

Approved Aging- In Place Committee Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2018

The Meeting was called to order at 1:02

Present: Ellen Ceppetelli, Ron Ceppetelli, , Gail Licciardello, Jean Paulantonio, Helen Sullivan, Janice Cerabona, Brigitte Gelfrich, Bob Pomerleau, Select Board Liaison

Guest: Patricia Oh, From AARP, Maine, Livable Communities

Check In: Ellen welcomed the new members. Gail relayed that Connie Weeks had another appointment today and thus could not attend our meeting. She is anxious to relay her experience of trying to find transportation, at the committee's next meeting. Helen indicated she was glad to be back. Bob indicated that his role as Select Board Representative, was to bring our concerns and needs to the board, and vice versa.

Review of the Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Ellen had the following corrections:

Page 2, middle of the page, place an apostrophe in the word today's (today's)

Pg3. Add at the end of Roland's comments about the food pantry add the following phrase: Roland expressed concern that they may not be reaching everyone in need.

Pg5. At the bottom 3rd of the page, Ellen added: "It was the consensus of invited guests that the Aging in Place Committee could serve as a valuable resource for all agencies providing services to the elderly in Eliot. They expressed interest and enthusiasm in being involved as we begin the process of identifying needs and developing a plan."

MOTION: Helen moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Seconded by Ron. Jean, Helen Ron, Ellen and Gail voted in favor, none opposed.

Chair Update: Ellen indicated that at the last meeting, Kyle Lewis, from the Eliot Rec Dept, asked if we could come to either the March 14, or April 11th meeting which is held at the Congregational Church, at noon, with speakers presenting at 12:15. Helen, Jan, Jean, Brigitte, Gail will attend the March meeting. Committee members need to let Kyle know that they plan to attend.

The Meals on Wheels representative was not able to attend today's meeting, but will be at next meeting in March.

Ellen announced that The York County Regional Age-Friendly Meeting will be held in Saco on Thursday, March 8, 2018 from 9-2. This is the same time as our meeting. Since we have had requests to change time of our meeting, we will consider changing our meeting time (and thus committee members may be able to attend the York County Meeting) at the end of today's meeting.

We have been accepted into the Age Friendly Communities in Maine. We are the 47th community in Maine to be designated as such.

AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities

Patricia Oh: Distributed an information sheet, entitled "Maine Network of Age -Friendly Communities Member Benefits. She also asked committee members what did we have in mind when we started communicating about resources. Patricia indicated that she realized we have been reaching out into the community to determine what resources there are already. She asked what else the committee has done already. Ellen relayed that we have submitted a request to the budget committee for funds for our committee. We decided we really wanted to do a survey to determine what the needs are. And that we have submitted application to be designated as an Age Friendly Community

Patricia indicated that when we started contacting resources we essentially began the assessment process. She asked each member what we thought the top 2 issues in our community were.

Ellen: Transportation and communication

Gail: Transportation and socialization

Helen: Transportation and knowing who your neighbors are, and having a check in service

Jean: Transportation, socialization, and neighborhoods, wondering if meals on wheels can be expanded

Jan: Transportation, communication and coordination of resources, knowing your neighborhood. Working on process of connecting high school students with seniors who need assistance. She also mentioned an article about a process to get an internet story telling "ap," to help with respect and social inclusion of the elderly. Jan spoke with Lydia at the library, who indicated she would look in to the process and what it involved.

Ron: indicated that in his job he has assessed many elderly people. He agrees with what the others have said, but he feels there is need for an "ethos" in the community. To get the community involved, i.e. "this is what we do in Eliot." This lead to a discussion of neighbors and neighborhood associations.

Patricia relayed that there is a small rural community (of 290 residents) that has organized itself in neighborhoods for a social support, and for that sense of place and that place has meaning.

Brigitte: communication, and transportation. She relayed how when she moved here she noted little interaction of neighbors. Getting a list together of list of volunteers is important. Jan agreed that we have moved away from knowing neighbors. Helen indicated that she does not have that sense in her neighborhood, on Goodwin Road, as the neighbors are supportive.

Bob: From the select board perspective. He has been engrossed in finding out as much information as he can, reading the AARP notices and resources. Communication is important. What are the needs, and what are the resources, and how do we connect them? He was astonished by the percentage of food insecurity. He has three areas that he is trying to pursue:

1. Having a local public cable station for the town of Eliot. The cable company provider is required to provide this public service, but they are also allowed to pass on the cost to cable subscribers, which town residents may or may not be willing to pay.

