

MINUTES
Advisory Committee for Age-Friendly Bowdoinham
May 13, 2024

Committee Members Present: Maureen Booth, Mary Kelley, Karen Mayo. Grace McCarthy, Peggy Muir, Deb Smith and Lois Smith

Members Absent: Ann Hartzler

Staff: Jason Lamoreau

Guests: Louise McCleery, Ambassador/Spectrum Generations and Patricia Oh, Director/Lifelong Communities

I CALL TO ORDER

Maureen established a quorum and called the meeting to order.

II APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as distributed with the addition of two additional items from Mary Kelley.

III APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the April 10, 2024 meeting were approved as distributed.

IV COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR/SPECTRUM GENERATIONS

Maureen welcomed Louise McCleery who was recently hired as Community Ambassador at Spectrum Generations. Through advocacy of Maine's Cabinet on Aging and federal funding, an Ambassador has been appointed to each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to connect with the municipalities in their region. The position is intended to help make each community and its residents more aware of the services and programs within each AAA and to assist where necessary in accessing those services. Members commended the State for addressing the need for a more streamlined system for accessing services. Upon hearing members' past experience in successfully contacting staff at Spectrum Generations, Louise offered to run interference when unable to reach the appropriate staff person. Louise also offered to attend Committee meetings when specific issues regarding Spectrum Generations are on the agenda.

Louise reviewed major services at Spectrum Generations, many of which were unknown to members. The lack of clear and easy to disseminate information about Spectrum was further confirmation of the need for someone in Louise's position to work closely with communities to

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assure residents were benefitting from programs offered. Attachment A summarizes many of Spectrum Generation's services.

V. COMMUNITY CONNECTOR PILOT

Maureen welcomed Patricia Oh who, in addition to serving as the hub for all Lifelong Communities in the State, works directly with the Maine Cabinet on Aging to support innovative solutions to help older adults live quality lives. Most recently, the State announced a community connector pilot to identify, train and support community members who link people to essential services and social opportunities. In describing the essence of the pilot, Patricia turned to Lois Smith to read aloud her vision for how a pilot could function:

Access to available social services by the elderly, disabled, and community members in need is an identified challenge. The self-sufficiency that has served these proud and independent New Englanders all their lives now serves to isolate, rendering them unaware of services that are available.

The proposal is that, in the spirit of "neighbors helping neighbors," a program be created that will reach these individuals in a way that allows them to preserve their independence and privacy.

By working with the town's Age Friendly Coordinator, attending local functions and building relationships in the community, an Outreach Coordinator learns of and makes connections with community members in need. Outreach efforts are low-key and small-scale. Additionally, there is distribution of a local phone number that community members can call with questions about services and/or requests for help.

The Outreach Coordinator matches a volunteer "neighbor" with the community member to build a relationship that fosters the exchange of information. As the volunteer learns more about the individual's specific situation, the individual learns more about services that might make life easier. The volunteer reports to and receives guidance and information from the outreach coordinator. The volunteer supports the client developing direct connections with the relevant social services.

The coordinator networks with AAA service organizations and local resources to learn more about available services. There is a dedicated phone number that community members use to contact the coordinator and/or a volunteer.

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Committee members and Patricia agreed that this vision parallels closely to the goals of the Pilot as described in Attachment A. Patricia suggested that members speak to Blue Hill Peninsula about their Bridging Neighbors program which has been in place for nearly a year. The following issues were discussed:

- Funds are available to hire one coordinator who will be paid a stipend under the pilot for up to \$20,000 for 20 hours per week. In addition certain start up costs, such as ipads, phone service) will be paid for under the pilot.
- One purpose of the pilot is to improve access to health and social services through engagement of volunteers on a one on one basis with residents. Findings from this one year pilot will help determine whether the pilot should be extended beyond a year.
- Pilot sites will be required to collect standardized information so that aggregate and comparative data can be analyzed to asses outcomes.
- Sites wanting to participate must be ready to comply with the following short term timeline:
 - June: submit a job description and 1-year workplan for the Volunteer Coordinator
 - Mid August: identify the person assuming the position of Volunteer Coordinator
 - September 5: volunteer coordinator attends mandatory training

Peggy expressed concern that the program may be too bureaucratic given the involvement of multiple state and local entities. It was pointed out that the buy-in of multiple entities is part of the value of the program by connecting and coordinating their respective roles at the community level.

Maureen suggested that a sense of the committee be ascertained by having each member note their reaction and level of support. Karen expressed enthusiasm for reaching out to those who need help, if even only for one year. Mary endorsed the concept and saw opportunities to bring in volunteers specific to different population groups, such as veterans, who could better relate and be a trusted advocate. Lois supported the pilot but cautioned that we will need to be thoughtful on how it is presented so that Peggy's concerns are addressed. Louise noted that it will be important to have clear goals against which success can be measured. Peggy came around in support of the pilot seeing close parallels to the older settlement house concept where workers went door to door. Maureen was in favor assuming that the position can be distinguished from Jason's and seen by the public as augmenting his role without cost to the Town. Patricia reiterated that the Committee should feel no pressure to participate and that if we go forward, the pilot should reflect local values and circumstances. Deb, as a Select Board member, had similar concerns that it be well understood that this opportunity is voluntary and at no expense to the Town. Jason echoed his support but saw the importance to both him and

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the public in clearly defining how his role and that of the Volunteer Coordinator compliment rather than compete with each other.

Maureen proposed that a small Task Force be established to both draft a job description and a preliminary Year 01 workplan for the Coordinator. Mary, Deb, Lois and Maureen volunteered and to keep Jason closely informed as they move forward.

The Committee thanked Louise and Patricia for attending the meeting and offering their perspectives on the benefits and challenges of the Pilot.

Follow-up Action

1. Mary, Deb, Lois and Maureen will form a Task Force with the goal of drafting a job description and One Year Workplan for the Coordinator in time for review at the next Committee meeting.
2. Maureen will contact Blue Hill Peninsular to schedule a time to discuss their program with the Task Force.
3. Deb will advise the Task Force on an appropriate date for bringing the concept before the Select Board for review.

VI. QUILT AND SILVER SNEAKERS

Mary reported that she spoke with Nan Curtis who volunteered to make a quilt from old T-shirts collected by the Recreation Department. The quilt will be used as a prize for a raffle.

Mary proposed that we publicize the three times weekly (M-W-F) Silver Sneaker program at the Cathance Fitness Center at 1201 Main Street, Topsham.

Follow up Action

1. Mary and Jason will coordinate on the quilt with Nan Curtis
2. Jason will post Silver Sneakers on our FB page.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 3:00 pm for a reception in honor of Peggy Muir who is leaving the Committee to live on Bainbridge Island, WA. The next meeting is scheduled for 1:30 pm on June 10, 2024.

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Approved by:

Peggy Muir, Co-Chair

Date

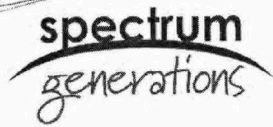
Maureen Booth, Co-Chair

Date

Jason Lamoreau, Older Adult Services Coordinator

Date

ATTACHMENT A



Spectrum Generations

Promoting life-long learning, health, wellness, nutrition, community engagement,
and social well-being of all older and disabled adults.

(800) 639-1553

www.spectrumgenerations.org



Spectrum Generations

Who are We?

Your local Area Agency on Aging – covering six counties in Central Maine; Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Somerset, Waldo, and including the towns of Brunswick and Harpswell.

Home Office

Home Office
One Weston Court
Augusta, ME 04330
(800) 639-1553

Northern Kennebec County

Muskie Community Center
38 Gold Street
Waterville, ME 04901
(207) 873-4745

Lincoln County

Lincoln County Regional Center
767 Main Street, Suite 3
Damariscotta, ME 04543
(207) 563-1363

Waldo County

Waldo Community Center
18 Merriam Road
Belfast, ME 04915
(207) 338-1190

Somerset County

Somerset Community Center
30 Leavitt Street
Skowhegan, ME 04976
(207) 474-8552

Southern Kennebec County

Cohen Community Center
22 Town Farm Road
Hallowell, ME 04347
(207) 626-7777

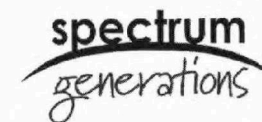
Sagadahoc County

Midcoast Regional Center
35 Union Street
Brunswick, ME 04011
(207) 729-0475

Knox County

Knox Resource Office
87 Elm Street
Suite 204A
Camden, ME 04843
207-596-0339

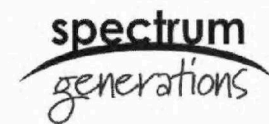
When in doubt, call (800) 639-1553





Our Services

- Socialization
- Health and Wellness
- Nutrition Services
- Supportive Services
- Medicare Education

