



Council on Aging

May 9, 2013 – **Minutes**
181 Hillman Street, Bldg. 9

****View Agenda****

Board Members Present:

Bruce Duarte, Chair
Patricia Costa, Vice-Chair
Virginia Morrison, Secretary
Inez Mello
Jane Stott
Joan Swain
Stanley Ociesa

Excused:

Mary Sullivan
Esperanza Alejandro-Berube

Also Present:

Debra Lee, COA Director
Cynthia Wallquist, Director of Community Services
Christina Connolly

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 AM by the Chairman, Bruce Duarte

Secretary's Report

Ms. Connolly from the Mayor's office first addressed the meeting with the proposal made by the City Council to extend the hours at the senior centers in order to lengthen the times of operation and offer more programming. There is a request for an increase in the budget for the Council on Aging to help to pay for this. A figure of \$28,000 was mentioned to open the center for one additional hour and \$14,000 if it were an additional half hour. There was much discussion about the issue including a comment made by the chairperson that the money would be better spent on increasing the administration staffing at Hillman Street where it is deeply needed. Mr. Ociesa, said "who made this decision, not the Board.? Let us know what is happening. Ms. Connolly reported why the Mayor suggested some of these proposals. The Board recommended that Ms. Lee, look over the proposals. The Board also suggested that we look at all of the options, all the pros and cons before making this kind of a decision. A thank you went out to Ms. Connolly for taking the time to meet with the Board. She assured the Board that she will take their comments back to the Mayor.

Old Business

Volunteer Luncheon will be June 25th from 11-2 and will be catered by D and D caterers. Boston Medical has been very busy and it is believed that this is because of our flexibility in scheduling people when they need to go. Ms. Lee contacted SRTA and they said that they are continuing to work on building this into their schedule.

Approval of minutes for April 11, motion was made by Ms. Stott and seconded by Mr. Sylvia. They were unanimously approved.

Chairperson's Report – Bruce Duarte, Sr.

Budget – Cynthia explained how it works

Computers at Hazelwood. Hopefully this will be up and running very shortly. Several people have offered to teach. The installation has not happened yet, but will be happening shortly.

Lunches at Hazelwood and Downtown – Lunches have begun at Hazelwood and the response to an alternative menu of soup and sandwiches is going very well. They are being offered two days a week to start, currently on bingo days to capitalize on the larger crowd days. They will begin at the hotel with a plated meal which come all made up, no need to do any preparation which satisfies the requirements there, as the kitchen is not up to code. The meals at the Hotel will begin next week. Starting on June 14th the alternative and the hot menu will be made available to both sites.

Brooklawn Center and Flooding at the Park.- there is a lot of work being done at the park. Mr. Duarte asked if the work was interfering with the things going on at the center. Ms. Lee reported that she had not heard any issues regarding this, so believes at this point it's not an issue.

CBDG Grant – There is nothing new at this time, we have heard nothing to this point.

Volunteer of the Month has been in touch with Personnel on this issue and they have stated the importance of having clear criteria on this issue.

Foot Doctor – the question came up about privacy for the foot doctor. The question of liability was raised and Ms. Lee told the Board that everyone signs a waiver and that the Doctor carries the liability according to our legal department. The Director reported that the schedule is set and the doctor will be coming every nine weeks.

Election of Officers will take place on June 13, 2013 at our next meeting.

Ms. Payton is retiring, gratitude goes out from the Board for all her “wonderful work.” Ms. Payton expressed that she enjoyed working with the Board and that this is no reflection on the current management, that it's just time. Ms. Payton thanked the Board for the courtesy that they have shown. Ms. Costa expressed her gratitude for Ms. Payton's direction to the Board.

Mr. Duarte explained that he was brought in and told the news of Ms. Payton's retirement and that he is very thankful to have been informed of this.

Ms. Payton is leaving on July 1, 2013.

Friends of the Elderly: Ms. Alejandro-Berube could not be present today but sent a message that she has been in touch with the University of Massachusetts in Dartmouth with the Gerontology students to work with the Friends of the Elderly to get this going. They will be here for the next Board meeting to meet with the Board. Nelson Ostiguy according to Linda Morad, who was also unable to attend today that he does not seem to have enough time.

Ms. Mello stated that she spoke with Maria O'Connor from the Dartmouth Friends of the Elderly. She reported that she is willing to come and speak with us. We will invite her to the next meeting.

Mr. Duarte questioned whether there could be a thrift store next door. It was stated that the Dartmouth COA has an entire building. Ms. Mello was asked to invite her to come to the next meeting. There was a motion to accept Bruce's report made by Ms. Costa and seconded by Mr. Ociesca. It was unanimously approved.

Director's Report - Debra Lee

Ms. Lee reported that she did receive an email from Ms. Alejandro-Berube, and reported the information that she received is the same.

