

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

Date and Time: December 19, 2018 at 5:18 P.M.

Meeting Location: Great Room, 401 Bridge Street

Members Present: Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), Julie Carver (JC, Secretary), Elaine Heredeem (EH, Vice Chair), Alice Williams (AW), Abigail Butt (AB), George Barbuzzi (GB), John Russell (JR)

Members Absent: Alison Thibodeau (AT)

Also Present: Teresa Arnold, (TA, Director of the COA), Fred Norton (FN, Transportation Coordinator)

Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Meeting Called to Order

LC calls the meeting to order at 5:18 P.M.

Motion made by EH to approve the November Minutes, seconded by JC and passes unanimously.

Old Business:

Alison Thibodeau –LC advised that she wrote to Mayor Driscoll and asked her to remove AT as a Board Member but has not yet heard back from her. As a follow-up, AW has a friend who is interested who is Hispanic and she has submitted an application for approval. LC advised that she will follow-up with the Mayor.

My Senior Center – TA advised that AB had mentioned buying a table for use at sign in. TA spoke with Rosanna Donahue who thought we did not need a tablet because we have scanners. The other thing brought up was the congestion in the area where My Senior Center presently is. It is contemplated moving it upstairs as people are getting used to it and many of the programs are upstairs. AB stated that we really need 2-3 My Senior Centers which could be on a movable cart and relocated as needed and advised that numbers are money. With increased numbers AB advised that we could go to bat showing there is a need. TA asked if the price doubled for another screen. AB said no. TA then asked if she had any idea on price and AB advised she did not know. GB asked about the scanners and FN advised they were about the size of a car charger and great for checking people in at off-site events, etc. TA stated that tomorrow she was going to look

at the numbers and look at the budget and see if we could get one more screen. JR advised that The Friends were willing to help any way they could.

New Business: JR and LC met on December 11, 2018 with Carol McGowan and John Boris to begin a dialogue regarding senior housing. LC advised it was a great meeting and there is a real willingness to work together which includes reminding the Mayor about Lee Ft. Terrace which is one floor with 50 units and could be expanded into two spaces using the adjacent property owned by the City or creating a second floor. This would mean displacement of people during this expansion.

LC followed up on AB's suggestion and pursued with Jane Guy the possibility for CPA funds to do rental assistance. Immediately she said "not eligible". LC sent materials and will follow up again. The Salem Housing Authority will administer if funds become available. Another issue brought up was the fact that elderly people are getting evicted because multi-family houses are being sold for a lot of money and the new owners need to raise rents to pay mortgages. This led to a discussion to see if there is some way to work to get an ordinance where when people buy multi-family houses and there are elderly residents, there could be a grace period so other arrangements could be made.

AB advised that small landlords wouldn't be able to buy multi-family houses because if there was an extended grace period, the new owners would not be able to pay the mortgage.

LC advised that they would meet again with the SHA in January to develop a Five-Year Plan. Amanda Chiancola from the Planning Department would be there and a member of the CDC.

GB asked if there were any stats showing how many buildings are being sold and housing lost by seniors. No one knew the answer to this.

Friends Update -- JR advised that the annual appeal letter was coming out. This year it would be going to the entire senior population in the City. JR stated that there is a need to go to the younger people in the City for money for the seniors and looking for the best way to reach out to the public. This is something they are working on, but having trouble finding the right way to do this. AB stated that we need to be sure that we are not sending duplicates out to seniors. JR advised that The Friends were looking into the possibility of bringing someone on board to write grants. TA advised that Robin Cabral of Development Solutions is willing to give The Friends a pro bono consultation on fundraising.

LC stated that she is seeing a lot of seniors at the exercise classes and suggested having a poster placed in the exercise room which asks "have you made your contribution to The Friends". AB advised that the COA is not allowed to solicit for donations. LC suggested speaking to Beth Renard about this. JR said a meeting with Beth is a good idea to explain fundraising, etc. to her and to see if we could come to some sort of agreement.

JR also spoke about reaching out to local politicians and using their network to reach out to their people.

Director's Report:

Remembrance Ceremony – This was a huge success and people enjoyed the ceremony.

Memory Café – The second Memory Café was held on December 7th at East Pt. Adult Day Health. Patrick Maher used the Timeslips story telling method which is very successful in engaging people, and a staff member translated in Spanish since we are the only Spanish speaking café in the area. The Memory Café is held monthly. The next one will be on January 10th at noon.

Salem for All Ages – We will host the North Shore Physicians Group medical staff as speakers on various topics such as fall prevention, diabetes education, physician services, and behavioral health. These talks are geared to the entire community and not just seniors. The first discussion will be on diabetes education and will be held on January 15th.

Alzheimer's Association -- Met with the Regional Manager and we will be looking to host educational meetings for the community regarding Alzheimer's.

North Shore Elder Services – We hosted the annual meeting on November 28th. Francisco Urena, Secretary of Veterans' Affairs was the guest speaker. Approximately 100 people attended.

Social Services – Our social workers serviced 343 seniors 60+ and 7 under 60 during open enrollment or Medicare. Two Shine volunteers serviced 48 seniors. Forty-two seniors 60+ were assisted concerning fuel assistance, and 3 under 60 disable people were serviced.

Goal for 2019 – A kiosk has been ordered to put resources for seniors outside the social services offices.

Transportation – Fred Norton, Transportation Coordinator spoke. He advised that four years ago we provided 12,000 rides, last year 18,500 rides and this year seeing a lot more seniors requesting rides. He advised that a full-time driver will be needed next fiscal year and we will also need a part time dispatcher. He advised that we average about 1,530 rides a month. He said that the program has become very popular and a lot of seniors are taking advantage of it.

AB asked Fred what he needed the Board to do and he requested advocating for a full-time driver and part-time dispatcher and TA stated that transportation needs to be a priority. LC said that data is needed before going to the Mayor and City Council and Fred advised he would put this together.

Next Board Meeting: January 16, 2019.

A motion to adjourn is made by JR, seconded by AB, and passes unanimously.

The meeting adjourns at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk