

**Salem Council on Aging**  
**Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Salem Council on Aging**  
**Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 6:00 pm.**

The Regular Meeting of the Salem Council on Aging held Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 6:00 pm., at the Senior Center, 5 Broad Street, Salem, Massachusetts.

**Roll Call**

**Board of Directors Present:** Lynda Coffill (LCf, Chairperson), Elaine Heredeem (EH, Vice Chair), , Julie Carver (JC, Secretary), Abigail Butt, (AB), Anthony “Tony” Schettino (TS), Alison Thibodeau (AT), Donna Clifford (DC), Alice Williams, conferenced called in, (AW, Treasurer).

**Absent:** John Russell, (JR).

**Also Present:** Meredith McDonald, (MM), Director of the COA, Elaine Milo (EM, City Councilor advocate to the COA), Sharon Kearney, (SK, Secretary of Minutes).

**I. Call to Order**

Open the regular meeting Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 5:57 pm

**II. Approval of December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 Regular Meeting minutes**

**LCf:** Has everyone had a chance to read the December minutes? Are there any corrections, deletions?

**Board Response:** Yes.

**MM:** I sent what I found to Sharon.

**LCf:** Hearing none. Motion to accept the December minutes as written.

**TS:** Motion to accept the December minutes as written.

**AB:** Second the motion.

Vote unanimously approved.

**LCf:** I would like to add one thing to the agenda under old/new business, hopefully Elaine will be here, the status of the in law apartment ordinance.

**III: Report from the Director - Meredith McDonald, Director of the COA.**

**1) New Building Update**

**MM:** We had a great meeting. Julie attended. John was not able to attend. But Julie and I spoke with him separately earlier in the day about some things. Elaine Bello, the interior designer architect for the project was in attendance. Julie, myself, Kathy McCarthy (program manager), and Elaine reviewed a bunch of samples for finishes so we could start looking at what direction we want to go in. This was preliminary, just a wish list of what we would like to see in the new building. These are some thing we would love to see if we could have them, if would could afford them. We still have yet to see a budget. So, we do not know what kind of money we have at our disposal to spend. So we were trying to pick finishes and fixtures that were not ridiculously expensive. Elaine was really good about trying to steer us in a very reasonable way, whether that lines up matching with what budget we have for the finishes or not, will remain to be seen. We, as the park recreation and community services team, had requested changes to the interior design of the building based on functional needs. When we saw the plans that they presented to us it became glaringly apparent that there was not enough office space. They have four offices in the building. Four. And we have how many now. They have a very large section of the first floor designated at open office space for cubicles. That doesn't work. There is no space in the plan

earmarked for veteran services and yet they are to be in the building. We don't know where they are sitting. Both of our social workers need to have private offices. They have to be able to shut the door to have a meeting with a senior, as does veteran services, as does Fred in transportation. Fred is so busy all day long getting phone calls and scheduling transportation to have him in the open air public would drive everybody crazy. So we sat with Elaine and mocked up the open cubicle space as to how we could design it into closed office spaces. We asked for that. Don't know if it can be granted because there are special guidelines and rules that govern how many offices can be in a certain location when a building is deemed for public use. So, we got the architects our wish list, changes, and redesigns. And they sent back final plans to Mike Lutrzykowski and Dominick at the Mayor's office and none of our changes were reflected. So, we had a little emergency meeting with Dominick, Mike, Trish and me today. We are hoping it was just a mistake on the architect's end and they just attached the wrong file. So Mike, will be contacting the architects first thing in the morning. Mike will be the one, at this point going forward, overseeing this project to make sure that they, the architect and the builders, stay on the time line that has been presented so, that we can break ground on time; and barring any weird unforeseen issues that it comes to completion on time as well. So he is going to contact the architects first thing and say is this a mistake? Are you addressing these changes? Can we make all of these changes? Some of these changes? None of these changes? And if not, why? Once we get that information back it will have more bearing on some of the fixtures and what not that we picked out because some of it maybe for not if we cannot make some of these changes. So, right now we are in a holding pattern until we hear back from the architects. But, as of right now, they are surcharging the ground and everything is still to the best our knowledge on schedule to break ground in June.

**LCf:** Who is Mike?

**MM:** Mike Lutrzykowski, he works in the building department.

**LCf:** Is the developers plan to do the big building first? Do you know?

**MM:** I don't know.

**LCf:** And we are sure we have the backing of the building department and the mayor's office on the interior plan?

**MM:** Backing on the interior plan for the changes that we requested? Yes, Mike's perspective is, he says, we know what we need best to run efficiently. And there were somethings that he saw get changed and he said no, that they needed to be changed back for the good of the city who as a whole will be using this building. Specifically we are talking about two restrooms outside of the great room. So we are hoping to get those back into existence. The old architect said you did not need them.

