**Committee Members Present**: Maureen Booth, Mary Kelley, Karen Mayo, Grace McCarthy, Barbara Rollins and Deb Smith (via zoom)

**Absent**: Mary Kelly, Peggy Muir, George Oliver

**Staff**: Jason Lamoreau

**Guests**: Ann Hartzler

**Call to Order**

Maureen established a quorum. Everyone welcomed Ann Hartzler who came as a guest but would like to serve as a Committee member.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was amended to include two additional updates.

**Approval of MinuteS**

The minutes of the December 12, 2022 meeting were approved as distributed.

**staff report**

Jason informed the Committee that Jen Curtis left her position as Planning Director and that he will be assume the role of staffing the Comprehensive Planning Committee. Everyone agreed that Jen was a terrific asset to the Town and will be sorely missed.

Jason apologized to Barbara Rollins that the refrigerator at the Fire House was turned off without notice due to high electric bills. The plans going forward is that nothing perishable should be kept in the refrigerator between luncheons but that the refrigerator will be turned on the day before and day of luncheons for the Committee’s use. Barbara agreed to restock the butter that was lost in time for the January luncheon. Also in reference to complaints about the heat pumps at the Fire House, Jason indicated that it was checked and appears to be working.

There is no final resolution to ambulance coverage now that Northeast Mobil has made service prohibitively expensive for the Town. Every effort is being made to assure that there are no lapses in service and that the public is made aware of temporary and permanent changes that are put into place.

Alas, the lights have been moved from the rec garage making room to relocate the medical equipment available for loan. The relocation will be an opportunity to take inventory of what is available.

Next year’s budgets are due February 4. Grace expressed concern that future demographics require that the Town consider increasing hours for Jason’s position. Although the position is part of the Town’s Administrative budget and not that of the Committee, members felt strongly that we should advocate that the Committee express its concerns and endorse further commitment from the Town. Ann expressed interest in working on the budget.

Jason asked whether the Committee has interest in sponsoring a refreshment stand at the Ice and Smelt Festival during February vacation. The committee agreed to offer hot cocoa, preferably at the shack where there is electricity. Jason indicated that the bulk of activity and attendance is likely to be on February 18-19.

Finally, remodeling is underway will include a private office for Jason. YEAH!!!!

Follow-up Actions:

1. Barbara will buy butter for the luncheon; Jason will investigate options for “pats of butter” for the future.
2. Karen and Jason will work together to relocate the medical equipment to the rec garage.
3. Maureen will mobilize a group of committee volunteers to set up a hot cocoa (and cookies???) refreshment shack on February 19 and 19.
4. Jason will set up a meeting with Peggy, Ann and Maureen to discuss the 2023/2024 Age Friendly budget.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Joint Planning Task Force**

Maureen reviewed the task before the Committee to develop a draft set of goals and objectives for inclusion in the Age Friendly section of the 2024-2034 Comprehensive Plan. Maureen emphasized that there will be future opportunities for revision based on Committee and public input. She also noted that the timespan of the plan was ten years so can include ambitious activities. The Committee considered a set of criteria to help in evaluating the merits of objectives.

Using the 1/3/2023 version of the Goals and Objectives, the following comments were made:

*Goal: To enhance the accessibility of services, buildings, events and physical environment*

* Objective #1 should not be limited to the crossing at Main/Rt24 but should address all hazardous intersections in Town.
* Objective #3 should not be limited to sidewalks but refer to accessibility of public grounds.
* Objective 5 should speak generally to the need that all public meetings be accessible for people experiencing all barriers, including physical, hearing and vision.

*Goal: To develop accessible and affordable housing that promotes independent living*

* Objective 3 should be expanded to include the implementation of universal design and the potential for tax credits for those who adopt it.

*Goal: To expand services and supports to assist individuals remain in B’ham as they age.*

* This goal should be listed first
* The goal should state “to expand and promote….”
* Objective #3 should change models to initiatives
* There should be an additional objective related to wellness activities.

*Goal: To expand transportation options*

* Objective 1 should include the expansion of the program not just promotion
* Scheduled rides may include contractual services with other towns.

There was also discussion on whether health services should be included as a goal, specifically recruiting service providers to Town. The discussion led to the position of Health Officer and the role this position plays in Town. No decision was made about adding a health-related goal for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan.

Attachment A presents a revised list of Goals and Objectives based on the above Committee discussion.

Follow up Actions:

1. Maureen will revise the Goals/Objectives and circulate the revision to Committee members for their review and comment before submitting to the Joint Task Force.
2. An invitation should be extended to Bowdoinham’s health officer, Susan Hobart, to attend a future Committee meeting.

**Lifelong Fellows Project**

Jason reported that he has received a lot of positive feedback from other Towns about our winter kit project. Of particular interest was communication from Al Huntington of the Sagadahoc County Sheriffs’ Office who expressed interest in partnering with Bowdoinham, on programs such as their patrol for family members inclined to wander. Jason indicated that Bowdoinham has few such cases but that other areas, such as a registry for persons wishing to be notified in case of emergencies, could be potential partnerships.

Lisa Clark, Director of the Midcoast Senior Center, also was pleased with the winter kit distribution. Her future involvement with the Committee could be critical on health care issues. Finally, Kate Cutko contacted us to discuss whether the same strategy for distribution could be used to get e-readers and audio books into the hands of older residents.

Maureen opened discussion to consider next steps in coalition building which is the second part of our Lifelong Fellows Project. At one point, the thought was to bring together many of the same individuals who participated in the Listening Sessions to think about ways in which we could collaborate to address the needs of isolated residents. Although that remains the goal, Committee members agreed that pursuing some one-on-one partnerships with the Sagadahoc Sheriffs’ Office, Midcoast Senior Center and the Library may offer a way to incrementally build a coalition over time as success stories provide evidence of what can be done when we work together.