Ms. Lee reported that she is very excited about the space next door, that this space is going to afford us the opportunity to offer more support type groups. Ms. Lee also reported that the first support group is due to start on the 28th of May at the Buttonwood Center. She talked about the focus of this group being meeting the needs of the people who are not ready necessarily to play bingo, but are struggling with the fact that they are alone and have no real family support. It is not intended to be a group where they sit around perseverating their current situation, but instead look at ways to move forward.

Ms. Lee talked about the work that she is doing in trying to determine exactly what is needed to fill Ms. Payton's position. She stated that this is a city position and it is very important to get this clearly defined. Mr. Duarte stated that it is important to get someone into the position prior to Ms. Payton's departure. Ms. Wallquist explained the posting process. She also talked about the payout and the process of hiring for the position. Ms. Wallquist stated that the position can be posted in July, but the hiring cannot happen until the payout has been covered. Mr. Duarte stated that he wants this position to be hired as soon as possible. He stated that we can utilize the extra money in the budget to cover the salary. Mr. Duarte stated that he wanted to get a letter out to personnel and to the Mayor in order to fill the position as soon as possible.

Ms. Lee stated that this person needs some supervisory experience that they need to be a self starter. Ms. Lee stated that there is no one within the Council that has the qualifications for this position. There was a great deal of discussion on how the system works, in terms of payout and budgets. Ms. Wallquist stated that there is no cushion in the budget. What is in the budget is a person's present salary, not the payout because of vacation time and sick time. There are no provisions in the budget for payouts. Ms. Costa said that ideally and in a perfect system to have Ms. Payton train the new person would be great.

Ms. Lee said that she has been in touch with Coastline about the meal programs.

Ms. Lee talked about the EOEI and the current amount of \$7 per elder. There is legislation to try to get the figure up to \$8 per elder. She reported that there is a legislative breakfast tomorrow at Brandon Woods where there will be an opportunity to appeal to legislators at that time. The EOEI pays for our outreach and our transportation.

Ms. Lee reported that there have been a great deal of interns that are looking for placement. She talked about a dance major who would like to offer her services to the seniors at the centers.

Ms. Lee also reported on a gentleman that she met with at the request of the Mayor who is looking for just the type of support services that we are going to be offering next door. He was informed of the Support group at Buttonwood, beginning at the end of this month and he was very interested, and glad to have been afforded the time to meet with the Director. Ms. Lee talked about a program that she is going to attend on "Feel Good Bingo" in Worcester. It is to teach staff how to recognize Depression in Elders.

Ms. Lee talked about the 'pinning' ceremony, and how wonderful it was to have Mr. Ocieska and Ms. Morrison on their years of service to the Board.

A motion was made to accept Ms. Lee's report it was made by Ms. Swain and seconded by Mr. Syliva. It was unanimously approved.

Mr. Ocieska reported that there is a Health Fair that at the Seaport Inn today, sponsored by Coastline. Ms. Lee reported that Ms. Barrette from Senior Travel and Ms. Wilson from Senior Scope will have a table there representing the Council on Aging.

Mr. Duarte asked Ms. Lee to look for students to help research Grants that might be available to the Council. Ms. Lee reported that we are working on partnering with Coastline because they are a 501C3 and we are a C4, and that a lot of the grants available are available to C3's. By going in under Coastline, we are made eligible to

apply.

Ms. Wallquist Report: Ms. Wallquist distributed updated calendars. She reported that Ms. Coelho would be back next week from knee surgery and that Ms. Foley from Brooklawn would be going out in June for surgery.

There was a motion to accept Cynthia's report made by Mr. Ociesa, it was seconded by Ms. Costa. It was unanimously approved.

There was a motion made to adjourn by Mr. Sylvia and it was seconded by Ms. Costa. It was unanimously approved.

Dr. Crowe, a podiatrist, was contacted by Ms. Lee about setting up podiatry clinics in our Senior Centers. He is very much interested.

There was a motion to accept Ms. Lee's report made by Ms. Costa and seconded by Ms. Stott. Motion carried 7-0.

Community Services Director's Report

Cynthia Wallquist distributed each staff member's Preliminary FY14 Work Plan for their review. She reported that there was a budget meeting during which she was informed that the Mayor's Office requested budgets to keep each Senior Center open until 4 PM. Mr. Duarte stated that the Hotel can only be used until 3 due to the terms of their lease. If the other Centers remain open, it will mean an increase in salaries in order to accommodate this change in hours. The Board was very much opposed to this change and the Chair and Ms. Lee will contact the Mayor's office to convey their thinking on this subject. The Chair would like the Mayor's office to hold off on this decision until they have come and met with the Board.

The Senior Centers' calendars through June are being updated; Ms. Wallquist will send out an update on the activities at the centers.

There was a motion to accept Ms. Wallquist's report made by Ms. Costa and seconded by Jane Stot. Motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Duarte stated that these meetings have been running very well and that the Board is well informed. He extended congratulations to the Director on passing the SHINE exam. There was some brief discussion on the number of years that people have served, and how the numbers are derived.

There was a motion to adjourn made by Ms. Stott and seconded by Ms. Swain

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 AM

Respectfully submitted

Virginia Morrison, Secretary