**Committee Members Present**: Maureen Booth, Grace McCarthy, Karen Mayo, Peggy Muir, and Barbara Rollins and Deb Smith

**Absent**: Mary Kelley and George Oliver

**Staff**: Jason Lamoreau

**Guests**: Kathryn Harnish (via Zoom)

**Call to Order**

Maureen Booth established a quorum.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was amended to include an introduction of the newly hired Age Friendly Coordinator.

**Approval of MinuteS**

The minutes of the July 11, 2022 meeting were amended to note Karen Mayo in attendance.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBER AND STAFF**

The Committee gave a hearty welcome to new member Grace McCarthy and to Jason Lamoreau, recently hired as the Town’s Age Friendly Coordinator. Jason thanked members for their warm welcome. Although new to the field of aging, Jason noted that his work as a volunteer at the Fire House exposed him to some of the issues faced by older residents. Jason indicated his eagerness to apply his experiences as a life time resident of Bowdoinham and business owner to the Committee’s work.

 Follow-up Action

1. Peggy and Maureen will meet with Jason at 2pm on September 16, 2022 to review outstanding tasks and their order of priority in the short term
2. Once Jason’s schedule is better known, the preference is to allocate a day a week to Age Friendly activities with his remaining time to be scheduled on an as needed basis during a given week.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Findings of the Listening Sessions**

Maureen introduced Kathryn Harnish, a student intern working the AFB Committee during the summer, to present finding from three listening sessions she facilitated for the Committee. The purpose of the sessions was to get the perspective of individuals whose work brings them into close contact with at-risk residents.

Kathryn noted that a major challenge of the listening sessions was the limited knowledge of participants about the circumstances and needs of isolated residents. This was particularly surprising given that participants were selected on the basis of what we understood to be their work with at-risk individuals.

Kathryn summarized four major findings from the sessions:

* There is a general lack of awareness about activities and services available in Town for older adults. Participants noted the need for a consolidated calendar with local events. A surprising finding was the extent to which participants were unaware of Rides in Neighbors’ Cars, a five year old program in Town matching residents in need of transportation with available volunteer drivers.
* Given the complexity of the human resource and health care systems, participants expressed the need for a “navigator” who could assist residents access available services at the time they are needed.
* Point-to-point accessibility is seen as a challenge for older residents and those with disabilities. Kathryn noted that often we think of accessibility as being ramps and wheelchair accessible bathrooms. While important, accessibility also means having parking spaces near events, golf carts to transfer people across uneven terrain, places to sit en route to a location.
* There often is uncertainty about how to respond to “isolated” individuals. Some individuals purposely isolate themselves and prefer being left alone; others are isolated because of a lack of information about services or activities.

The goal of today’s presentation was to identify follow-up activities that built on existing work and which responded to the above findings. Maureen reminded members that Kathryn was approved as a Fellow by the Maine Center on Aging to work with the AFB Committee for the coming year to advance its efforts. This led to a broader discussion of tangible efforts that could address known concerns without building an entirely new (and unsustainable) expectation within the community.

* Research on what is known about successful approaches by other communities in supporting at-risk individuals. How can the Committee develop partnerships with others in Town who are most likely to be called upon in emergencies (wellness checks by the Fire House and sheriff’s office)? How to assure personal privacy/independence while also being available to offer assistance? What measures should be used for defining “isolated”.
* The development of a Resource Directory feels like a good first step in building awareness among Committee members and the community about available services. A Directory could be distributed to residents through existing channels (food pantry, Rides in Neighbors’ Cars, wellness checks, etc) as well as being a foundation to a potential training program for volunteers wanting to assume a “Navigator” role within the community.
* Kathryn mentioned concerns about this coming winter given the price of home fuel. She shared plans in Houlton to distribute Safety Kits (flashlights, emergency foil blankets, etc) both as a support to residents as well as a way to introduce services available through the Committee.

Kathryn thanked members for their enthusiastic and thoughtful discussion on the findings and its relevance for future work.

 Follow-up Actions:

1. Kathryn will review the Committee’s thoughts and recommendations and propose a priority project. Her draft proposal will be shared via email with Committee members for their comments. Revisions will be made accordingly.
2. Maureen, Peggy and Kathryn will discuss the proposed project with Patricia Oh on September 20, 2022 to determine its suitability as the focus of work for Kathryn in her role as Lifelong Fellows Program at the Maine Center on Aging,
3. Kathryn asked that members consider the following question: What would you like to see different this time next year with respect to the AFB Committee? Maureen agreed to collect members thoughts and share back with Kathryn.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Meeting with the Comprehensive Planning Committee**

Maureen reported that she and Peggy were invited to meet with the Comp Plan Committee to discuss coordinating efforts of the two Committees in areas of common interest, most specifically transportation, housing, public facilities and recreation. Historically, the AFB Committee developed a three year Action Plan that never received public review and which was approved by the Select Board. In contrast, the Comprehensive Plan is a mandated document that goes through a public review process and is approved by the Town at its annual meeting.