Follow-up Actions:

1. Jason will respond to Al Huntington’s expressing our interest in working together, possibly in the development of a registry of residents wishing to be notified in case of an emergency (e.g., power outage)
2. Maureen will follow-up with Kate Cutko and Lisa Clark to assess opportunities for partnering with the Library and Midcoast Senior Center respectively.

**Updates**

*Tax Prep Day*: Maureen noted that she has yet to make contact with Steve Cohen following last month’s recommendation from Sally Cluchy. Steve heads CA$H Maine – a volunteer led program to help residents prepare their tax filings. Members remained interested in being trained to work on state only returns and to assist Steve during a State Tax Prep Day in Bowdoinham.

*Food Assistance Program*: There have been no further developments in coordinating this federal program to provide food staples to low income residents with Bowdoinham’s Food Pantry which currently has no income guidelines.

*Resource Directory*: Maureen reported that she and Mary Kelly have been meeting to update a Resource Directory for older adults and that a draft document will hopefully be available for Committee review at the February meeting.

*Luncheons*: Barbara reported that plans were in good shape for the January 12 luncheon. Maureen will bring several winter emergency bags to the Luncheon to distribute to those attending who may need one or know of someone who could use one. In February, Grace will present on Romance Scams. In March, Aga Smith, social worker at the Richmond Area Health Center, will speak on coping with Winter Blues.

Follow up Actions:

1. Maureen will continue to follow up with Steve Cohen regarding setting up a training and State Tax Day Prep in Bowdoinham. She will send out updates to the Committee.
2. Maureen will check back with Jenn regarding any plans to include the Federal Food Assistance Program at the Food Pantry.
3. Mary and Maureen will prepare a draft Resource Directory for consideration at the February Committee meeting.
4. Barbara will coordinate with Grace and Aga Smith regarding their presentations at future luncheons.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**AARP Grant Opportunities**

Maureen reported that two grant opportunities will be announced by AARP in mid-January:

*Small (under $1000) Grant*: Ideas were generated for possible proposals. Ann proposed improved audio equipment for streaming town meetings that would greatly benefit older residents. Deb indicated that plans were already afoot to purchase new equipment although it was not clear that funds were allocated. Maureen mentioned Kate Cutko’s interest in purchasing e-readers that could be available on loan to residents.

*Challenge Grant:* These grants can go up to $50,000 but generally range from $5,000-$8000. Maureen reminded members of the two ideas discussed so far: (1) a handbook on universal design; and (2) activities needed to advance the concept of a volunteer-led program similar to Harpswell’s Aging at Home. Other suggestions generated at the meeting included: contract van service to provide regularly scheduled rides to popular destinations and creating a full-time Age Friendly Coordinator. Maureen noted that both ideas may be problematic given that funders prefer projects that include a plan for sustaining the activity once the grant terminates. No final decisions were made on projects for either grant opportunity.

Follow-up Actions:

1. Jason will check in with Nicole to determine the status of funding for audio equipment.
2. Maureen will meet with Kate to discuss the need and potential costs for the purchase of e-readers.
3. Peggy, Jason and Maureen will meet following the grant announcements to discuss the merits and feasibility of the ideas. Deb and Karen volunteered to provide feedback and guidance on the development of a grant proposal.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 13, 2023.

**Attachment A**

**Draft Statement of Age Friendly Goals and Objectives**

**GOAL: To expand and promote services and supports to assist individuals remain in B’ham as they age**

1. Pursue a community-based, volunteer-led initiative for promoting, navigating, coordinating and delivering in-home supports.
2. Expand and provide home repair and safety upgrades to help older adults stay safer, warmer and dryer in their homes.
3. Assist residents to conduct home safety assessments and to make necessary improvements.
4. Support state initiatives to expand the in-home direct care workforce.
5. Implement a system to support older adults during emergencies (e.g., storms, power outages).
6. Improve access to wellness and preventive health care services.

**GOAL: To enhance the accessibility of services, buildings, events and the physical environment.**

1. Identify and address hazardous crosswalks in Town.
2. Rate the level of difficulty and accessibility of trails and post signage to inform users.
3. Expand the walkability and accessibility of residential areas and public grounds in the Village for all users including older adults, strollers, pedestrians with vision impairments, and those using wheelchairs and other assistive devices.
4. Update the 2017 evaluation of accessibility of the Town’s public and private buildings and spaces.
5. Develop and Implement guidelines for assuring that everyone can fully participate in public meetings without barriers.

**GOAL: To enhance programs to reduce social isolation and build social connections.**

1. Address the gaps and challenges that prevent older adults from using digital technology.
2. Develop a program to regularly connect volunteers with older residents to provide reassurance and assistance as needed.
3. Expand opportunities for sharing ideas, activities and knowledge across generations.
4. Expand programs to enhance the physical, mental and social health of older adults.
5. Develop a dedicated space that facilitates access to services and resources for older adults and where older adults can use their knowledge, skills and energy to contribute to community life.

**GOAL: To develop accessible and affordable housing that promotes independent living.**

1. Pursue new models of housing such as cluster housing, shared housing and Accessory Dwelling Units.
2. Expand housing options for individuals requiring in-home support services.
3. Expand the adoption of universal design in the renovation of existing homes and the development of new homes through tax and other incentives.

**GOAL: To expand transportation options**

1. Promote the Ride in Neighbors’ Cars program through driver recruitment and building awareness about the program.
2. Encourage safe driving through voluntary driving evaluations.
3. Develop a system for car pools and scheduled rides to popular destinations

**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 |