



Council on Aging

January 10, 2013 – **Minutes**
City Hall, 133 William Street, Ashley Room

****View Agenda****

Present:

Bruce Duarte Chairman
Patricia Costa Vice-Chair
Virginia Morrison Secretary
Stanley Ociesa Member
Inez Mello Member
Jane Stott Member
Joan Swain Member
Esperanza Alejandro- Member
Berube

Excused:

Mary Sullivan
James Sylvia

Also Present:

Cynthia Wallquist
Debra Lee

Meeting was called to order at 9:02 A.M. by Bruce Duarte, Chairman.

Minutes from December 13, 2012 meeting were not available.

New Director

Ms. Wallquist introduced Ms. Debra Lee to the Board members as the new Director of the Council on Aging. She will begin the position on January 14, 2013. Ms. Lee spoke about her life and education. The Board members welcomed Ms. Lee to the COA. Ms. Arsenault expressed the Mayor's welcome. Mr. Duarte and Ms. Lee met before the meeting this morning.

Mr. Duarte stressed the need to reach out to the residents at senior housing sites to get them to participate in our programs.

Ms. Swain asked if Ms. Lee had written grants in the past. She replied that she was familiar with grant writing and has done it before. She stressed how important grants are to this job.

Mr. Ociesa and Ms. Mello asked whether the fact that she is also a minister would affect the time she would be able to put into the COA or interfere with her duties here. She reassured them that the Directorship is her full-time job and her part-time job is as a pastor.

Mr. Duarte stressed that the purpose of the Council on Aging is to reach out to the elderly and provide services for them to improve their standard of living and that he was certain that everyone will working to that end.

OLD BUSINESS

Downtown Senior Center Move

The old center has closed and a Christmas dinner was held for the regulars. The move has been completed and the Outreach workers have been moved to Hillman St. and Buttonwood. The basement at the old center location has been cleaned and some files have been left there waiting for permission to shred. The lease at the hotel site is for one year and the monthly rent is \$667.

Christmas Day Dinner

Mr. Ociesca reported that the dinner put on by Tifereth Israel Synagogue was a success. They served about 125 meals and delivered 175 meals to homebound people. He acknowledged Ms. Mello for her participation and for getting Normandin Middle School students as volunteers.

On-Call Drivers

Ms. Wallquist reported that the position has been posted on-line and she has begun to receive applications. The Acushnet COA has part-time drivers who may be interested. She mentioned the assistance available through the Comm. on Disabilities for taxi transportation for disabled seniors, when needed. Recently, this has been used to transport seniors when the COA transportation system has not been able to take them.

Boston Medical Program

Mr. Duarte voiced concern that the program is underutilized. The costs and time constraints were discussed. The committee will be meeting.

Friends of the Elderly

Mr. Ostiguy was unable to attend due to illness. He will attend the February meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Community Services Director's Report

Cynthia Wallquist

Ms. Wallquist's packet included:

Highlights of December Senior Centers' holiday parties which were well attended.

January & February Flyers for Senior Centers

Calendar of all Center activities and special events

Part-time driver specifications

SRTA meeting announcement for January 17, 2013

Ms. Lee's resume

Snow Removal Program.

First storm had eight houses for seniors paid by the Necessities Grant.

Community Development

Holding its second of this year's annual hearings on Community Development Block Grant funding which funds all the senior center coordinators salaries except for Downtown. We always ask for more money and always get cuts. Technical workshop being held tomorrow on filling out applications. Once the application has been submitted, it may be helpful if the Board members let the Mayor's office know that we really need all of this. The Mayor does have final say in how the funds are distributed,

Mr. Ociesca asked about the construction at Brooklawn Park and what was being done. Ms. Wallquist said that the only thing she knew about that would affect the senior center was parking. She said that she would check on the other projects for him. Mr. Ociesca said that the parking was a problem because of the hill and that the entrance to the park and additional spaces were planned in the pond area. Ms. Costa commented that the work is being done by City workers after the Route 18 work is done. The priority project is the flooding.

**Motion by Ms. Swain to accept the Comm. Services Director's report. Seconded by Ms. Mello.
Unanimously Approved**

Chairman's Report

Bruce Duarte

Mr. Duarte received a communication from City Councillor Steve Martins, Chairman of the Ordinance Committee about Executive Order No. 2012-1 regarding Remote Participation by Members of a Public Body. This is when a member has a planned absence the member may vote. Ms. Wallquist stated that there must be extreme advance notice because the request has to be filed with the City Clerk as well as the Chairman and the Mayor. All three have to approve. The process cannot be done to cover multiple meetings but must be done for each meeting. Ms. Wallquist said that the Disabilities Commission had tried to use this process but it didn't work out.

The Chairman spoke about the need to educate seniors on computers and cell phones. The technology changes constantly. Ms. Wallquist said that the "computer lab" is at Hazelwood and is used for computer teaching. He recommended that Ms. Lee contact the Executive Director of the Housing Authority to ask about the computers which have been replaced.

Mr. Duarte stressed the need for more funding to be found and the need to seek out grants.

Motion by Mr. Ociesa to accept the Chairman's report. Seconded by Ms. Swain. Unanimously Approved

Mr. Ociesa has donated art supplies to the Buttonwood Center. He also has old New Bedford pictures for Jeannine Wilson to use in SeniorScope.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 14, 2013.

Motion by Mr. Ociesa to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Costa. Unanimously Approved

Respectfully submitted by Bruce W. Duarte