

Senior Advisory Committee Minutes - March 24, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Councilor Russ Anderson.

Roll Call

All Senior Advisory Committee Members were present. Members include: Russ Anderson (Council Liaison), Lucky D'Ascanio (Community Programs Director), Jen DeRice, Joel Glass, Raymond Jett, Amy Lamontagne (Staff Liaison), Peggy McGehee, Dolores Vail.

Carol Kauffman also attended the meeting. Carol has applied for the committee and is waiting for an interview with the Appointments Committee.

Item 1 – Introductions

Each committee member introduced him/herself and shared background information as well as reasons for participating in the Senior Advisory Committee process.

Item 2 – Election of Committee Chair

Peggy McGehee nominated Dolores Vail as Committee Chair. Jen DeRice seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous.

Peggy McGehee was appointed Vice Chair.

Item 3 – Review the Committee's charge and timeframe

Amy distributed additional copies of the charge and mentioned the typo in the date of September 1, 2014 (should be 2015). That error was corrected and a new version of the charge is available. The group agreed that it must set priorities and decide "what needs to be done right now." The September 1 deadline might be ambitious and although more time might be needed, there was also discussion about not dragging the work out. The group decided that Councilor Anderson will provide periodic committee updates to the Town Council.

Jen explained her work with the Town of Cape Elizabeth and offered to share their recent report with Falmouth. The Cape Elizabeth Senior Citizen Advisory Commission report was given to the Town Council in November 2014 and outlines the top four senior needs in the community – Transportation, Communication, Social Opportunities and Affordable Housing/Taxation. Jen also said that Cape Elizabeth has business reps on its Senior Committee and perhaps that could be a possibility in Falmouth? Perhaps OceanView or other resources could participate? Carol lives at OceanView and could provide that perspective but is an OceanView staff member also needed? There was no decision on this subject.

The group brainstormed some top needs for seniors in Falmouth – Senior Center, Transportation and Meals. However, the committee would like demographic information. For example, how many seniors live in Falmouth? What percentage lives at OceanView? Where do the seniors live in town? Amy explained that Theo Holtwijk is the Census contact and she will speak with him about data. Lucky also mentioned that she might have information from past surveys (needs assessments) and Jen suggested an outreach survey for the public and/or using ads in the local newspaper.

The group agreed it's important to focus on one or two goals and target those areas. Everyone wants to be efficient.

Lucky D'Ascanio provided an update about Senior Programming. Community Programs has provided a variety of successful senior programming for many years. She explained the role of the Parks and Community Programs Advisory Committee (PAC PAC) and suggested it might be helpful to have a representative on the Senior Advisory Committee. The committee members agreed that current senior programming is excellent and they're not looking to change it. Lucky explained that the new space at the Community Center would allow daytime programming, a need that has not been met because of space issues. Community Programs moved to the new space effective March 30 and Lucky invited the committee to tour the space. There has been discussion about creating a dedicated senior space inside the new Community Center. Dolores would like to encourage seniors to share talents with the community that are not being shared now. A dedicated space could facilitate that interaction without scheduling structured programs.

There was discussion about offering meals and Dolores and Ray provided examples of community needs. Joel was concerned about reduced funding as well as other logistics (drivers, staff, etc). This is an area that needs a strategic partner like the Southern Maine Agency on Aging.

Item 4 – Discuss Committee Meeting Schedule

After some discussion, the committee decided to meet on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. The meeting time will be limited to 1 ½ hours. The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 7, at 7:00 pm in the large conference room at Town Hall. The meetings could move to the new Community Center. The meetings will be noticed by town staff and agendas will be developed by town staff and the Committee Chair. The meeting minutes will be taken by town staff and distributed by e-mail. Ray doesn't have e-mail and will need his minutes mailed.

Item 5 – Discuss Next Steps

The committee assigned some tasks to the following members –

Dolores – She will contact the Southern Maine Agency on Aging. This group is an excellent resource and could be a partner with future initiatives. It might be helpful to have a representative speak at a future meeting.

Carol – She will visit the Forecaster to pitch a story and hopefully, obtain some press about the committee and its new plan.

Lucky – She will visit the Town of Gorham’s Community Center to investigate their senior programming/services. Jen will accompany Lucky on the visit.

Jen- She will invite Brett Seekins to speak at the committee’s meeting on April 7. Brett is the Chair of the Cape Elizabeth Senior Citizen Advisory Commission.

Peggy – She will visit a Senior Center. After hearing feedback from other members who have seen other community centers, she would like to see what other towns are doing for their seniors.

Amy – She will work with Theo to obtain Census data and also identify areas in the Comprehensive Plan that relate to seniors. If applicable, she will bring copies to the next meeting. She will also create a slide for Falmouth’s cable station. The informational slide will encourage residents to call the Administration office with suggestions.

Item 6 – Adjourn

Chair Vail adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm.