

**SALEM COUNCIL ON AGING**  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting**

**Date and Time:** September 11, 2019 at 5:00 P.M.

**Meeting Location:** Board Room, 401 Bridge Street

**Members Present:** Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), John Russell (JR), Julie Carver (JC), Elaine Heredeen (EH), Abigail Butt (AB), Alice Williams (AW), George Barbuzzi (GB)

**Also Present:** Teresa Arnold, (TA, Director of the COA)  
Mayor Kimberley Driscoll

**Absent:** Donna Clifford (DC)

**Clerk:** Kathleen Fitzgerald

**Meeting Called to Order**

LC calls the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

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

LC advised that the next Board Meeting will be Wednesday, October 16, 2019 which will be the Annual Meeting, followed by the regular Board Meeting.

**Old Business:**

**Friends Update:** JR advised that the First Comedy Night will be October 18<sup>th</sup> at the CLC. Tickets are \$25.00 and the hope is to have 160 people. This event is not costing the Friends anything. The catering organization Roots will be providing hors d'oeuvres and there will be a cash bar. George McCabe is paying for the comedian and Sen. Joan Lovely, Rep. Paul Tucker and Councillor Elaine Milo are paying for Roots.

LC asked if you could reserve an entire table and JR said yes if you pay for all ten seats.

JR said the Friends was hoping to raise between \$5,000.00 and \$6,000.00 from the event.

JR spoke with Trish O'Brien about using 5 Broad Street for parking during Halloween to raise money for the Friends. Trish agreed and they will discuss dates.

**Senior Housing** – Mayor Driscoll was present to talk about senior housing and the ADU ordinance that needed to be passed. She advised that there was not enough housing inventory in Salem.

The Mayor said renters and home owners shared their biggest fear which is being priced out of Salem. She said it is really difficult to find units and to find affordable units. She has heard from young adults working in the service industry and from seniors who can't afford to buy a house and now feeling priced out. Seniors also advised her that they wanted to downsize and buy, but not rent. She advised that there is a committee looking at different ways to resolve this. Possibilities are St. James, Immaculate Conception as well as the old senior center. If the council passes the new ordinance, then properties can be redeveloped. She advised that the old senior center is being sold and will be condominiums.

The Accessory Dwelling Unit Ordinance enables individuals in certain zones to create housing and they want to change it for all residential zones. This will help not only individuals looking for housing but may be a source of income for seniors who may have additional space. If the ordinance passes, there will be another opportunity to meet the housing challenges.

She went on to advise that the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance requires 10% of units be set aside for affordable housing. She said the Salem median income of 80% doesn't help us because the figure is too high and is closer to 60%. She said the City is looking at publicly owned land, city owned land, and housing authority property. She advised that in Somerville, Boston and Chelsea, there are programs within the housing authority where senior housing is renovated, and then additional housing units are added. She said there is no longer HUD funding, but the State allows for modernization programs.

She noted that the biggest challenges to the cost of housing is land and the per square foot cost is incredibly high. She said that the City doesn't want Salem to become a place where no one can afford to live.

LC advised that the Board is very involved with the housing crisis and has started to work with the housing Authority because it felt that CPA funds could be used as a bridge between people living in housing and people coming in and houses being sold and then rents are jacked up. She asked Mayor Driscoll if she could speak about ADU in all neighborhoods.

Mayor Driscoll advised that there is a limitation on the size of the neighborhood. Need to see an entranceway, must have adequate parking, adequate set-back, and be owner occupied for two years to qualify. The purpose of the ordinance is to get ADUs built and that in most of the Salem single family neighborhoods, there is usually space to do this and usually they have adequate parking.

LC asked how the existence of ADU's impacts the R-1 status. Does it turn R-1's into multi-family or two-family homes.

Mayor Driscoll advised that more of the homes in Salem are single family. She also advised that short-term rentals are allowed in R-1 neighborhoods, but must be owner occupied and must be registered. LC asked who oversees this. Mayor Driscoll said that you must get a building permit and must satisfy a series of requirements to become an ADU, but if you then change to short-term rental, you must be registered.

JR stated he felt that not a lot of people know about ADU's. AB agreed and stated that outreach was not adequate and that more outreach really needed to be done. JR further advises that an amnesty clause was built in, but no one knew about it and a lot of work was done without building permits.

AB went on to say that about 10% of units built would be affordable housing, but that in Somerville it was 12.5% and in Cambridge it was 13-15%. AB asked if Salem could increase the percentage. The Mayor advised the City was looking into this and was looking for the "sweet spot".

JR stated that the plus to an ADU for someone buying a home for the first time is help paying the mortgage if made into an ADU. The Mayor stated that she would like to have the COA support this. She also advised that would add more applicants for CPA funds.

JR asked what the Mayor's feeling was on feedback from the City Council regarding ADU's. The Mayor advised that they must push hard. He went on to say that there needs to be a pathway to amnesty and the Mayor stated they will work with them but can't do anything unless the ordinance passes.

JR advised that one of the things about ADUs is the question of whether they were going to subject to earned income and subject to capital gains if you sold the house. LC stated that this was a big deterrent. He stated that he thought there were a lot of people who wanted to legitimize what they have and penalize people who are not in compliance.

LC advised the Mayor that there was an issue with Board members using salem.com and the Board has asked for someone from IT to come to a Board meeting and help but were advised that no one is working at the time of day as the Board meetings. The Mayor said she would look into this.

At this point the Mayor left for a housing meeting.

### **New Business:**

LC advised that Tabernacle Church was probably going to offer affordable housing and advised St. James will be 55+ and St. Mary's affordable. She stated that there was a lot of movement in terms of affordable housing in the City. AB asked how the Board could support this and LC advised that the Board could start a dialogue again with the new Housing Authority Director. She suggested invited the new Housing Director to the October meeting.

AB advised that even though the Mayor stated CPA funds were not a lot of money, it is a lot of money as life changing for someone in need.

JR said that we talk a lot about people who know the issue of subsidized affordable senior housing, but at some point we have to disconnect from all others and push for senior housing.

Haunted Happenings Parade – This will be on October 3rd and LC advised that if you want to ride the trolley, you can meet at the CLC (time to be determined). AB asked if a reminder email could be sent out prior to the event.

Board Opening – AB asked about this. LC said she would reach out to Domingo Dominguez again.

### **Director's Report:**

**Transportation** – Hired Annie O'Shea to replace Fred Norton and she will be starting shortly. The drivers have been working extra hours and we want to do a lunch for them in the coming weeks to thank them.

**R U OK** – Sharon Felton did a lot of work in getting this set up.

**Social Services** – On September 19<sup>th</sup> the social workers met with North Shore Community Health Network to iron out what the clinician will be doing. TA advised that we wanted to start this soon.

**MCOA Conference** - October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Teresa and the social work team will be attending and AB will be speaking in a workshop.

**Internship** – There will be a paid internship honoring Kay Walsh starting in JANUARY 2020. The City is putting internship funds in the COA budget. We want to carve out a meaningful project so it is a learning experience.

**Salem State University** – Met with Ann DeFelippo, a professor at SSU who teaches a class called "Can You Live to be 100". The plan is to pair about 20 students with seniors to share life experiences.

Next Board Meeting: October 16, 2019

A motion to adjourn is made by JR, seconded by EH, and passes unanimously. The meeting adjourns at 6:10 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk