

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

**Date and Time:** October 20, 2021 at 5:33 P.M.

**Meeting Location:** Via Zoom

**Members Present:** Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), John Russell (JR, Vice-Chair) George Barbuzzi (GB), Abigail Butt (AB) and Kristin Macek (KM).

**Member Absent:** Alice Williams, Julie Carver, Patricia Small

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

**Clerk:** Kathleen Fitzgerald

**Meeting Called to Order**

LC called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.

LC stated that pursuant to Governor Baker's directive on 3/12/20 which suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations regarding gatherings, so this meeting is being conducted via remote participation. 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 AB to approve the September 2021 Minutes, seconded by KM, and passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

**Senior Advocacy Update:** LC stated she attended the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals meeting for the NSCDC for 9 Peabody Street and the Lafayette Street project.

She advised that it had apparently passed at the Planning Board level and everyone was excited about the project.

**Lee Fort Terrance** - KM advised that there had been no recent meetings and that it was at a standstill.

LC advised that there was an article in the newspaper last week about the Crescent lot and flooding and that a solution for that is being worked on. The Crescent lot is vital to the renovations of the Courthouses. She further advised that this was a package deal with the Gateway project as there are no sidewalks.

AB stated it has been dangerous to walk down to the canal or train and she was happy about the sidewalks. She said all that was needed right now were crosswalks and asked how we find out about the Gateway Center. JR said he would make some calls.

**Kitchen Update:** JR advised they were having a terrible time trying to get someone to come in to look at the exhaust fan for the stove. He said now an architect was needed and a design person and it has become a real issue. He said the Friends were looking to get support from the Mayor and the City Council.

AB asked if we were working with a contractor. JR advised they were dealing with the Building Inspector. JR advised waiting until after the elections to see who the new City councilors are.

**Generator Update:** AB said she was shocked that there is no generator in the building. JR said that was something that needs to be addressed and once we get the size needed, we will get pricing.

#### **Friends Update:**

JR said he spoke with the Friends about the project on Lafayette and Peabody Street to see if they wanted to send a letter of support. He said there was some feedback regarding parking and traffic. JR said getting 100% of affordable housing was worth the car issue.

LC advised that she did send a letter from the Board.

JR advised that the Annual Appeal raised \$15,000.00; the cocktail party raised about \$5,500.00; and parking for Halloween should raise about \$7,000.00 for the Friends and \$7,000.00 for Park & Recreation.

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

##### **Programming/Activities:**

We started an early Friday morning Aerobics class at 8:30. There are not too many attending but will keep trying in November. This is our attempt to think out of the box and have activities not jammed pack in the middle of the day. All classes remain at 20 participants for distancing purposes.

We started a new registration process for activities and classes. Registration will take place the 3rd week of each month. Registration sheets will be available each day during the 3rd week on the specific day the class is offered. Each sheet is numbered 1-20 then a

waiting list starts after that. If members end up on the wait list, they are first on the roster for the following month. If slots open during the month, Rosanna will contact those on the wait list. Those who stay on the waitlist will be first on the active roster the following month. Monthly rosters are posted upstairs. Of course, members are welcome to come to a class they are interested in and wait to see if everyone shows up. If there is an opening for that day, they can attend.

Instead of the traditional Halloween party, we are having a spooky social on Tuesday, October 26th from 1-3pm. Limit is 60. There will be just snacks and no meal. We will have dancing and costumes. We continue to scale down due to COVID.

### **Transportation:**

Last month we increased our number again by over 100 rides. There are 1,100 in total.

As we try to absorb the increase in ridership, we are working to streamline the process for both the seniors and the department.

We continue to look for new PT drivers to round out the week.

We will be celebrating our Transportation team and their commitment to the seniors and the department on October 27th at 10:45 am in the CLC Great Room.

### **Nutrition:**

We hosted 497 dining guests in September, an increase over August. Our average daily walk-ins were six people, and no shows were seven. Everyone received a meal regardless of reservation.

We see more new faces and individuals joining with others, more mingling, lots of long visits and conversations.

The monthly breakfast run by the activities program and prepared by Brothers Taverna draws in about 25 people, Mayor Driscoll attended, it is very popular, and we'd like to promote it more.

Two new volunteers were welcomed to the kitchen team on Mondays: Susan Berton and Pat Furlong.

### **Nutrition Education and Outreach:**

Kelley Annese is working with the Backyard Growers of Cape Ann to see how best to cover the raised vegetable beds for the cold weather. She is working regularly with Kerry Murphy from the Health Department to make cooking videos that promote nutritious and easy dishes to make. The drive-thru Farmer's Market ended this week, and we will resume this offering again early next summer.

Kelley has researched how to get our Snack Shack idea going. We spoke with Youth Build, but they would need space here to build something and we don't have that kind of room. We are looking at food carts we can order and then have Youth Build put the pieces together. The Snack Shack is to have healthy snacks available at the Community Life Center at a very affordable cost.

**Other news:**

Nursing students from the RN program at North Shore Community College started their hours at the Council on Aging on October 14th. Most weeks through mid-November, we will have two to three student nurses visiting on Thursdays and Fridays. They meet with staff and seniors to get to know what we are about and to learn about the seniors' lives and why they like to come to COA activities and offerings.

Andrew LaPointe, President of the Friends of the COA, has started a support group for those living with vision loss. This group will meet once a month.

The COA, along with the Health Department, is sponsoring monthly wellness walks on the Salem Common. The first was held on October 13th and the next one will be led by Jim McAllistair on Wednesday, November 10th from 9:00-10:00 am.

We have been the host site for a lecture series put together by Patricia Zaido. There are two more on November 9th and November 16th starting at 7:00 pm. Community Life staff are on hand to talk about offerings at the center before the speaker talks.

The Transportation team will be honored on October 27th at 10:45 am in the Great Room for their dedication to seniors and their work over the course of the pandemic. All are welcome to come for coffee and a treat.

We are offering a Spanish-speaking Memory Café at the Charter Street senior housing site on a monthly basis. This is led by Activities Coordinator Rosanna Donahue.

Representative Paul Tucker put a request of \$50K in the state budget for Memory Café's at our COA. TA is working with Finance Director Anna Freedman as to how to access this funding and learn if the funds can also be utilized for related programming.

**New Business:** AB said she was wondering what the COA is doing regarding diversity. TA said we were taking direction from the City and that we were being encouraged to hire staff who reflect the diversity of the community when possible. GB asked if the COA was looking for money until the end of the year. TA said she had some money and would find resources to cover expenses. If need be, we would go to the Mayor and City Council.

AB suggested adding something to the Workplan regarding diversity and said everyone is now focusing on this.

LC said the City is already taking steps regarding inclusivity. AB advised that in Lincoln they have made sure that signage reflects inclusive language. She said they have training and are going through policy manuals which are read and edited with diversity equity and inclusion (DEI) focus. LC asked if this Board should be involved. AB said that they have edited their Mission Statement.

LC said she was worried about overloading and that if a sub-committee was needed, those from the Board would be needed. KM advised this was initially driven by the staff and then brought to the Board.

LC said she would like to see what was actually happening in the City. TA said she would contact the person and get more information. AB said in the future maybe we could invite that person to the meeting.

JR said we had to work hand in hand with the City but that it was easy to take a look at our Mission Statement.

TA said she would send it out to the Board via email.

KM state we needed to look at the Bylaws also.

Next Board Meeting: November 17, 2021 via Zoom.

There being no further business:

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:33 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk