

**NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MEETING: COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS, ELDERLY, YOUTH,  
HEALTH, HOUSING & DISABILITY ISSUES**  
**DATE: MARCH 18, 2019**  
**TIME: 7:00 P.M.**  
**PLACE: COUNCILLOR WILLIAM SALTZMAN ANTECHAMBER,  
ROOM 213, MUNICIPAL BUILDING**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLORS MARIA GIESTA, CHAIRPERSON; IAN  
ABREU; DEBORA COELHO; SCOTT LIMA**

**ABSENT: COUNCILLOR HUGH DUNN, VICE CHAIRMAN**

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Councillor Giesta called the Veterans Affairs Committee Meeting to order and took attendance. A Communication from Councillor Dunn was read into the record stating his reason for not attending tonight's meeting. This Communication was received and placed on file by Councillor Carney and seconded by Councillor Abreu.

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Notice, City Clerk of reference of a WRITTEN MOTION, Councillor Giesta, requesting that Christine Sullivan, M.S., Tufts Grant Coordinator and Paula Shriner, CEO of Coastline be invited to the next Committee on Veterans Affairs, Elderly, Youth, Health, Housing and Disability Issues, to present the Age Friendly Initiative, the project's background, and what this means for our City (Ref'd 9/27/18) was received and placed on file by Councillor Coelho and seconded by Councillor Abreu.

Councillor Giesta welcomed former Ward Three Councillor George Smith to the Ante Chamber, he is a member of the Council on Aging.

Christine Sullivan, Tufts Grant Coordinator for the Age Friendly Initiative and Paula Shiner, CEO Coastline Elderly Services, Inc. were present to introduce the Age Friendly Initiative and give some background information to the Committee. Ms. Sullivan passed out a packet of information on the Age Friendly Initiative. This information was received and placed on file by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Coelho.

Ms. Sullivan gave an overview of the Age Friendly Initiative. The program was triggered by the Mass Health Aging Collaborative. The project is a collaboration between the City and Coastline Elderly. Tufts supports the initiative financially. In 2006 the World Health Organization started the program in the United States. In 2012 AARP became the organizing body in the United States. In 2015 the Mayor was approached by Coastline to see if they would like to be a part of the initiative and he said yes. A city's administrator must agree to the program, which is why they approached the mayor. A survey was done with help from UMass Dartmouth and it was discovered there is a lot to tackle as the city currently has well over 20,000 citizens over the age of sixty-five (65). The city was approved by AARP in 2017 and was given the designation; Tufts funded the outreach position in 2018.

Councillor Lima asked how the initiative was funded and was told through Tufts, and some grants. Currently, the Governor is looking to add funding to support Age Friendly Initiative programs. The Initiative is holding a Legislative Breakfast to explain to the areas State Legislatures the need to fund this program when it is proposed by the Governor.

An action plan was developed and there were seven (7) areas the Initiative would focus on called domains. They included Housing, Transportation, Health and Community Supports, Employment and Volunteerism, Respect and Social Inclusion and Communication. Each one of these domains have smaller Committees coming up with ideas to expand on their missions.

George Smith explained there have been monthly meeting over the past two (2) years. The meetings have been informative and those involved have been kept in the loop on the development of age friendly programs.

Paula Shiner, CEO Coastline Elderly, explained that all the city's departments were involved in the structure of the initiative. Many departments are involved with the smaller domain committees along with other individual entities.

Councillor Abreu asked about outreach and he was told they use Coastline Elderly, the Senior Scope and currently the city is working o a logo and website for the initiative. He suggested they look at Facebook, WBSM and Cable Access.

Councillor Coelho thanked those in attendance for their commitment to the city's elderly population and she understands firsthand what it is like to take care of aging parents. She praised the Meals on Wheels program and laundry programs offered.

Councillor Giesta echoed the same sentiments of Councillor Coelho, stating that Coastline is incredible and all that they have to offer are an asset to the city and its aging population. She too knows firsthand on the issues that arise when taking care of aging parents.

On motion by Councillor Abreu and seconded by Councillor Coelho, the Committee VOTED: To recommend that the City Council go on record in support of the Age Friendly Initiative and thanks Coastline Elderly and the Council on Aging for their involvement in making this initiative possible. This motion passed on a voice vote.

Councillor Abreu made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Councillor Coelho.

This meeting adjourned @ 8:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Denis Lawrence, Jr.,  
Clerk of Committees