioned to Meals on Wheels.

Dan Cote', the Nutrition staff person, is not presently working due to closure of the CLC.

**Activities/Programs:**

LC asked if there were any exercise classes on Facebook. TA said yes and the staff are in the process of adding more. We are working with Patrick Kennedy from SATV to air some of our classes as well.

LC asked if there was any other business and the consensus was no.

LC said she hoped everyone stayed well and in touch with friends and that everyone got strength from friends.

Next Board Meeting: May 20th, 2020 in person or via Zoom

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

The meeting adjourned at 5:56 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk