

MINUTES
Advisory Committee for Age Friendly Bowdoinham
February 9, 2026

Committee Members Present: Mary Kelley, Karen Mayo, Maureen Booth, Deb Smith, Colleen Crowley, Laura Arnold, Bill Small

Members Absent: Pam Buffington, Lois Smith

Staff: Jason Lamoreau

Guest: Rachelle Tome

I. CALL TO ORDER

Maureen established a quorum and called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved with additional status reports: Opportunity for community service, May 13 speaker sponsored by Library, Lifelong Maine 2026 Annual Conference, Summer concert supper, and luncheons.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 12, 2025 meeting were approved.

IV. AARP CHALLENGE GRANT SOLICITATION

Members reviewed a concept paper describing a home assessment project that, if agreed upon, would become an application for the 2026 AARP Challenge Grant. Major points of discussion included:

- Deb described the major components of the project which address many of the shortcomings of our earlier efforts to encourage residents to conduct home assessments as a way to increase safety and enjoyment in the home as residents age. New elements include a broader system for identifying a target audience, use of the AARP Home Fit Guide with supplemental questions on items specific to winter conditions and falls prevention, the inclusion of trained volunteers to work alongside the homeowner in conducting an assessment, and a clearer pathway from assessment to recommendations to action.
- Deb, Karen and Colleen reaffirmed their interest in becoming volunteers for the program.
- The concept paper should reference specific budget items before being reviewed by the Select Board prior to submittal on March 7.

Maureen agreed to make suggested changes and to submit to both the Select Board and Bowdoinham Community Connections (BCC) for their review.

V. WELCOME KIT

Rachelle noted that the idea of developing a Welcome Kit was brought up by BCC to help familiarize new residents about the services and resources of the community and the opportunities available for residents to engage in community life as participants and volunteers. Rachelle showed one example of a Welcome Kit modeled after a community in Connecticut. Members were unanimously supportive of the idea which, if approved by BCC and the Select Board, would be funded from monies awarded to Age Friendly under its designation as AARP's Beacon Community of 2026.

Rachelle suggested that Members begin thinking about vital information to include in the Kit. Members suggested that Volunteer Opportunities be highlighted as a great way to meet people and to get involved.

VI. STAFF REPORT

- Annual Reports are due by March 1.
- Bulky Waste Day is scheduled on April 19. Again BCC volunteers will assist with pickup and disposal. A suggestion was made to post an announcement at the Gift Shop.
- There will be a public hearing on options for using the "yellow building"
- The February 28 tax prep day is full. The March 17 date is half full.
- The Ice & Smelt Festival is on for Feb 28-March 1. Age Friendly will sponsor hot cocoa and cookies, most likely in the Rec Snack Shack unless a smelt shack can be found. Deb, Maureen and ANYONE ELSE?? have volunteered to help. Mary suggested that she will invite a student wanting to do community service to join.
- Jason asked if anyone could stop by the Firehouse on Feb 28 during Tax Prep Day to assist with the coffee. Maureen volunteered

VII. DANCE OPPORTUNITY

Maureen reported on a call received from Laura Karlin who expressed interest in exploring opportunities to bring dance classes to Bowdoinham, particularly focused on those with mobility or other challenges. Members were very interested but referenced difficulties we have had in the past with programs that extend over a period of time. Mary suggested that one option to be explored would be to offer a one day free workshop to assess the level of interest and, based on that, Laura could decide whether to offer scheduled classes. Similar to the yoga classes at Merrymeeting Hall, any payment arrangement would be between Laura and participants with Age Friendly doing promotions and helping with site location and set up.

It was agreed that Maureen would contact Laura to invite her to a Committee meeting to discuss her ideas for a workshop and the assistance she would need to implement.

VIII. STATUS REPORTS

- a.) Mary reported that she was approached by a 17 year old student about her interest working with older adults as part of a **community service**. Mary identified one older neighbor who has agreed for weekly visits and asked Members if they were

aware of other residents who could benefit from weekly visits. Mary gave as an example reading to a blind resident. Maureen said she would follow up with Mary about someone she knows who may enjoy the help.

- b.) Yvette is requesting Committees wishing to sponsor a **supper during the Summer Concert Series** to notify her. Everyone agreed working with BCC last year worked well and asked Maureen to check in with Sally about BCC's interest.
- c.) Maureen distributed an announcement from Kate Cutko about the Library's hosting of **Maureen Groden, author of *When a Loved One is Dying***, for a discussion and book signing on May 11.
- d.) Laura walked through a handout explaining the six dimensions of **Lifestyle Medicine** and discussed options for building awareness about the simple steps that can be taken to improve health outcomes. In thinking about hosting a lecture, members suggested gaining support from other entities. Karen suggested reaching out to BCDI whose currently priorities include lifestyle choices; Colleen offered to approach Kate at the Library for her thoughts on moving forward.
- e.) Maureen encouraged members to register for the **Lifelong Maine 2026 Annual Conference** in Orono on June 1. She will send the correct link to the Committee.
- f.) Deb confirmed that she, Colleen, Maureen, Pam Fortin, Barbara Rollins would be working at the **2/12 luncheon**. Mary confirmed with Paul Tabor that he too would help with clean up.
- g.) Mary summarized findings from a **survey sent to all participants** in the BCC Pilot during the first year. Six of the 7 respondents expressed strong support for the program and were grateful that it existed. One individual noted that needs extended beyond the scope of the project; another felt that more information was needed on local resources.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.

Approved by:

Maureen Booth, Chair

Date

Jason Lamoreau, Older Adults Services Coordinator

Date