

SALEM COUNCIL ON AGING
Minutes of Regular Meeting

Date and Time: January 15, 2020 at 5:08 P.M.

Meeting Location: Board Room, 401 Bridge Street

Members Present: Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), John Russell (JR), Julie Carver (JC), Donna Clifford (DC), Abigail Butt, Elaine Heredeen (EH), and George Barbuzzi (GB)

Also, Present: Teresa Arnold, (TA, Director of the COA), Amanda Chiancola

Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Meeting Called to Order

LC calls the meeting to order at 5:08 P.M.

Motion made by JR to approve the December Minutes, seconded by AB and passes unanimously.

New Business:

LC asked Amanda Chiancola to speak to the Board and apologized for not being in touch to ask Amanda to write an article for the March Newsletter. TA advised that she did write a piece for the February Newsletter.

Amanda stated that she works with the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to create affordable housing across the City for all demographics and advised that they want to create processes where affordable housing can be built. She stated that one of the key provisions this year is inclusionary housing and that they have to set aside a percentage of units as affordable which the City now asks for 10%.

AB asked why only 10%. Amanda advised that they were basing on 60% of the median income. Amanda stated that only 10% because the developer needs to make money.

AB advised that in bigger cities they have higher percentage on the books and Amanda said they have higher percentage of units but at 80%. AB said that is moderate income not affordable housing. She advised that there is a really small window to get in between

the cut off for what you must make vs. where you cap out so a lot of people can't get into units.

Amanda advised that in Salem 60% of the population is at median. JR stated that this is what we need to separate. LC stated that part of the problem is that we are in a metro planning area in which we do not belong. She said that in her opinion it would be better in the future if we advocated for the City and create another metro area reflecting income that is prevalent in Salem, Peabody, etc.

AB asked if LC was saying that our AMI is being skewed and LC said yes. Amanda said that they have not had any problems at 80%.

LC stated that all seniors that need advocacy, on housing, but lower income really needs help. AB said it would be great if we pumped it up to 11-12%. AB suggested that if there was some kind of offering to contractors building these units that 10% would be acceptable if moderate income and if they make lower income, we will reduce the number of units. Amanda said the City could say 15% at 80%, 10% at 60%. AB commented what if we gave contractors that option.

AB said that in other communities they have taken money from the Preservation Act and given developers x number of dollars for developed to create more units.

Amanda said the City wants to continue to support non-profits and the City wants to develop public land and then offset that by adding some market rate units.

JR asked if they found that some people with higher incomes don't want to live with lower income people. Amanda said that people have talked about diversity as appealing.

Amanda stated that Salem State University has been very good about getting the City involved in their redevelopment process and what the City is hearing loud and clear, is that people want affordable housing and senior housing. She said the University gets to choose the developer and that the property is zoned R-1 so the developer is allowed to build single family homes.

She advised that other properties they are looking at are Salem High School but have to be careful about students etc. and that there is an area along Highland Avenue where 30 town homes could be built which would be affordable. She said the City is also looking at park land near the power station. LC asked who would develop that and Amanda said they could sell the land to a developer or the City could propose it to the Housing Authority, and they could get a developer.

AB asked if the City has worked with non-profits like Harborlight and Amanda advised that they were looking to see if non-profits are interested. AB also asked about the Community Preservation Act for 3-6 years and then applying for rental assistance and stated that rental assistance may be the best way to chip away at this.

LC advised that although we don't have specific numbers, we know that when multi or two-family homes are bought, the new owners raise the rent and tenants can't pay. Amanda was very pleased that we are interested in rental assistance as she thinks that it is very needed. She is willing to work with the Salem Housing Authority and our Board to apply for CPA funds for this. She asked who the contact person for this on the Board would be. Lynda Coffill said she would be.

Amanda advised that the City is looking for a lottery agent to be housed in the City and also that the City is working on bringing back the ADU Ordinance and wants to broaden it and is putting together two packages as follows:

- Loan package (\$25,000.00) and if someone applies and receives it, it must be used for affordable housing.
- Property tax incentive for a portion of the home rented as ADU.

AB asked how big the lot has to be for R-1 housing and Amanda said 11,000 square feet.

LC advised that the Tabernacle Church is in the process of carving out a partnership with NSCDC and that there may be up to 30-40 units available.

Old Business:

Board Recruitment – AB stated that she has tried and tried to call a suggested person and Terry also tried to call. LC said they had another plan and TA explained that there are several ladies from the Philippines and Rosanna Donahue gave her a number of names with one woman in particular that could be a good candidate. AB asked if she was well connected in the community and LC said she was very well connected.

LC knows of another person to look at for the Board position. LC will pass this by the Mayor's office.

Friends Update: JR advised that they were looking at Board recruitment and looking for someone who may not be able to make every meeting but connected to different groups throughout the City as the Friends are looking to get their message out to reach out to a broader community.

JR advised that the annual appeal letter is going out very soon. He advised that Fred Norton went through the entire list and many people were missing from the list and a lot on the list didn't get the mailing last year due to envelopes being stuffed incorrectly.

JR also said the Board should start to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce.

Director's Report:

Transportation – Continues to be active. TA advised that the transportation department is looking to make some changes to create more consistent rides home from the COA in the afternoon. Vans are needing frequent maintenance and vans are being prepped for yearly inspection stickers. There will be a coffee hour on March 25th so Annie O'Shea can review policy changes and gain input from riders. Rosanna Donahue will talk about the importance of registering for events so transportation can be efficiently planned. TA advised that she would be transferring funds to Vehicle Parts and Accessories line item in anticipation of high maintenance costs over the second half of the fiscal year. TA also advised that she and Annie would be attending meetings in May to learn about a proposal for new vans through Mass DOT. TA also advised that they are advocating for a part-time dispatcher.

JR again suggested using mini-vans and GB suggested speaking with local dealers.

GB asked out much it would cost for a dispatcher and TA said a part-time salary of about \$20,000.00.

AB asked how the CLC was on increasing staff and stated no one at the CLC was paid enough and said she would love to advocate for an ethical living wage.

Social Services – The Greater Boston Food Bank has nearly 80 participants. The social workers were extremely busy in December due to Medicare Open enrollment.

The Behavioral Health offerings were off to a slow start with North Shore Community Health. TA advised that she and Sharon Felton were meeting with their leadership on January 23rd to redefine goals, decide on group support offerings and to schedule one-on-one mental health counseling. TA advised that five people have already signed up for one-on-one counseling.

Nutrition: TA advised that she has a meeting with Roots this Friday to discuss alternate meals, etc. and that she will still look at Bass River.

633 congregate meals were served in December. The slight decrease is due to holiday parties and snow days.

Activities/Programs: Kathy McCarthy and Rosanna Donahue have worked on bringing many interesting programs to the CLC this winter.

The Spanish speaking Memory Café will move to Charter Street because the East Point Adult Day Center was hard to coordinate with. This is operated under a grant so must adhere to a schedule.

Kathy McCarthy is meeting with tax work off volunteers to review eligibility and talk with new applicants.

TA advised that we are working with the Census Bureau to provide space for worker recruitment and training for the 2020 census.

Old Business:

JR asked if the purchase of a generator could be put on the agenda for future discussion and LC asked TA to see if Trish O'Brien could come to the March meeting to discuss this.

Next Board Meeting: February 19, 2020

A motion to adjourn is made by AB.

The meeting adjourns at 6:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk