



*Eliot Aging In Place
Committee*

Aging In Place Committee

Town of Eliot, Maine

The mission of the Aging In Place (AIP) Committee is to provide advocacy for changes in Eliot's physical, economic, and social environment that enable Eliot residents, especially older residents, to live in their homes for as long as possible and that foster the creation of services and programs geared to keeping all residents active and engaged in the community.

MINUTES – April 15, 2021 Meeting

Present: Ellen Ceppetelli, Melissa Layman, Gail Licciardello (left at 5:14pm), Ann Lukegard, Nedra Sahr, Melissa Albert

Absent: Michele Meyer

Guest: Deb Lloyd, coordinator of Creative Club

Meeting called to order at: 4:03 pm

Check In: Ellen changed agenda times. The Foundation of Art and Healing discussion was switched with Nedra's Volunteer discussion as Deb Lloyd is joining us at 4:15 pm. There were no objections to doing so.

Review of Minutes of 3-18-2021 meeting and 3-23-2021 special meeting:

The Committee reviewed the Minutes of March 18th. A correction to Deb Lloyd's name was made. Melissa Albert's listing in the heading was updated to present as a non-voting member of the committee. Gail was added to the list of those who attended the ADU Planning Board meeting online. Ellen had some wording changes for the Grassroots Fund write up that were made and the title of Southern Maine Agency on Aging was corrected. The Committee voted to accept the Minutes from the 3-18-2021 meeting with changes. Ann will make the requested changes and submit the Minutes to the Town Clerk.

MOTION: Nedra moved to accept the Minutes. Ann seconded the motion. Ellen, Melissa L, Gail, Ann, and Nedra voted to approve the minutes with changes. All approved. No one opposed. The minutes were accepted with changes.

The Committee reviewed the minutes for the special meeting on March 23, 2021. The only suggested edit was updating Melissa Albert's listing on the reporter. Ann will send the approved minutes to the Town Clerk.

MOTION: Gail moved to accept the Minutes to the special meeting. Nedra seconded the motion. Ellen, Melissa L, Gail, Ann, and Nedra voted to approve the minutes. All approved. No one opposed. The minutes were accepted.

Ann added that she would like to create a heading for AIP documents like the Minutes Report to drop in on documents and will send it out as a jpeg for others to use. The members welcomed this.

Chair Update:

Ellen reminds members that the committee still has a vacancy and asks all to think about how to recruit a new member. She added that Michele Meyer's work as our state representative takes up a great deal of time and she is unable to participate as an AIP member as regularly as she would like.

Deb Lloyd joined the meeting.

Ellen also asked if anyone had had a chance to look at the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities portal, she had sent the invitation to join to all members in an email. Melissa L and Ann had looked and will look again to see how they can sign in.

Deb Lloyd presented to the members

Ellen introduced Deb Lloyd, facilitator of Creative Circle workshops this past spring and fall. Deb reported on the Creative Circle and Creative Club and success. Deb had provided committee members through Ellen two documents with data that gives details on the programs: "Successful Aging Creativity Circle Pilot Program (Fall 2020 and Spring 2021)" and "Summary of the Successful Aging Program." All members had received the documents.

Deb reported that The Foundation for Art & Healing (FAH) which oversees the program was a "flexible and responsible organization." FAH tailored meetings for facilitators and program coordinators not only to train them but to also offer support. FAH responded without hesitation to requests and were flexible and modified things. For instance, those like Deb who liked to print materials, FAH had someone turn materials into pdfs for easy printing. Deb found this to be an important part of her experience and the success of her workshops.

FAH's overarching question for this programming was "how do we support people with loneliness?" This was a pilot program with research components to best understand the value of such a program to participants and initial programs were done in fall 2019, face-to-face, not online. Participants were from organizations in Chicago, New York, and other places in Maine, about 100. Some participants reported a change in their sense of loneliness due to the program but the finding was not statistically significant. Of value, participants reported that following their participation in the programs they were more confident and self-directed. When Eliot joined in the topics were focused on aging.

Deb said additional training and time was needed to learn how to deliver programming to participants during Covid over the online Zoom format. More so for the first group than the second who had at this time mastered Zoom. Speaking for participants, Deb thanked the Town of Eliot and AIP for organizing and supporting the programs. Participants said it was nice to see each other, to see faces, and talk to others. Deb emphasized that participants were truly people who were not going out during the pandemic, not even to the grocery store as they were having groceries delivered instead. Deb felt so fortunate to observe and to present the opportunity for these connections. She applauds the Town for experimenting with something like this.

Both of Deb's groups were enthusiastic about continuing. The Creative Circle can continue as a Circle Club participant-driven group, also supported by FAH and has its own platform. FAH would allow them access to their resources online, about 20 activities that would serve as springboard to conversations and activities.

The activities that Deb lead the groups in included mindfulness activities, painting, sculpting with clay, listening to music, and cross-talk (talking and listening). Stretching exercises were on the schedule but did not work well given the Zoom format. The only downside she found to being online. The focus was always on do what you are comfortable with. Deb shared a story about how compassionate and caring the group was to each other.

Deb applauded FAH has providing a great curriculum and planning week to week, which included themes and discussion topics. Not everything was covered in meetings as discussions were so deep, reflective, and important. Discussion about Covid, grandkids, or things in the news were more important than completing the agenda. Group appreciated the opportunity to connect.

Members are excited about joining the Creativity Club. Deb is scheduled to meet with everyone online at 7:00pm to see what the mechanics would be and who wants to facilitate. Deb would be training that group as she did people in the fall group. FAH allows them access to their website and platform. No group is confined by FAH, even encouraged, to do their own thing to their liking.

Creative Circle is a group model that uses art exercise, mindfulness, and discussion to bring people together. Its intent is building relationships and connections. And introducing purposeful and select topics, in the Eliot group's case, about aging and coping and stress and things like that. The benefits are using art activities as a modality help people become more self-aware by sharing how they felt about doing the activity. Things created were personalized and reflected something about everyone that was then shared. People loved using clay. While the group did not get to all the activities, including dancing, Deb attributed that to the limitation of online meeting format. Shoulder stretches, thinking about posture and breathing were covered. It was made clear to participants up front that the meetings were not meant as therapy and pursue that on their own.

Deb reported specifically on members – 7 in one group and 8 in another, mostly women, mostly from Eliot but not all. Information and activities covered were reinforced with homework or an accompanying email Deb might send out in between meetings. Themes for each week included participating in community, what does healthy mean to everyone, coping with the pandemic, making and keeping friends, resilience, brain health, self-care, and finding meaning through legacy. Deb provided anecdotes about how these themes, particularly finding meaning through legacy was important to members.

Gail asked if people were connecting outside the groups. Deb said yes, people have been walking together, singing together, and planning a future picnic. As well the "phone buddies" activity has taken off on its own where members call each other on the phone and chat. Deb said to expect data from the spring session and to consider continuing on Zoom.

Everyone thanked Deb for her outstanding leadership in running the programs. Deb Lloyd left the meeting. Ellen shared that she will be meeting with Louisa Hudson, FAH program director, next week to provide feedback and will inform the committee about that meeting in the next AIP meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Gail presented the Treasurer's Report. She reported that Grassroot Funds had been used as planned in its entirety. She reminded the committee that Town funds must be used by June 30th or they will be returned to the Town. She said that Arts & Humanities had received its payment and that Deb Lloyd had been paid in full. The Town Select Board had approved the Maine Community Fund grant and that AIP had received those funds earmarked for the two new benches. Gail will direct Heather Muzeroll Roy, Eliot Community Service director, to order them.

MOTION: Ann moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as amended. Melissa L seconded the motion. Gail, Ellen, Nedra, Melissa L, and Ann voted yes. All approved. No one opposed. The Treasurer's Report was accepted as amended.

Public Spaces

Discussion focused on the two new benches. Gail asked should she order the exact same benches as before, all agreed she should. Gail clarified that the wording on the plaque on the two new benches should read, "Presented by AIP and funded by the Maine Community Fund. " All agreed yes.

MOTION: Nedra moved to order the two new benches, Ann seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Melissa L will reach out to Tracy to finalize the security of the benches. Funding and the order for the security system for the existing five benches was enhanced to include the two new benches, bringing the costs and order to seven benches. Materials for the security system will include PVC, anchors, and cement as decided at an earlier meeting.

Nedra asked about adding funds for landscaping around all benches. Elements of landscaping will include mulch and other materials. Nedra also emphasized that the committee should act to complete this project before taking on any new projects. Gail reminded the committee that Town funds must be used by June 30th and called for a celebration of the benches by June 30th to use the Town funds for the celebration.

Ellen asked that next steps for the benches be outlined. Discussion ensued. Gail to direct Heather, Community Service director, to order two new benches and plaques, the same as the other ones. She will also check to make sure Tom will be available to put the benches together. Gail shared that she will be away April 21-28 and not be able to do any AIP work. Melissa L to touch base with Tracy about the security system and components for the benches and installing the anchors. She will also touch base with Tom about putting the benches together. Gail is not comfortable with ordering the security items unless she gets specifics as to what to order. Melissa L will touch base with Tracy and Tom and get a parts list to Gail.

Melissa L asked about the Garden Club people to help with landscaping around the benches. Nedra knows Polly is eager to help with this project. Ellen said this is a great opportunity to ask volunteers to help.

Nedra said that April 24th is the Town's Clean Up Day. She asked if AIP could put up a table to inform people about AIP and ask for volunteers but we cannot. So Nedra will use online resources like Eliot Strong and Eliot Connect to get the word out about volunteering with AIP.

Ellen added that May 22nd is the date of the Garden Club Plant Sale.

Gail shared that by the end of May the new benches should be in and that plantings can go in during June with the celebration scheduled for the end of June. Melissa L will get in touch with Tracy and send members an email with an update on plans to secure the benches.

Ellen asked where at the Library will the benches be put? Gail said Lydia Goodwin, the Town librarian, has a place in mind. Ann will reach out to Lydia to see where Lydia is thinking about. Ann asked how to meet with Lydia and it was decided that Ellen will send Lydia an email, cc'ing Ann and introducing her to Lydia. The three will set a time to meet to discuss bench placement at the Library.

Discussion turned about the purpose of the benches as written in the language of the grant application was to advance walkability in Eliot and that placement would be near the new sidewalks. This is different than providing the Library with an outdoor sitting area. Melissa L asked if the committee had to vote on specific location of the new benches at the Library or was just that they would be at the Library sufficient.

Discussion turned to how to undertake next steps on installation of the benches. Ann asked if the committee could do this work via email. Gail pointed out that all decision had to be made publicly. Melissa L suggested the committee vote that the benches be installed in the vicinity of the library, without specifics as to where on library grounds. Everyone was comfortable with this. Ellen cautioned that the decision as to actual placement be in line with what was proposed in the initial grant. Discussion focused on where the sidewalk is, the existing crosswalk, and the layout of the area. There was discussion about adding the two new benches to the one already at the library. Ellen pointed out that the grant was not written to encourage social congregation but walkability in the town. Staying true to the grant and what it was approved for, the members agreed to put the benches near the library with the goal of approving walkability in mind. Ellen will join Ann and Lydia for the meeting to decide where the benches will go.

MOTION: Melissa L moved that the two new benches are installed within the vicinity of the Library to improve walkability in the Town of Eliot. Gail seconded the motion. Ellen, Nedra, Melissa L, Gail, and Ann voted yes. All approved. No one opposed. The motion passed.

Date for Celebration of the Benches

Discussion turned to setting the date for the celebration of the new benches. It was decided the date would be the last weekend of June – Saturday, June 26 or Sunday, June 27. Everyone was asked to think about what the celebration should involve. Ellen said planning the end of June celebration will be put on the May agenda. Ellen will write a backward plan about what needs to be done for the celebration. The budget will be created. Everyone was reminded that Eliot’s fiscal year ends on June 30 and there are funds there. There are funds in the budget but no one wants to use that much money on a celebration. Next month’s agenda will include the budget and money that needs to be spent with fiscal responsibility at the forefront. AIP has brought in some \$13,000.00 in grants.

Volunteers

Nedra spoke briefly about her work on volunteer materials. She thanked Melissa L for helping her with uploading documents. She said more information about her work on AIP volunteers would be forthcoming in an email to everyone. Nedra reported that people have started to show interest in AIP and that AIP is getting known. Everyone applauded Nedra and Melissa L for her work and efforts.

Communication and Information

Melissa L asked how AIP and its members be listed on the Town website. Everyone thought adding everyone’s AIP Gmail address and everyone’s phone number, not just Ellen’s, would be good. There was concern about members receiving spam but will see how that goes. Melissa L said she will also post the AIP board member vacancy on Eliot Strong and Eliot Online.

Ellen asked how members would feel about meeting in person. Aiming for June meeting in person. No one from the public has joined the Zoom calls.

Ellen asked what members thought about providing Creative Club members with the committee’s Zoom access, which would mean sharing the password and authorizing usage. Everyone thought that was fine if it did not get misused. Melissa A said she will see if she can set up access such that only specific emails can be used. Everyone agreed that would solve any problems. Ellen added that Deb Lloyd could also be involved in that as well.

Ann will re-send her plans for the celebration as well as a video of the route from the library to Dead Duck to give everyone as sense of the area. Melissa L suggested Ann uses her AIP Gmail account to load and share video.

Nedra moved to adjourn the meeting, Melissa L seconded. All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Lukejord



Aging In Place Committee

Town of Eliot, Maine

The mission of the Aging In Place (AIP) Committee is to provide advocacy for changes in Eliot's physical, economic, and social environment that enable Eliot residents, especially older residents, to live in their homes for as long as possible and that foster the creation of services and programs geared to keeping all residents active and engaged in the community.

AIP TREASURER'S REPORT

APRIL 15, 2021

Grass Roots Funds:

Previous Balance was :	\$571.78
Payment to Foot Prints Food Pantry	- \$571.78

New Balance:	00.00

Town Budget Funds:

Previous Balance	\$2882.40
No additional expenditures	
Balance remains	\$2882.40

Arts & Humanities Funds:

Previous Balance	\$1740.03
4/6/21 received final installment	+\$1000.00
3-24-21 Payment to Debra Lloyd	-\$1000.00

New Balance	\$1740.43

Maine Community Fund:

Received grant for 2 park benches (approved by select board 3-25-21)	\$2100.00.
---	------------

Submitted by Gail Licciardello