

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

Date and Time: March 20, 2019 at 5:15 P.M.

Meeting Location: Board Room, 401 Bridge Street

Members Present: Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), John Russell (JR), Julie Carver (JC), Elaine Heredeem (EH), Abigail Butt (AB) via telephone, Alice Williams (AW) via telephone

Members Absent: George Barbuzzi (GB)

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

Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Meeting Called to Order

LC calls the meeting to order at 5:15 P.M.

Motion made by JR to approve the February minutes, seconded by EH and passes unanimously.

Old Business:

Senior Housing Advocacy – TA said the Board have been excellent advocates for senior housing. She advised that tomorrow there will be a meeting of the Salem for all Ages Housing subcommittee.

LC advised the Board that the Residential Overlay did not pass. She and GB attended the meeting which lasted four hours. She stated the ordinance passed in committee, but when it got to the council, it did not pass. LC said she did not know what that means. St. James parking is an issue and at Immaculate Conception. They did not talk about St. Anne's. JR advised that a friendly amendment is being talked about and it would be easier to get through. It has the ability to let contractors get in some extras.

LC said one of the things that happened at the Committee meeting was that the Mayor mentioned several initiatives around housing and Elaine Milo asked why we were doing it now without knowing the other initiatives planned.

JR advised that he met with Patricia Zaido's intern and looking into the in-law apartment issue. He said they did not include opening it to everybody but the reason the bill was

crafted that way was to get it through. He said there was a lot of support from the City Council.

AB advised that part of the issue was if doing an in-law apartment, it would work, but as soon as you change it, it becomes multi-family and then a variance is needed. JR said it was done mostly for the seniors but if we want to broaden it, fine but if we need to go before the Board it may be a problem.

LC asked if anyone on the Board had a chance to see the two articles from Patricia Zaido – auxiliary apartment and the Nesterly article which talked about boarders. Both articles talked about places other than New England where zoning issues probably were not as difficult as Salem and talked about converting old garages into auxiliary housing. AB said Nesterly won't work with Salem but has a pilot program in Boston.

JR stated that one of the biggest drawbacks to auxiliary apartments is that no one knows they can do it. AB said that maybe we should focus on outreach. JR suggested having a housing fair with HUD people here and someone to speak about reverse mortgages, etc.

LC asked if anyone knew how much the apartments across the street were going for. JR advised that Salem does not have anything in writing that says a certain percentage of housing has to be affordable. AB said every other city she knows of has the percentage built in. She said Somerville demands 12% and Cambridge demands 15%. JR advised that Salem should have a minimum of 10%. LC said that minimum of 10% was a big discussion at the Committee hearing because Councilor-at-large Sargent wanted 20%. The Mayor pointed out, as did City Planner Tom Daniels, that once you get over 10% the construction costs, etc. make the profit very close. AB said she did not agree. JR advised that affordable housing is subsidized. LC stated that was the feeling of the administration and said we may have to work towards changing that. JR said maybe we should be looking to the developer to give 15%. He said one of the things people may be agreeable to regarding giving back, was to raise the height limit that developer can build.

EH advised that at a housing complex on Rantoul Street in Beverly, 22 units were subsidized, but that 2-bedroom units were going for \$3,200.00. JR said there has to be a way to do it in Salem and AB advised it was about "attitude".

LC asked if at the meeting tomorrow would JR be willing to talk about a hard and fast minimum of 10%, and if not agreed to, why.

New Business:

Friends Update - As always, pushing for fundraising efforts and wanted to expand on this. One idea was to do a comedy night and suggested Ames Hall at the Y which could seat about 300 people. He said someone told him they could get a comedian for \$400.00.

LC asked if the appeal mailing had gone out and JR said it went out over a month ago and they have donations of about \$10,000.00.

JR advised there would be a pasta dinner in June.

LC wanted to advise the Board that the Enhance Fitness class was going to have a graduation, and that 14 people had been chosen to go to the Y for the next program and that roundtrip transportation would be provided from the Center. She stated that there is only room for a certain amount of people due to safety issues and stated that this class is very popular and cannot accommodate everyone who wants to participate.

TA stated that Rosanna Donahue and Kathy McCarthy were working hard to accommodate everyone in exercise and dance and advised that so much of what is offered here is either free or costs very little and that we cannot please everyone.

TA advised that everyone on the Board should have received a salem.com email address and should have been contacted by Eric in IT. JC advised hers was not working and TA said that she would talk with Eric and do a couple of test emails.

AB advised that she had gone to the LGBT Conference on seniors in Salem last week. She heard rave reports on the new senior center and people found it very welcoming. AB said it was very important for us to share each other's fliers so if not comfortable in Salem, they know where to go in neighboring communities. Any time we have an LGBT event there needs to be a sign up at the front desk and there should be a person designated at the Center for people to talk to about senior LGBT. AB said that if there is not a LGBT flag on the front door, that there needs to be one. TA said she would speak with Trish O'Brien about this.

AB then spoke with the My Senior app for your phone. She said she has it on her phone and it is awesome and very easy to use.

Director's Report:

Transportation -- In January there was a total of 1,398 rides -- 328 rides to medical appointments; 75 rides for employment; 435 for shopping/errands; 498 to COA and 62 miscellaneous rides.

TA advised that Dianne White was hired as a new part-time driver and that this would keep Fred in the office more. She advised that she would be meeting with Fred next month to discuss policies, procedures, snow emergencies, etc.

North Shore Community Health Center: TA met with Maggie Brennan, Executive Director of North Shore Community Health Center. They are collaborating on an application to the North Shore Community Health Network to have a clinician hold office hours at the Community Life Center.

It was suggested that running groups for caregivers that were stressed, grief support, etc. would be a good idea. LC suggested that as we got closer to the possibility of a part-time clinician, these support groups could be part of the Memory Café.

His and Her Heart Health – This was the second in the lecture series and was very well attended and the lecturer spoke about symptoms experienced by men and symptoms experienced by women. SATV filmed the lecture.

Nutrition Program -- A Letter of Intent for a nutrition grant through North Shore Elder Services has been submitted. These funds pay for Dan Cote's part-time salary and meal programs.

Social Services:

418 seniors were served and 72 people are participating in the Greater Boston Food Bank.

Are U Ok? – This is a wellness check program and TA advised that reports/alerts will be defaulted to the Police Department printer.

MCOA Conference – The next meeting will be in Danvers on October 2-4, 2019.

Next Board Meeting: April 17, 2019 and will be chaired by EH as LC will be on vacation.

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

The meeting adjourns at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk