

Salem Council on Aging
Minutes
Regular Meeting
Salem Council on Aging
Wednesday, November 16th, 2016 6:00 p.m.

The Regular Meeting of the Salem Council on Aging held Wednesday, November 16th, 2016, 6:14 p.m., at the Senior Center, 5 Broad Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

Roll Call

Board of Directors Present: Lynda Coffill (LCf, Chairperson), Elaine Heredeen (EH, Vice Chair), John Russell, (JR), Alice Williams (AW, Treasurer), Anthony “Tony” Schettino (TS), Abigail Butt, (AB).

Absent: Meredith McDonald, (MM), Director of the COA, Donna Clifford (DC), Julie Carver (JC, Secretary), Alison Thibodeau (AT), Trisha O’Brien (TO) Executive Director of Parks, Recreation, & Community Services, Elaine Milo (EM, City Councilor advocate to the COA), Roseanna Donahue(RD).

Also Present: Sharon Kearney, (SK, Secretary of Minutes).

I. Call to Order

Open the regular meeting Wednesday, November 16th, 2016 6:00 p.m.

II. Approval of October, 2016 Regular Meeting minutes

LCf: The October minutes, are there any questions, concerns additions or deletions on the first two pages?

LCf: None, on page 3, first paragraph second to last sentence. So, if there could be a way to figure out by partnering with group. Put the before group. Meredith’s comments two thirds the way down talking about the age friendly.

AB: Yes, there should be a period after it’s not a needs assessment. The city hired the graduate school of gerontology which is not what it is. I’m looking at the minutes that were hand out here.

LCf: Ok, I’m looking at the original minutes sent. And I could not make out what was being said in them.

LCf: Any other corrections, additions, deletions? Hearing none. Motion to accept the October minutes as written.

JR: Motion to accept the October minutes as written.

EM: Second the motion.

Vote unanimously approved.

Question: We don’t have the minutes from the Annual Meeting?

Answer: Not until the next annual meeting.

III: Report from the Chairperson – Lynda Coffill.

1. Age Friendly Initiative Draft Report Review

LCf: We missed the comment period. That being said, I assume the report has been accepted as written. Two things: 1) I received a letter today they are putting together a leadership council to oversee the working groups and I have been asked to sit on that and I will.

Question: When was the deadline? Was it recent?

LCf Answer: No, it wasn't recent. It was after our board meeting and before the end of the month of October. It was a very short time. I asked Dominique and he said the time has passed. Last months report from Meredith was really what was being discussed. I didn't recognize that as such.

LCf: What I have done is I have gone through the report and I have got some recommendations for us to look at, with regards to the report. Did you all have a chance to review that draft report? There were a number of recommendations. I did not go through all of them. These are the ones we could particularly have an impact.

Question: That hasn't changed in a while has it?

Answer: No.

Note: Lynda Coffill handed a two sided page paper with Recommendations to look at on the Recommendations from Aging Friendly Salem Draft Report on HOUSING, COMMUNICATIONS, OUTSIDE ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC BUILDINGS and TRANSPORTATION.

1) Encourage seniors to take advantage of home modification and rehabilitation opportunities.

That could be a public information campaign. It could be done through the COA body, through the city – that would be the suggestions.

AB: In Beverly the Outreach Coordinators put those kinds of things in the newsletters from time to time. It may have been here, in Salem, as well. However, the different organizations suggested, they all have very different guidelines, for example the Home Modification Loan programs and the Mass Rehabilitation Commission, you have to be disabled. So, that is not for most seniors.

LCf: Those 55 it will, if you are disabled. Aren't you eligible for services through COA?

AB: But, you can't get this Home Modification Loan unless you are disabled.

LCf: Right.

JR: What qualifies you to be disabled because you if need the Home Modification Loan I hope you are disabled even if it is because of your age, is there something?

LCf: Through MRC there has to be a documented disability and most of the folks that get services through Mass Rehab. are on SSI.

JR: I'm thinking if a senior is 80 years old and they need a modification for a ramp because they are in a wheelchair now is there something to get them assistance?

LCf: There are other programs. There are a number of programs out there it is just getting the word out is the issue.

LCf: Maybe we could encourage them to put outreach flyers into the tax bills?

AB: Yes, I like that idea. Under the communication section of this report, is that everything going out in Salem needs to be both in English and Spanish. And, currently I think we have been doing a poor job of that.

LCf: Is it in two languages?

AB: No, it isn't. Whatever flyers going out need to be in two languages.

LCf: Absolutely, whatever flyers that goes out need to be in two languages. The next suggestion is -

- 2) The Volunteer Coordinator, which has been a perennial complaint, where is our Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator could be working with church groups, the high school(s) honor societies, Boy Scouts, etc. to get folks to help out with shoveling, it is in the newsletter and racking of leave. That is one of the things I see the volunteer coordinator doing. It is suppose to be in the budget.

JR Question: Where is the meals on wheels person? I thought they were talking about her going somewhere else?

LCf: She is only 19 hours. There is still 19 hours of work for her to do with Meals on Wheels.

AB: She's doing more than one thing. Whoever is doing the Volunteer Coordinator is doing more than one thing.

LCf: That is Kathy. Kathy McCarthy's position is supposed to be doing the volunteer coordinating. How about we ask Trish?

AB: How can we get a Volunteer Coordinator position happen?

LCf: It has to be in the budget or if that is part of Kathy's position? How do we make it happen so Kathy gets freed up so she can do it? So, that is a conversation with Trish, correct?

JR: The problem is everybody here does everything. Kathy drives van so they don't have time. The volunteer coordinator use to be they had a certain number of dedicated hours. So it doesn't matter if it is a person that it is their only dedicated job part time or if it is somebody that knows they have to dedicate hours to that.

AB: As a board, what are our tangible goals to making this happen?

LCf: There are two ways we can approach it: The first way is through the budget which we know how successful that has been. But, if we even ask for a part time person, Meredith said the last time she was here, that it was in the budget. I would like to have a meeting with Trish and see the budget. So maybe, the January meeting we can ask Trish to come and talk about the budget. And what is going to be in the budget and talk to her then about the volunteer coordinator. If she says, Kathy is suppose to be doing that, than how are we going to make that happen. You are right, we have a pizza party at the Moose and Kathy is giving out pizza.

JR: A Volunteer Coordinator will have a volunteers handing out pizza.

AB: That's exactly it. And when it comes to the communication goals getting things translated to Spanish you can get volunteers to translate with translation. All of those things would go more smoothly if we had a coordinator.

JR: Once you get a volunteer coordinator all these little jobs would take care of themselves.

LCf: Yes, it would be less work. Elaine couldn't come tonight. But how are we doing on the home sharing initiative is the question I asked her about that today she had two meetings a joint council and planning meeting.

JR: I'll try to get in touch with her too because I volunteered to work on it as well about the in-law apartments.

AB: Could you keep me in the loop on that? Given the information in the report there is really really strong data saying that there should be an in-law apartment. This is concrete information in this report.

LCf: Communications. - My suggestion is we could urge the Mayor's office to pay for a work study student to do that from Salem State.

AB: Or a volunteer coordinator could find a volunteer to do that.

LCf: Right, this is more skilled labor.

JR: Throughout all the Council on Ageing(s), when we try to reach out to all of the seniors for the TRIAD events the information never gets to them. We put it through every multiple avenue to reach out to the seniors and it never gets to them. We got to the point now, that I won't put on a presentation unless we first have a meeting two months prior in where we get all of the groups the seniors are involved in. And we send the flyers to the groups and actually doing the presentation with these groups and we sometimes go from having 4 to 5 people to having 30 to 35 people at some of these presentations.

AB: That sounds about right given my own experience having to do the same thing.

JR: You put it in the newsletter, SATV and you could do a reverse 911 and the response is that they did not hear about it.

LCf: It is said that somebody needs to hear it or see it three times before it sinks in. Or it has to be a personal invitation.

AB: Do you ever slide flyers under the doors? Flyers under the doors has worked ok for me but it has worked better when I knocked on the door and handed them the flyer which takes time if you have 100 units.

JR: We do find there is a connection to all the seniors through the different groups that are there whether it is the TRIADS, or the knitting club or a book club. If you reach out to five or six groups everybody seems to be hearing about it. That seems to be working. It seems to be the best way to get things around is to whisper about it.

TS: My experience is the newsletter for the Peabody council nobody seems to read it. They all get it. They all love it. But, they never know what's happening. So I converted the newsletter into a slide show and put the slide show up in the lobby, like they do here. The seniors say it is wonderful and I didn't see it in the newsletter. And yet they still don't know what is happening because they look at it but they don't read it. People don't see it.

LCf: We can only do what we can do. There was a good turnout for the TRIAD this year in May.

AB: It builds over time too.

