

**AGING IN PLACE COMMITTEE**  
**APPROVED MINUTES 10-15- 2020 (virtual ZOOM meeting)**

*Mission: The AIP mission is to:*

*Provide advocacy for changes in Eliot's physical, economic, and social environment that enables Eliot residents, especially older residents, to live in their homes for as long as possible, and foster the creation of services and programs geared to keeping all residents active and engaged in the community.*

**Present:** Ellen Ceppetelli, Ron Ceppetelli, Gail Licciardello, Nedra Sahr, Tracy Dunton, Melissa Layman, Jordan Miles

**Absent:** Michele Meyer

**Meeting called to order at:** 4:06 pm

Ellen welcomed Tracy Dunton as full a voting member and Melissa Layman as alternate member. Tracy is a long-term resident of Eliot with 35 years of experience in retail sales, and recent involvement as a full-time caregiver and advocate for elderly family members. Melissa is a recent resident of Eliot with an extensive background in Information Technology. She is looking at a career change and is currently enrolled in several courses, one of which is web design. Ellen will arrange a zoom orientation meeting with Melissa Albert and new members.

**Review of Minutes:** One correction proposed:

Pg. 1: Correct meeting date to September 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Motion:** Ron moved to approve changes and Gail seconded. Ellen, Ron, Gail, and Nedra voted in favor, none opposed.

**Chair Update.**

Ellen reported an inquiry regarding the Senior Tax Assistance Program that will go into effect in July 2021. She shared information on a recent Age Friendly Meetup focused on social isolation; recent job change for Patricia Oh who will continue her work with Maine Age Friendly committees in her new role at UME; and the opportunity for AIP members to attend the October 27<sup>th</sup> UME Gerontology Clinical Conference.

**Secretary Position:** The position of Secretary remains vacant. Tracy expressed interest in the role. Election will be held at the November meeting.

**The Foundation for Arts & Healing**

Ellen provided a brief history and specific AIP commitments in its collaboration with the Foundation for Arts and Healing (FAH) on the Successful Aging Project. The primary focus of this program is to use creative arts and discussion to decrease social isolation and loneliness in

older adults. She mentioned that social isolation is considered a risk factor equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. She further described key activities needed over the last few weeks that resulted in implementation of this program on October 6th. Although the timeline to recruit a facilitator and between 10 to 15 participants was short, 10 individuals agreed to participate. All participants received free art supplies that are essential to this weekly online group discussion to bring socially isolated seniors together for engagement, support, and collegiality. Ellen shared Deb Lloyd's feedback that each individual seems eager to participate and support one another. They are diverse in backgrounds and ages, but truly warm, authentic and engaged. If this experience is successful, AIP will have the option to participate with a different group in the January 2021. This decision will be made once the outcomes of this group are reviewed. The honorarium for the second round would be \$1000 less than the \$3000 honorarium provided for this first session.

Gail mentioned that the FAH project came up so suddenly, and decisions had to be made so quickly, there wasn't time to consider whether it fit in with the Committee's stated priorities. She suggested that we look at our priorities to decide if we want to amend them from the original 4 that we had agreed upon. Nedra suggested that this committee be flexible to take advantage of worthwhile programs that pop up on short notice. The committee thanked Ellen and Ron for their initiative and good work.

Discussion followed on the challenges created by this unique opportunity that required instant action. The unanticipated cost of \$150 to create a separate zoom account at the last minute, resulted in the chair needing to make this decision without committee input. As part of the MOU between the FAH and AIP, the committee had approved supplying a zoom room. The problem was that AIP was not aware that the most feasible way of doing this would have a cost attached. This need for sudden decision-making was a first. Ron asked that the AIP consider forming a 501-3C organization with an Executive Director. He shared his concern that the increased number of baby boomers, many with dementia, is far greater than the resources currently available throughout Maine. He shared that the state of Maine had received a \$200,000 grant to support elderly residents in their communities.

A discussion of how the priorities of the action plan can be met while meeting the needs that emerge followed. To date, several key goals under the Housing and Public Spaces domains have been met. The goals under the Information and Communication and Transportation domains are yet to be achieved. Ellen shared examples of programs developed by several Age Friendly communities that were developed in response to emerging needs. One example was the Tech Handy Helpers Program in Saco.

### **AARP Challenge Grant**

Gail reported that the AARP grant of \$5,000 has not yet been received. The benches have been selected, locations at Dead Duck have been determined, and Tom McDonald has volunteered to take delivery of the benches, assemble and install them. Melissa offered to help Tom. Gail talked with the president of the Garden Club who expressed their interest in helping design and

select perennials. She also mentioned that the Garden Club is open to sharing perennials, but would require some help in planting. Tracy offered to donate perennials, her design skills and planting help.

Gail met with a sales-person at Bob's Plaques on Rte. 236. She was given two options for plaques:

1. Anodized aluminum with black and silver engraving on a 5"X3" plate. Cost \$30.
2. Plastic material with holes for mounting a 5"X10" plate. Cost \$50.

She will pursue further details and report back to the committee. Discussion among committee members yielded this inscription for the plaques: "Presented by the Eliot Aging In Place Committee and funded by the 2020 AARP Challenge Grant".

### **Communication and Information Sub Committee**

**Town Survey:** The town-wide survey showed a lack of knowledge about services and events in the town. One of the seminal precepts of the committee is to identify said services and events, and either form or join forces with a group that is actively pursuing the same goal. Two organizations were mentioned:

1. SOBO, a group in South Berwick created to provide an umbrella of liability insurance for non-profit organizations in South Berwick.
2. Eliot Connects. Originally started by a group from the Bahai' Community, it is being formed with the purpose of consolidating information of services and opportunities town wide. Michele Meyers is on their Board. Melissa Layman offered to become our active representative in Eliot Connects.

### **Dashboard**

Gail asked about the status of the AARP Dashboard project. Ellen reported that a resource management consultant, Fourth Economy from Pittsburgh has provided an initial list of resources in Eliot based upon their scan of the area. However, AIP needs to provide further information. This project was put on the back burner during the efforts to recruit participants to the Successful Aging Project. She & Melissa Albert will follow up.

### **Volunteer Engagement**

A more coordinated plan for volunteer engagement is needed. AIP has two email lists that include one of volunteers and another of all individuals who participated in the survey and wanted to stay connected. At its June meeting, AIP agreed to have Fran Thomas become the volunteer coordinator. However, her resignation from the committee has left this position vacant. Melissa Layman offered to be the volunteer coordinator and the committee unanimously agreed. Ellen reminded members of the Saco Age Friendly documents that were reviewed previously. The committee agreed to use the job description of the volunteer coordinator as a template.

Nedra suggested that creating a one-page summary of the AIP and its four subcommittees would be helpful in recruiting volunteers. This summary would include purpose and a brief description of goals and anticipated outcomes. She offered to create this document that could be published and given to prospective volunteers. Ellen will speak with Michele about posting the final product on Eliot Strong for volunteers.

### **AIP Logo**

Creating an AIP logo has been an ongoing project that keeps being interrupted. Originally the committee had approved funds to support a contest among middle and high school students, offering \$100 for the best submission. Due to the Covid-19 shut down, the process was stalled. Committee consensus is that we restart that search. Ron volunteered to follow up.

**Meeting Adjourned:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 P.M. The next meeting will be November 19<sup>th</sup> at 4 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Nedra Sahr, acting secretary