**MM:** You can't have seniors walking across the lobby, around the corner and down a hall to go to the restroom from the great room, at a function. That is not going to work. The two restrooms were right outside of the great room and we are trying to have those put back in. Yes, Mike is advocating. He understands what we are asking for. He sees the need. He sees that we have evaluated the function of what we are trying to accomplish; and, that the form that we are asking in the layout will best satisfy the function that we have. So he knows that we have thought this through and we are not just saying we think this will be great over here. We are trying to make an art room in the corner room on the second floor because that is the room that butts up to the second floor bathrooms so you can butt the plumbing up. You're not going to locate an art room where there is no access to plumbing. We are trying to be logical about what we are asking for. And Dominick, representing the mayor's office, is in agreement. He sees we have put thought into this and tried to make it flow as well as possible.

**LCf:** Have we revisited the kitchen?

**MM:** We have and I asked again and there is no chance of having a commercial kitchen. There is not the space and there is not the money in the budget.

**LCf:** Who said that?

**MM:** Mike Lutrzykowski from the building department. We are getting a fully operational kitchen. It will have a stove, a sink and it will have everything in it you need to run a kitchen. We will be able to do programming from this kitchen. We can offer cooking classes. We can keep food warm. So if we are having an event we can put things in the oven and not just the warming trays. I was told that there may be room for two ovens. The size that you need to account for duct work, grease traps, and everything else in a commercial kitchen would mean we would have to take away something from the building as it has been laid out. There is nothing extra we can take away. There is nothing extra and superfluous in the design to say we really don't need this. Everything that is there now we need. We will probably need more than what we have in the design.

**TS:** What is programming/cooking?

**MM:** It means offering cooking classes.

**TS:** So in other words you can have classes in there because it is not a cooking kitchen?

**MM:** Yes, It's is considered a caterers kitchen.

**DC:** Do you know if it will be gas or electric stove?

**MM:** I don't know. I think electric but I'm not certain.

**MM:** With a commercial kitchen there also comes with it a whole host of other issues that you have to think about. Is not a reason to say not do it. It means you have think about them. You have to have a chef. If you are doing all the meals in the area you then have to have a dietitian on staff. There are also all sorts of different licensing stipulations that you have to abide by. These are all things that cost money. We have not seen a budget for not only the construction of the building, but also the yearly operating costs.

**LCf:** How do we know we don't have a budget for a commercial kitchen?

**MM:** Because they know the cost of a commercial kitchen is at least two hundred thousand dollars.

**TS:** After all these years of waiting they never budgeted for it? It sounds like somebody doesn't want this.

**LCf:** Alice did you want to come into the conversation? Do you have a question?

**AW:** No, I'm good.

**MM:** There is a budget for the cost of the construction. That is already laid out. There is a bond approved that is ready to be floated because I asked that question today. That is to pay for the construction of the building. The way it was explained to me was that there are two things to go before the city council. Elaine correct me if I'm miss speaking, we know the construction cost it has been defined. Any changes that we now make that are construction changes will be an additional charge from the contractor. We would have to present to city council and say that we are requesting these construction changes that will cost x amount of dollars, and ask the city council if they approve of these construction changes and can we have this money? That will have to go before city council. The other budget that will have to go before the city council is for all the interiors. The city council could come

back and say that they are not approving x amount of dollars to furnish the interior. They could deny the request outright, or come back with a counter offer of a different amount. That means all the desks, furniture, supplies, computers, stove, hood for stove anything that we want. All of those things come out of that separate budget.

**AB:** One of the things that has been talked about several times is finding sponsors for different rooms. So, that would cover anything like that, correct?

**MM:** Correct.

**TS:** What I'm getting at between what she is saying here and what she said earlier about office space and everything else it sounds to me that what has been budgeted is a warehouse. That's all it is.

**LCf:** The shell.

**TS:** Yes, it's not budgeted as a senior center or living center it's a warehouse. That bothers me, after all these years.

**LCf:** I agree, our journey is not over yet with respect to what we need to advocate for. I think we still have miles to go.

**AB:** As far as the kitchen goes, I know you've been to Peabody and seen their incredible kitchen there which is outstanding. I think as a group we are also very lucky to have Elaine with hands on kitchen experience.

**TS:** I'm not talking about just the kitchen, I'm saying nothing inside has been considered. Office space - it was mentioned that the plan was for four offices. I can count ten offices that you would need. A Director needs an office. You need to be able to close the door to talk to people. You can't talk to people out in the open. Some you can. Many other people need that, Rosanna needs an office.

