**Committee Members Present**: Maureen Booth, Ann Hartzler, Mary Kelley, Karen Mayo, Peggy Muir (via zoom) , Barbara Rollins and Deb Smith

**Absent**: Grace McCarthy

**Staff**: Jason Lamoreau

**CALL TO ORDER**

Maureen established a quorum.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Committee members officially welcomed Ann Hartzler as a new Committee member. Maureen reported that George Oliver resigned as a Committee member but offered to assist on specific projects. The Committee asked that Maureen send a note to George acknowledging and thanking him for his time and contributions as a member.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was approved as distributed with slight changes to the order.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the January 9, 2023 meeting were approved with an edit to delete Mary Kelley’s name from those present at the meeting.

**STAFF REPORT**

Jason announced that Yvette Muenier was hired as the Town’s new Director for Planning and Development. Jason also reported that the Ice & Smelt Festival has been a challenge this year due to the weather and that it was unclear what events would actually take place. Given the uncertainty of attendance, the Committee decided to cancel plans to staff the Snack Shake. Also, tentative plans to host a Bean Supper on 2/28 were also canceled given competition with the Soup Supper planned by the Food Pantry.

Jason reported that the draft Age Friendly section of the Comp Plan is to be reviewed by the Comp Plan Committee February 14 and, pending decisions, would be forwarded on to the Select Board for their initial consideration.

No decisions have bee made for EMS service in Town once the Northeast Mobil contract terminates in June. In the meantime, Topsham has offered to cover calls on a mutual aid basis. Talks are underway exploring multiple options including a regional system with Gardiner and Richmond and the possibility of the Town developing its own program. Regarding the former, Richmond has little incentive to join a regional effort given the higher costs to them if an ambulance was stationed in Richmond. Developing a local program in Bowdoinham would come with significant costs plus the added challenge of recruiting qualified EMTs and paramedics. There is also some discussion about a county wide service but with Gardiner and Topsham already having their own program that seems unlikely.

Peggy raised questions about involving Sally Cluchey. Jason noted that she has been a party to conversations and that the State has approved funds over the next five years to provide emergency support to EMS services in imminent failure. Jason pointed out, however, that the issue is not solely financial but also centers on finding qualified staff. The Committee questioned the extent to which local programs are available to train recruits; Peggy advocated that more be done in the State to promote EMTs and paramedics as a career track

Mary thanked Jason for playing such an active role in issues; the Committee heartedly agreed.

**2023/2023 BUDGET**

Jason distributed a.draft budget for the coming fiscal year for Age Friendly activities, exclusive of staffing. The budget is based on the following assumptions:

* To the extent that contractors or instructors are needed, they would be paid through grants and not directly funded through Town appropriations.
* Efforts would be made to break-even on luncheons through donations, the reserve fund and/or sponsorships.
* Miscellaneous costs (supplies, printing) would be covered at the same levels as in 2022/2023

The net effect of these assumptions is that $400 would be requested from the Town. Jason also reviewed that status of our reserve account which should be approximately $2500 at the end of this fiscal year. This amount does not include any grant funds that the Committee is hoping to be awarded in the coming year.

While the Committee will be requesting a significant reduction in Town appropriations for its operations, Jason has requested an additional 10 hours per week to support age friendly work. The rationale for requesting an increase in hours is based on his current level of effort most weeks and the anticipated role that the position can play in facilitating a more coordinated response to residents’ access to needed services. The Committee’s work in developing a Coalition assumes a continuing role in Town for working together with local service partners (e.g., food pantry, fire & rescue, library, churches, etc) to identify needs and work together to better meet those needs.

Follow up Actions:

1. The AFB draft 2023/2024 budget will be reviewed by the Finance Committee at 3:00pm on March 15, 2023. Committee members are welcomed to attend.
2. Maureen and Peggy will develop a justification for the increased hours to further support the request. This will be shared with the Committee prior to the Finance Committee meeting.

**RESOURCE DIRECTORY**

Mary and Maureen reviewed their work in updating the Resource Directory and provided important context:

* The update excludes private service providers and instead focuses only on resources that are offered at no or low costs.
* Since distributing the draft, further conversations were held with Kathryn Harnish, the AARP Fellow working with the Committee. Kathryn advocated for a tiered approach to building awareness about available local resources. The first tier would be the magnet currently distributed by the Town listing emergency and town service contact information. The second tier could resemble what Houlton has done in identifying contact information for the key resource in each domain (housing, medical, financial, etc) on a single or double sided sheet that could be laminated for helpful reference. The third tier would be the full Resource Directory for those wishing more detailed information such as the town office responding to inquiries, other local entities who may become aware of resident needs (food pantry, churches, library), and local residents. The full directory would also be available online for easy updating.
* In hindsight, the number of domains or categories used in the draft update should be reconsidered and consolidated into no more than six categories.