The strongest argument for working collaboratively is to assure that the lens of older adults, who represent over 20% of the Town’s population, is reflected in the Comp Plan. In addition, inclusion of age-related goals in the Comp Plan will increase their visibility and accountability.

The Committee expressed strong support for coordination, seeing it also as an opportunity to strengthen the partnership between the Committees and increase our efficiency.

 Follow-up Actions;

1. Maureen and Peggy will meet with the Comp Plan Committee to encourage shared planning.
2. Pending the outcome of the meeting, a draft agreement will be reviewed by AFB at its October meeting outlining timelines, roles and responsibilities of each party.

**Status and Updates**

***Celebrate Bowdoinham***

Peggy reported that the event was a big success, especially in terms of the visibility of the AFB tent, the broad interest in the medical equipment loan program (thank you Karen!), and our participation in the parade.

 Lesson for Next Year:

1. Request the same tent size and location
2. Work with Public Works to do a better job informing people about handicapped parking and to offer golf cart services for those needing assistance. (Jason indicated that golf carts were planned for this year’s event but fell through)
3. Provide more and scattered shaded rest areas.

***Medical Equipment Loan Program***

In response to a question from Jason, Karen indicated that no inventory has been made of the equipment. Jason also noted that there has been discussion of possibly moving equipment to the garage by the rec fields. Karen noted that she has been in touch with the Partners for World Health to donate excess equipment to them. Partners collect medical equipment from multiple sources and directs them to places in need, locally and internationally.

 Follow-up Action:

1. Jason will raise the issue of cleaning out the storage area with the Fire House; Karen offered to assist in any cleaning effort.
2. Jason will find out the status of any move and use that as an opportunity to conduct an inventory of the equipment with Karen.
3. Deb offered to work with Karen to bring excess equipment to Partners for World Health.

***September 22, 2022 Luncheon***

Peggy reported that plans are in place for the luncheon in the basement of Second Baptist Church. There was some concern that the October luncheon, planned for October 13 was so close at hand.

 Follow-up Actions:

1. Peggy will email Jason a PDF or jpeg file of the Luncheon poster for inclusion on the AFB FaceBook page
2. Jason will post announcement of 9/22 luncheon and future luncheons (October 13, November 10 and December 8) on FaceBook and Town Calendar.
3. Maureen will announce luncheons in email to be sent to the AFB mailing list this week.
4. Peggy will post announcements of the Luncheon around town (Town office, Post Office, Country Store, Hardware store, Three Robbers, and both churches)
5. Karen will bring the peg board displaying medical devices to the luncheon.
6. Maureen will bring to Peggy: copies of the home assessment tool, brochures, stickers, name tags and pens.
7. Maureen will contact Leslie Anderson and Deb Smith about reimbursement for purchases made for the luncheon.
8. Grace has put together an AARP bag of goodies for attendees which she will bring to the event
9. Jason will attend the luncheon if possible.
10. Peggy will request that Jenn Curtis include the dates of future luncheons in the Newsletter calendar.
11. Grace will include tips on avoiding scams on FaceBook and for the next Newsletter (need to confirm deadline for submission)
12. Jason will be point person for people to call for luncheon registration in the future

***Mind Your Health Series***

Maureen shared a poster of a series of 6 sessions beginning October 5 being offered in collaboration with the Richmond Health Center.

 Follow-up Actions

1. Maureen will email Jason a PDF of the poster for sharing on FaceBook.
2. Maureen will include an announcement of the event in an email to the mailing list.

***Yoga Class***

Maureen shared the poster for Anita Goller’s yoga class beginning September 19, 2022 at Merrymeeting Hall.

 Follow-up Actions

1. Maureen will share a PDF of the poster with Jason who will post on FaceBook.

***Elder Health Fair***

Peggy raised the question of planning an Elder Health Fair similar to what was done in the past during the Fall. Members felt such an event would be too much to put on this year but suggested information could be shared at the Luncheons.

 Follow up Action

 None at this time

***Other***

Peggy made two suggestions. First, that AFB have a table at the Elections. Second, that winter tips be included in the next Newsletter. Maureen mentioned that previous monthly emails to the mailing discussing Committee activities had stopped for the past few years and that she planned to revive them this month.

 Follow up Action

1. Peggy will write up winter tips for the Newsletter (check with Jenn on deadline)
2. An AFB table at elections will be discussed at the October meeting; Maureen to check in advance about any restrictions.
3. Maureen will send an email (or mail to some) to those on the mailing list discussing Committee activities and plans to do more regular emails going forward.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for October 10, 2022.\*

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\* The meeting subsequently was changed to October 17 due to a holiday.

**Approved by:**

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| Peggy Muir, Co-Chair |  | Date |
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Maureen Booth, Co-Chair Date

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| Jason Lamoreau, Age-Friendly Coordinator |  | Date |