**MM:** Part of what has happened, which is an unfortunate circumstance, is there has been such turn over on many levels since this project started a long time ago, that I'm not sure in all cases the proper end users were being consulted. It's not a great answer.

**TS:** I'm not talking about you.

**MM:** No, I know. But that's the reality of many construction projects. Sometimes the end users don't get consulted.

**LCf:** 1) What I would like to know is when Mike calls and gets the answer from the architect that we then know what that answer is.

**MM:** Yes, I can shoot you all an email to let you know.

**LCf:** 2) It sounds to me, that there never was any attention of putting a commercial kitchen in.

**MM:** That I can't speak to because the plan for the kitchen area has never changed from the day I became involved. I don't know what previous iterations were.

**EM:** My apologies if you have to repeat, I came in a little late. There is a hundred thousand dollars somewhere, right?

**MM:** Yes there is. I checked on that. That is designated solely for fixtures and furniture, so we can't spend it on anything else; even if we wanted to.

**EM:** Yes, that is right but that will defray a little bit of that.

**JC:** The other thing is that there is nothing in the budget to have a proper structure to have the room dividers.

**MM:** No, there is. That has been discussed with Mike. There is one that has already been requested. That the architects said, yes we can do that. Now is it affordable from a budget stand point I don't know but the architects have no control over that either. But, structurally where we asked for it on a particular wall, they said absolutely. We met with Mike and he asked where else you would put another one? We mentioned on the flip side between those two rooms. He said that it would make sense to do it at the time of construction. So that request has been put in too. So, that is definitely easier to do at the point of construction and more cost effective to do at the point of construction to just put that all in.

**JC:** Yes, that was our original request.

**MM:** There were no dividing walls on the origin plan. In our request that went in was for one. Optimally we would like to see more. So, Mike said let's just ask for the more. So, it's going in with the request for two dividing walls which will affect four rooms. So we can have two larger rooms on the second floor or four small rooms for programming depending on the need or function of the group using it. It would give us more flexibility for when we are renting the space or when we are using it for ourselves.

**LCf:** Any other questions Julie?

**JC:** No.

**EM:** I have another question. Is there sometime of time schedule? We had a group getting together periodically but I don't know what happened to it. But, is there a time frame in which there was going to these plans, then there was going to be this budget, then there was going to be an opportunity to discuss it and weigh in on what folks want and what they don't want to see.

**MM:** Yes, we sort of had that discussion. Trish met with all of the staff and said look at the proposed plans and asked what did they need from their areas perspective? She sat with Rosanna and Eric, and asked them from a programming activities perspective, for all the events and activities that you run, this proposed layout plan, does this work? What would you do differently? What would you like to see differently? So, that is how Trish started making her wish list. She got together with the social services team and with Kim from Veterans Services. What we all saw was that there were not enough offices. There were only four offices built into the design. There are more than four people in this building. That was one thing that we had to address with the new architect. We sat in a meeting and asked can we convert this open office space on the first floor into closed office space. They said they had to go back and check because there are guidelines and stipulations and what not governing public use buildings as to how many offices you can have, where they can be, etc. So the architects couldn't answer us right away. They said they need to go back and check. We don't know, we hear your request and understand what you are asking, we are not sure if we can give you this or not. So, that is where the wish list came from. The talk about the dividing walls to make better use and more flexible use of space. The need if we are going to designate a particular program space like an art room locating it on the second floor in the corner that butts up to the bathroom so there is access to the plumbing lines. It makes more sense to put it there then diagonally across the floor where there is no plumbing. So things like that are what we looked at when we made our wish list and from our perspective that is all it is. We can ask but there are somethings that they maybe cannot give us because of these guidelines that govern it because it's going to be a public use building.

**EM:** So, my real question is, what happened to that group?

**JC:** At the last meeting we brought it up because there were meetings going on that John and I had not been invited to so we could not weigh in on the decisions being made.

**MM:** The only two meetings we had were: 1) initially that Trish and I were invited to from Dominick and Mike because the original architect on record resigned, or was removed. And the developer brought in a new architect.

**LCf:** Do you know who they are?

**MM:** The new one is DMS Designs out of Beverly, Daniel Skolski, a Salem resident. This was the first meeting I had been to since we had one way back in the spring. We just met Dan and his lead architect for our project. It was just an introduction. They said they had seen what the former architect did. They notice right off the bat that there were some design elements that were not to fire code. So there were somethings that they had to change which were the interior stairwells, they were not closed in and per fire code they have to be closed in. So, they were going to be changing that. We said OK. That was the end of that meeting. That's when they told us that they needed to know we want to know at the next meeting if there were any martial changes to this plan you we would like to see? I asked what is material change? They said we can't answer that it depends upon what you ask for. So compile your wish list and come back to us and give us your wish list. We made the wish list, need more offices. And the second meeting was just for them to say we closed in the stairwell, thank you for your list. That was all that was discussed in the two meetings.

**LCf:** But, we objected to the fact that there were meetings going on and we weren't represented on it. So the next meeting they had Julie was there. Our expectation is that any further meetings that we would be part of the team.

**EM:** Could I be cc'd on this stuff? I haven't seen a thing on it so I did not know what was going on.

**LCf:** Yes, I can cc you on it.

**LCf:** On to the next item, any good news?

## **2) Nutrition Coordinator position update -**

**MM:** We have a candidate. They have to fill out the application. He is currently sort of in the role now through the National Senior Network. His name is Dan Cote. Sophia left - she got a full time job. Dan has been Sophia's right hand in the dining room for well over a year. He currently works with us through the National Senior Network. Their hope and goal is that when they place a senior in a host agency, that the host agency will employ them if an open position comes up. This position came up, it's part time. Dan only wanted part time hours. He does the work every day. So we talked about it and asked him if this would be something he would be interested to do for the city? So, he has to fill out the application and go through all the procedural things. Hopefully, he will be able to step into the role on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**AB:** You still have to post the position and interview and do all that.

**MM:** Yes.

## **3) Update from the Friends of the SCOA -**

**MM:** At the last meeting they talked about potentially doing another fund raiser at Barns and Noble because they had such a success with the first one. So they will be talking with Hope at Barns and Noble to see if they could set something up in the spring.

**MM:** And we approached them for another donation to continue to fund the aqua aerobics class, the collaboration we have with the Salem Y. We originally only offered it one morning a week. The class we put them in runs twice a week but we started with one. It was so popular amongst our seniors they asked if they could go on the second day as well. We said sure because of the great health benefits from exercising in the water. So there are about fourteen or so seniors that go twice a week to the class. The Friends are funding that class so we basically pay for the instructor's time for that class and they can go into the Y free of charge and take that class. The Friends will fund that for another six months.

#### **IV: OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

**LCf:** The ordinance we were talking about for the in law apartment.

**EM:** I got an update from Tom St. Pierre last week. What I decided was I need to work with the city solicitor on this. So, I'm going to meet with her, hopefully, next week. We got three different samples of ordinances. So, my target date is not the next council meeting but the first one in February to bring something so it can then go to committee and start being discussed so we can hash it out.

**AB:** Would you keep John and I in the loop on this?

**EM:** Sure. I'll keep everybody in the loop. In terms of if we draft something?

**AB:** Yes, anything I can do I would like to help.

**EM:** Abby, do you have a sense of what other communities do ?

**AB:** I know a little about what Beverly does. But, housing in general is my passion.

**EM:** So maybe the three of us could sit down for a half hour. Or maybe the three of us could sit down with the city solicitor.

**LCf:** John was the one that is concerned about this. I would like to be involved with that meeting too.

**EM:** Ok, I will try to set something up for next week and we'll try to get it moving that way.

**LCf:** The other thing is the volunteer coordinator. We had a whole conversation if you recall last month. I was going to set up a meeting with Trish and I did but it isn't until next week. Reason being I didn't think John was going to be back. John and Abby are coming to the meeting. It is set for next Thursday at 5:45 pm. Trish asked if she could invite Kathy McCarthy. Response was absolutely. Our intent is to see what we can do to make sure that the volunteers get recruited and whatever needs to be done to do that.

**AB:** EH was going to bring in job descriptions?

**EH:** I did.

**MM:** Two new things

1. Tomorrow, January 19<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 pm, at City Hall, Salem will be officially certified as age friendly city by the AARP. There is a formal certification happening where we will be presented. They accepted our plan. So, we are moving forward. We just had our first initial meeting for the task force. We are setting up our own subcommittees and our first meeting so we can talk about our topics and how we are going to move forward. We are tackling three topics to start in the first year:

a) Transportation b) Voluntarism c) Communication

We will be meeting and working on those and coming together to report. The certification is tomorrow at 1:00 pm - really exciting.