The Committee supported the tiered approach and generally felt favorable about the draft Directory. Ann offered to edit the draft. The discussion again turned to how a “navigation” system could be created in town to support residents who get overwhelmed by the maze of resources and services. Jason described one option that had a “lead” person in each major domain whose role would be to stay current on the resources in that area and to work with other “leads” to develop coordinated responses to identified needs in town. There was general agreement that a model like that would be very helpful but would require that the Age Friendly Coordinator position is allocated increased hours.

Follow-up Actions:

1. Mary, Ann and Maureen will work together to finalize the draft Directory and to propose a one page summary that could serve as a Tier 2 document.

**EVENTS**

**CA$HMaine:** Jason reported that 4-5 appointments were made for the afternoon’s session to prepare state tax returns for residents. Grace, Ann and Jason planned to attend the session to shadow CA$HMaine volunteers so that they could be of assistance in the future. In discussion with CA$HMaine, Jason indicated that preference was to postpone the originally scheduled 2/20 second session to early April to hopefully attract greater participation.

Follow up Actions:

1. Jason will work with CA$HMaine to finalize the date of a second event and promote it.
2. Consideration will be made to using the Fire House as a venue for the next session.

**Luncheons**

Barbara indicated that all is going well with the luncheons. The Committee discussed the need to develop a strategy for seeking possible sponsors to help defray some of the luncheon expenses. This will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Follow-up Action:

1. Developing a strategy for soliciting sponsorships for luncheons will be put on the Agenda for the March meeting.

**Exercise Sessions**

Barbara raised her interest in having the Committee sponsor balance and other exercise programs for older adults. A Matter of Balance used to be offered as well as impromptu exercises by Linda Jarvis. Mary proposed that any sponsorship of an exercise program be done by a certified practitioner. Barbara offered to contact People Plus, Silver Sneakers and Aga Smith to see if there was interest and availability to offer a program in Bowdoinham. Jason offered to contact the school to determine if previous “walks” could be resumed there.

Follow-up Actions:

1. Barbara will contact People Plus, Silver Sneakers and Aga to assess interest
2. Jason will contact the school about resuming open times for public walks.

**UPDATES**

**Bowdoinham Estates**

Peggy reported that a new property manager has been assigned creating an opportunity for the Committee to develop ways to better promote our activities to residents. Prior to coming to a Committee meeting, it was decided that Jason and perhaps Grace (who has made previous contacts) would arrange a meeting to discuss the Manager’s role and interest in working together with the Committee to support residents.

Follow-up Action:

1. Peggy will try to contact the Property Manager about interest in arranging a meeting to discuss potential interest in working together.

**Annual Report to the Town**

Maureen reminded the Committee that the Age Friendly report for the 2022/2023 Annual Report to the Town is due February 28. Maureen will circulate a draft prior to that date for Committee review and comments.

Follow-up Action:

1. Maureen will prepare a draft with Peggy and circulate it to the Committee for review.

**Grants**

Maureen worked with the Library to submit a proposal to the Maine Community Foundation for the purchase of 3 tablets, headphones and CD player for loan to residents for use at home. Jason and Maureen are also putting together a team to respond to the AARP Challenge Grant solicitation to support the development of a Handbook on Universal Design (UD). So far, an architect and graphic designer from Alpha One, an advocacy and support agency in Maine providing services to those intellectual and physical disabilities, have expressed interest. Also, Sue Stapleford, a plain language consultant who founded Clear Language Group, agreed to consult with the project to assure the language was easily accessible to everyone. The purpose of the Handbook would be to describe the principles of UD and its applications in new construction and modification of homes, public buildings, and public spaces. Still under consideration is whether the Library or Town decides to go after a third grant to fund a ramp and parking spaces to the Library. The idea for this project came out of the strong sentiments expressed by older residents about the general lack of access to the Library.

Follow-Up Action:

1. Jason and Maureen will develop and submit a grant to develop a UD Handbook.
2. Jason, Nicole and Kate will decide whether to pursue AARP funding for a ramp and parking.

**Adjournment**

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

**Approved by:**

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

Maureen Booth, Co-Chair Date

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