

# MINUTES

## Advisory Committee for Age-Friendly Bowdoinham (ACOA)

May 11, 2020

Present: Maureen Booth, Diana Mosher, Peggy Muir, Patricia Oh, Alice Pollis, Gracia Woodward

Absent: Rachelle Tome

Staff: Missy Halsey

Topic	Action
A quorum was established.	
The April minutes were approved as distributed.	
Before moving to the agenda, members gave personal reports on how they are coping during the COVID-19 quarantine and spending their time.	
<b>Updates</b>	
<b>Community Outreach</b>	
<p>Following up on last month's discussion, Gracia raised the question of whether ACOA should more explicitly offer to help with picking up groceries or running critical errands for residents unable to travel during this time. Given that these services are currently provided by <i>Rides in Neighbors' Cars</i>, an ACOA initiative, there is no apparent liability issue. There was some discussion about how to safely exchange money and goods. Diana described how it is currently being done by volunteers. The broader question discussed was if any new effort was required or if it was sufficient to more prominently advertise existing services of the RideShare program. It was agreed that Missy would send out a notice to the ACOA mailing list and provide a blurb on Facebook's Bowdoinham Friends and Family page.</p>	<p>Missy to send an email to the ACOA mailing list and update B'ham Friends and Family Facebook page reminding people of the services available through Rides in Neighbors' Cars.</p>
<b>Home Safety Checklist</b>	
<p>Maureen provided an overview of the draft Checklist sent to the Committee in advance of this meeting. The draft was developed by the Committee's Task Force consisting of herself, Patricia, Peggy, and Kathy Pszczolkowski. Several issues were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audience: The Checklist should be primarily targeted to older adults. While it may be useful to others, the Checklist does not address safety issues that are of particular relevance to families with small children.</li> <li>• Third column: The last column should be used for note taking by the user. Separately, the Checklist should generally describe existing resources in the area that could potentially help residents make needed improvements</li> </ul>	<p>Members should share any edits to the Checklist with Maureen. The Task Force will review any comments and propose any additional changes prior to the next ACOA meeting.</p>

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(e.g., Handy Brigade, Comfortably Home).	
<b>Home Safety Checklist (con'd...)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose Statement: The Checklist would begin with a Purpose describing the primary audience, how it could be used, and a description of community resources that may be helpful.</li> <li>• Distribution: It was agreed that the entire Checklist could be overwhelming to people and that instead presenting individual sections, one at a time, in the Newsletter may be a better approach. Members suggested that priority sections would be Bathroom, Kitchen, and Interior.</li> <li>• Finalization: Maureen requested that members send to her any comments or edits they may have on the draft Checklist. The Task Force would review the comments prior to the next meeting and propose final changes.</li> </ul> <p>Peggy suggested that we continue to consider what additional information should be included in the Emergency section of the Checklist or to develop a separate flyer.</p>	
<b>Safety Programs in other Communities</b>	
<p>Patricia described programs that are primarily social calls versus those that are intended to keep older people safe during emergencies, such as the current COVID pandemic. Regarding the latter, Patricia reported that some communities give out tablets in emergencies that are technically simple to use. She mentioned opportunities designed to help communities fund the purchase of tablets that could be used free of charge for a defined period of time.</p> <p>Patricia also mentioned the Maine Digital Equity Center which is focusing on providing training on the use of technology. The Island Institute plans to introduce a broad band bill to increase access in rural areas. Members suggested that it may be helpful to engage Seth in some of these discussions given his concern about inequities in connectivity throughout our region.</p>	<p>Maureen volunteered to do some research into opportunities for making tablets available in communities during emergencies.</p>
<b>Post Office Mailbox</b>	
<p>No advancement has been made on Peggy's earlier petition to the Post Office to convert the existing outside mailbox to one that can be accessed via car. She agreed to continue to pursue this with the post office.</p>	<p>Peggy to continue to approach the post office about installing a mail box that can be accessed via car.</p>
<b>Reaching out to Isolated Older People</b>	
<p>After our April meeting, Patricia shared with members a flyer from the Sagadahoc County Emergency Management Agency in</p>	<p>Peggy to develop an outline of TIPS for aging to be considered at the next meeting.</p>

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<p>which they offered to provide check-ins to persons over the age of 65 or otherwise in need of contact who register for the program. Members expressed concern that this program may have the same problem of reaching those who are most in need. Peggy mentioned another program that she was aware of in which volunteer Wardens coordinated assistance to individuals within a defined neighborhood. Members considered these programs as part of a broader issue of helping older people confront the need for assistance as they age. Peggy suggested that ACOA consider developing a set of “Tips” to help older people in times of emergencies as well as to help accessing community resources at all times. Peggy offered to outline issues that could be included in Tips.</p>	
<p><b><i>Accessible Walking</i></b></p>	
<p>Everyone was in agreement that a recommendation should be made to the Town to expand sidewalks to the outer streets of town. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Select Board and Community Development Committee on the possibility of using TIF funds for such a purpose. Peggy offered to draft a letter prior to the June 8 meeting of the Select Board.</p>	<p>Peggy to draft letter to Select Board about expansion of sidewalks in Town.</p>
<p><b>Adjournment and Next Meeting</b></p>	
<p>There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 8 at 2:30 pm.</p>	