2. Park and Recreation was invited to collaborate with Salem State University on the Generation Games. The Generation Games is a concept that originated in the Netherlands at the University of Rotterdam. It's been going on in Europe for a while. The way it works in Europe is that it travels from site to site, much like the Olympics do. The purpose of a generation game is to bring together many different generations to be active together. It not necessarily to be competitive in nature but to bring your grandparents, parents, your children together or whoever it maybe, to come together as a family unit and engage in physical activities together. They typically do things in February. Somehow, someway the University of Rotterdam decided they wanted to bring it to the United States and they chose Salem State University to be the American University that they would partner with. Of all the universities in this country they chose Salem State. It's awesome. SSU approached Park and Recreation as they felt they needed help pulling off such an event. So our department is now involved as kind of a co-sponsor. It will be the first weekend in February. The opening ceremonies are Friday night February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The bulk of the activities will happen throughout the day at various sites on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The final activities wrap up on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup> before the Superbowl. There will be a flag football tournament on Sunday morning in honor of the Superbowl. We are combining some American games as well as some Dutch games. All of the events are free to anyone who wants to participate. There are twenty Dutch students flying over who will be on hand to help with some of their teachers and advisors. There will be about forty or so students from Salem State and their advisors helping and there will be Park, Recreation and Community Services staff helping as well. The Mayor has grabbed onto this and is eager to help promote it. It is a neat thing. It speaks to some of our age friendly things of getting people included and getting them out. If you are a senior here and have no family around, come and we will make a family unit if we have to. You maybe someone honorary grandmother at the event for the day. It's just a nice way to bring a community together. It's on facebook as well, Generations Games.

**EM:** Isn't there a requirement that each team have a least two generations.

**AB:** Are the surrounding communities involved as well?

**MM:** It is a request that each team have two generations. Yes, anybody can come. Even from outside of Salem. There is a link on survey monkey so that you can register yourself and check off what activities you and your family might be interested in participating in. There are some educational components as well.

**LCf:** There is something else going on next Tuesday, 7:00 pm at St. Peters there will be a meeting called Sanctuary for Peace meeting. The chief of police will be attending and speaking. It is being sponsored by the newly resurrected interfaith council of clergy, Latino coalition, no place for hate on January 24<sup>th</sup>.

**DC:** Being certified by the AARP as an age friendly city, what does that mean for us and why is it a good thing?

**MM:** They don't give us any money. It sets Salem apart from other communities. There are very few communities that have this certification. What it means is that as a city, community, you are putting together a game plan to address many aspects of your city to take care of your residence, technically, as they age so that they can age in place. Salem has renamed their initiative as Salem For All Ages. Because the changes put forth that benefit the elder demographics also benefits other people in your city; for example, putting benches in, having even level sidewalks, having handicap curb cuts on the sidewalks so wheel chairs can get up and down on them. All these benefit all not just the elderly. Making the community take a step back and be self-critical to see where are we. What are we doing well on? And what are we not doing well on? It's going to be



our game plan going forward to address these issues. But there are eight particular facets that have to be looked at and talked about. The big ones are housing, transportation, social inclusion, volunteerism, communication. Lots of things that people sometimes take for granted. If you don't look at where you are at and where you are going, you may be left in a place you don't want to be in. Do you have enough housing stock for the seniors in your community knowing that that is the only segment of the population that is growing. If you don't have enough elderly housing what are you going to do with all these people when they can no longer live on their own?

**DC:** So Salem met the criteria?

**MM:** We had to put forth a proposal and the AARP has accepted the proposal. Salem did hire UMass Boston (School of Gerontology). They did an evaluation of the city and helped us to gather all the information and data that we had and put it into a proposal with input from the Mayor and many people throughout the city. So we were making sure we were looking at things. It's holding many departments within the city accountable for actually needs to get done and prioritized.

**EM:** I would like to add is I think, it helps us to look back and really think about what our values are? What is our value system ? Who do we value? As well as what do we value in the community. Circle back to the earlier conversation at the beginning of the meeting, when we talk about budgets for the community life center. How does that reflect back on what kind of a community we are? If we have to plug a little more money into it then we put forth this is what we value and who we value. So, let's put our money where our report is so to speak. It is a reference point from which you can make your statement, argument, that we need more money because it falls in line with all these things that we already said and evaluated.

**LCf:** The plan is very detailed. It gives us a platform from which to advocate.

**LCf:** Anything else?

**V: VISITOR COMMENTS:** No Visitors.

**VI: NEXT BOARD MEETING:**

Next Regular board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at time 6:00 pm.

**VII: VOTE TO ADJOURN:**

Requests to make a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**EH:** Makes a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**JC:** Seconds motion.

Vote unanimously approved.

Regular meeting adjourns at 6:42 pm.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Sharon Kearney*