JR: It does. You have to find the senior and reach out and identify who the proxy is, a family member or friend. And send them the information on line to tell their parents or grandparents about the events so they will go.

LCf: The next one is a guide.

AB: I think the guide is necessary specifically because so many different people in the focus groups requested it. However, it is going to be an extremely time consuming activity to keep it updated.

LCf: Right, it has to be updated. Again, this is where we need a volunteer coordinator. Why is the Transportation Coordinator working on a resource guide?

Response: Because everybody is doing everything.

AB: How do we address that?

LCf: Why don't we ask why is everybody doing everything?

AW: I think at one time it was shortage of staff and everybody jumped on board to help out.

JR: Because it had to be done. You've got to take the leap of fate that if you do your job then everything else will fall into place.

AB: And communicate your needs, assume your coworkers are going to help you.

JR: It is a good staff here. It seems they have lost their direction, on if I don't do this it's not going to get done.

EH: Meredith has just started.

AB: And honestly funds aren't the best.

LCf: And again in black and white from the report a Volunteer Program needs to be setup. There is plenty of evidence to support.

AB: On the communications, can we add to it? Volunteer to help with translating materials to Spanish. If you have a willing senior that wants to act as the ambassador.

JR: It is important to address this now because when we move into the new facility we will be hopefully double the amount of space we will need volunteers to watch the front desk and we will need volunteers to run other areas. Peabody has 300 volunteers that run the store and the little snack bar.

TS: Peabody has 1200 volunteers listed.

LCf: A lot of the people that are here are on the tax abatement programs.

JR: That is not volunteering.

AB: They are getting paid.

LCf: Instead of taxes. I attended the October Pizza party and the Halloween party here and the same couple of people were there both times.

AB: I never gotten an email asking me to come down and help volunteer at a party.

JR: There has been an issue here in the past, I don't think it is the way now, but the volunteers would show up ready to do something and they would have nothing for them to do. So the volunteers would feel unneeded and not come back.

LCf: There has to be specific things for them to do.

AW: Didn't we have a meeting awhile back mentioned there were not job descriptions per say for any of the employees?

AB: That's right. Rosealeah asked me if I could bring in the outreach coordinator manual for Beverly. In the employee manual I have everybody's job description is in there.

LCf: Can we get a copy of that?

AB: I'll look.

TS: Do other members of the board get the newsletter mailed to them? I don't think that would be a bad thing. I thought when I signed up they would have done something.

AW: I get it emailed to me and mailed to me. I asked Roseanna to stop having it mailed to me for it is wasting postage. I asked to have it emailed to me.

JR: There needs to be volunteer jobs for people to volunteer for. Newburyport set up interviews for their volunteers and makes them feel more important.

LCf: Yes, you would have people working on computers; people will be there to help setup for pizza, serving for pizza party, etc. And they should be queried.

AB: Another place not to reinvent the wheel. I think Beverly has Volunteer job descriptions. You can ask the Volunteer Coordinator there and you will have a place to start from.

EH: Maybe the Beverly Volunteer Coordinator will come and tell us about the program.

LCf: I'll ask Meredith to call her.

AB: Beverly isn't Salem and Salem isn't going to do it the same way. But, it is nice to get fresh ideas. We have 3 or 4 interns at different times.

LCf: Next year we may see the interns come in. The Salem State nurses come in still.

LCf: The report had nothing to say about the outside environment & public buildings. Transportation, the leadership council will be looking at that and these kinds of things I think we should highlight for them. I'm not sure what group it was but in one focus group people were asking for a trolley to go around the city to pick people up and drop people off at different places throughout the city.

EH: There use to be a senior shuttle and there were signs all around the city for senior shuttle. I think it should be brought back.

LCf: I would like to see the people that do the Charlie card come here quarterly.

JR: You can get a Charlie card here anytime. You go see Sharon or Lynn. They will fill out your paperwork and take your picture once there is a disc of 15 people. It will be sent in and 15 Charlie cards will be sent back. There will also be a driving and transportation workshop presented by the TRIADS. We want to start to get people who are driving get use to using alternative transportation so they are comfortable giving up their licenses if they have to. We are also doing other things on how you can drive longer.

AB: Have you heard of the Drive Wise People? There might be a partnership there that you might be interested in. I got money from them before.

EH: I just want to mention that with the taxes this year, if you are having them done at the COA you have to have your social security card with you. This is the first year. If you don't have your card you need to get one.

2. New Building Advocacy – The certificate was issued on November 10th. Now we have to go through some permitting. The report is seventy-one pages long. If anyone wants to read it I can email you the link.

LCf: I have another email into Dominic asking how long will the permitting process take?

AB: Can you ask where we stand with the developer as well?

LCf: I will ask the question.

3. Update on Progress of Goals (set at Annual Meeting) – We are keeping on track.

4. Update from the Friends of the SCOA -

JR: We are doing excellent. Only went downtown one day, on the Saturday two weekends before Halloween, need to plan better for next year. I raised over four hundred dollars. They had no idea where the nonprofits were suppose to set up. I was in front of CVS. It was a good spot but breaking down you can't get back in there. I had to carry everything by myself around to Salem Five to pack up. I sold out of what I had pretty much. The next day my pop up tent would not have stood-up to the 45 – 50mph winds so I did not set up. So, it has some great possibilities. I sold pies and snacks. There was a banner that said The Friends of the Salem Council of Aging. The pies were \$3.00 a slice with whipped cream. And there were also people that just donated some money. We did pretty well even in the rain. So, if it was a nice weekend we could easily do a thousand dollars. Next year we can start earlier and do all month. Do three maybe four weekends. Not allowed to do Halloween because they want the vendors all out of the area at the end. We might be able to do three to four thousand dollars.

LCf: You can do hot dogs because your not serve safe?

JR: No, you can't do hot dogs because a non-profit can't sell what a paid vendor is selling.

LCf: But, if you get the vendor license you can sell it.

JR: That is what I want to find out. How much is the vendor's license and is it worth the cost? There was another non-profit next to me selling kielbasa.

LCf: Next year, it should not just be one person there by themselves and if you let us know when you need the help. The church I belong to made over ten thousand dollars for parking during the Halloween festivities.

TS: Somebody was charging to park in this lot at the COA. I hope it was the center.

LCf: I don't know who was charging for parking. The city allowed certain groups: the football teams, the other athletic teams and the drama kids from the high school had the FW Webb lot.

JR: Next year it will be planned out better with a schedule of help setting up and breaking down.

5. Program Updates – The Halloween Party was packed.

The 50th Anniversary of the COA is December 12th at 10:30 am.

LCf: They asked me if I knew anything about the history of the COA and I said yes, it started 50 years ago at the congregational church. It was the first place that the Council on Ageing met. How do I know this? I remember being in an annual meeting of the church when it was purposed to let the COA meet there.

IV: OLD/NEW BUSINESS

LCf: Any old business? None.

LCf: New business? Next month the meeting is on the 21st. should we have a little party?

Response: Yes.

LCf: We'll have a brief meeting then have a party.

AW: Do we have to start using our Salem.com email address?

LCf: I've got a Salem.com address but I don't know how to get into it.

TS: What's Salem.com?

LCf: The Mayor's office has sent out an alert that said as a member of a board or committee for the city fair warning your private emails would be - For example if somebody wanted to question what we do here. And maybe there was an allegations we are having meeting outside of here. Which is against the law and there was an investigation, all of your private emails would be opened up. So they are suggesting we get a Salem.com and all of the correspondents that we do to each other or to the city to go through the salem.com.

LCf: I will send out a sign up sheet for the party.

AW: Did anyone get that email SMART 911? Put out by Cataldo Ambulance? I got the email and was told that Cataldo who is the ambulance of the city is proposing this program that you can put your information in about all your family members and their health issues and their medications with into the system so that it would alleviate if you do call this ambulance they would have some updates on you and it would help. Before I signed up for this I just want to make sure it was legitimate.

TS: I did see it somewhere but I don't remember where I saw it. I didn't get an email.

AB: It sounds like an electronic file of life.

JR: Also it sounds like they are looking into seniors especially who have an issue if there is power outages who have oxygen that need to be check on immediately.

JR: Today was the first coffee with a cop meeting. There was a good turnout. There were five officers here: a captain, a lieutenant, a detective and two patrol officers.

AB: Did we ever learn anything about a Spanish speaking officer?

JR: The Detective is Spanish speaking.

V: VISITOR COMMENTS: No Visitors.

VI: NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Next Regular board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 21st, 2016 at time 6:00 p.m.

VII: VOTE TO ADJOURN:

Requests to make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

JR: Makes a motion to adjourn the meeting.

AW: Seconds motion.

Vote unanimously approved.

Regular meeting adjourns at 6:53 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sharon Kearney

DRAFT