2. The economic standpoint of Maine's aging population. The property tax payors are increasingly the seniors on fixed incomes. This is only going to get worse, in terms that more and more of the elderly are paying property taxes. This means that the tax dollar base is dwindling. And then if the elderly is given tax relief, then those funds must be made up by the rest of the property tax payors in town. The services won't diminish, but the revenue may.

3. The area of isolation for the elderly. He has investigated the use of TIF funds available to construct a building for a child care facility, which could have also been used for elder care, such as an adult day care center. The TIF funds have to have an economic impact, it cannot be predominantly a community center. The TIF vote did not pass. This led to discussion of best way to communicate the issues in town, but also citizens must do their part. This led to more discussion about Comcast. They are up for renewal of their contract with the town in 2 years. The contracts are written for 10-year period. Bob indicated he felt that there was not a lot of support in town for a local public cable station.

Patricia indicated we have a lot of resources in this community. One of the things that other committees have done is to advocate for things that Bob has been discussing.

She indicated that our focus seems to be on older, frail, isolated or economically disadvantage. Recently retired, healthy people also have needs. Some examples, needs for recreational opportunities, such as an outdoors club, classes yoga, dance, etc.

Most dangerous time in our lives, is at time of retirement. Retirement becomes a major switch in roles. Seniors can lose focus for their lives. Good time to tap into this resource, get these newly retired involved in community, volunteering. Social connectedness is a better predictor to living longer, and not necessarily some of the traditional things we would often think of, such as flu shots, stop smoking or drinking. Patricia felt that it is good that we talk about neighborhoods and all ages

Despite the economics of the aging communities. There is a golden reservoir of opportunities that can be generated through older population. e.g. if encouraging businesses to cater to older consumers, tapping into the volunteers, then communities can prosper from an elderly population

AARP does have money to help with the cost of assessment. She suggested we look at pre-made assessments, but then tailor it to our community. The committee needs to decide the content and method of survey. Patricia would highly recommend focus groups.

Ellen asked for advice, based upon what other communities have done. She indicated that mailing surveys is a waste of money, as the response rate is not very good. The best results have been in communities where volunteers were sent out to different events, such as church suppers, and have people complete the survey while they were there, as well as, reaching out to neighborhoods. Bob questioned how to reach those who are not engaged in the community. Patricia indicated that some towns they sent out surveys with meals on wheels, community nurses, and used the community free newspaper (Sentinel) which gets much better response rate than mailing out surveys. Also, we can work with town clerk who may be able to help with reaching those who may be getting services from the town.

The question arose: Is it better for the survey to go out to all the people in town, or just to the elderly? Patricia indicated that the livable communities concept is for all ages. But most likely the elderly will complete the survey in far greater numbers than the younger people in town, but that is OK. Patricia relayed that in one community they surveyed all ages and found out that one of the biggest need was for after school care. This was eventually matched with older folks you could provide some activities for those after school programs. This proved to be a successful program for this community.

Brigitte suggested put something in local newspaper to announce when survey can be completed with volunteers.

AARP has mini grants, most that one could expect is about \$1500, but they do offer a lot of technical assistance, such as photo copying, organizing and analyzing data. As soon as we join the network which we have, the committee can apply for grants, but there does need to be specifics as to what the grant money will be used for. She said some communities provide incentives for people to complete the survey (e.g. chance to win a \$10 gift certificate for completing survey). Often in past local businesses have offered to provide such gift certificates.

Meeting Time Change: Ellen has had some requests to change time to accommodate work schedules. Some elderly people may not be available in the day because they do work. After discussion it was decided to keep the meeting at times that were best for the committee members, as most likely public attendance will not be dramatic.

Motion: Jeaned moved to change the March meeting to Thursday, March 1 at 1:00pm. Motion was seconded by Helen. Vote in favor: Helen, Jean, Ellen, Gail. No one opposed. (Ron had to leave prior to vote.) No one opposed.

Subsequent meetings will remain at the 2nd Thursday of the month at 1:00pm

Gail will not be able to attend the March 1st meeting, so someone else will have to take the minute.

Motion: Helen moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Jean Helen, Jean, Ellen and Gail voted to adjourn, No one opposed

Also it was suggested that committee members communicate by email if they plan to attend the York County Regional Age-Friendly Meeting on March 8th in Saco

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Licciardello, Secretary