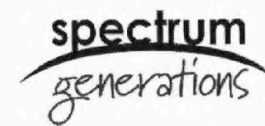




Socialization

Our seven sites offer the perfect place to connect with new and old friends. We offer several activities such as:

- Technology Classes
- Fitness Events
- Educational Opportunities
- Health Screenings
- Social Activities



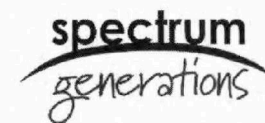


Health and Wellness

- We provide health education classes and workshops at our community centers.
- These classes can also be brought to residential facilities or private organizations such as your Age-Friendly Community locations

Classes include:

- Living Well for Better Health
- Living Well with Diabetes
- Living Well with Chronic Pain
- A Matter of Balance
- Enhance[®] Fitness
- Tai Chi for Health and Balance
- Bingocize[®]

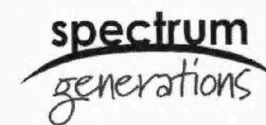




Nutrition Services

At Spectrum Generations, we believe that food is medicine and a nutritious diet is necessary to stay healthy, strong, successful, and independent. Our nutrition services include:

- Meals on Wheels
- Maine-ly Delivered Meals
- Community dining at some of our centers
- Food distribution through USDA Food Commodities Supplemental Program
- AniMeals program





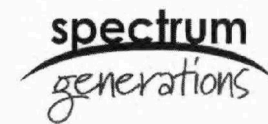
Supportive Services

Family Caregiver

- Our Family Caregiver program assists those 55 and older who have taken on the caregiving role for a parent, spouse, or other loved one.
 - Respite
 - Caregiver workshops
 - Caregiver support groups
 - Information and Assistance
 - Adult Day Programs
 - Legal Services

Money Minders

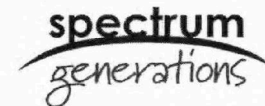
- The Money Minders program assists low to moderate income adults aged 55 and older with financial management.





Medicare Education

- Our certified State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) counselors are available to:
 - Teach Medicare 101
 - Provide individual, free, unbiased Medicare counseling appointments
 - Provide information and tips on how to protect yourself, your family, and your assets from Medicare fraud and scams



ATTACHMENT B
COMMUNITY PILOT CONCEPT



Community Connector Pilot Sites

Lifelong Maine, a program of the UMaine Center on Aging and the Consortium of Aging Policy Research and Analysis, is excited to identify communities for the Community Connector Pilot Project, a partnership with the Governor's Cabinet on Aging and Maine's five Area Agencies on Aging. Our goal is to work with you to identify, train, and support a resident of your community who will link people to essential services and social opportunities.

THE COMMUNITY CONNECTOR PILOT

Unfulfilled social needs play a crucial role in influencing health outcomes. However, many programs aimed at linking individuals to services lack full integration with social activities that enable people to spend time with neighbors and friends, maintaining the level of community engagement they desire. We also know that many people are unaware of available resources and services and are not sure where to go for help or information. Community Connectors will be people who live in the community and know it well. As trusted neighbors, Community Connectors will not only help people find what they need to thrive but will make it more comfortable to accept help or to participate in social opportunities.

The work in each Community Connector Pilot site will be community driven. It will reflect the assets available, be embedded in the ongoing priorities of the age-friendly or lifelong community team, and build on a trusted relationship with the municipality and other partners.

Up to three pilot sites within the service area of each of Maine's five Area Agencies on Aging will be selected. Community Connectors will receive training and support for their role from the Lifelong Maine team and will collaborate closely with the designated Community Ambassador from their Area Agency on Aging. Each Area Agency on Aging has appointed a Community Ambassador to connect with the municipalities in their region and to provide extra support for the pilot sites based on community needs.

With support from UMaine and their local age-friendly team, the Community Connector will identify local services and social events, familiarize themselves with the programs and services provided by regional service providers, and receive training to assist individuals in completing applications for local, regional, and statewide programs. Pilot sites will recruit their Community Connector before August 15 so that the necessary background check can be completed before the launch of the program in September. Community Connectors will receive a stipend of \$20,000 for a one-year, 20-hour/week commitment to the program (\$10,000 for a 10-hour/week commitment).

Each pilot site will be eligible to receive funding to cover infrastructure and operational expenses associated with participation in the pilot (e.g., a computer for the Community Connector, cost of Internet access, notepad or computer for residents accessing services, printing costs, privacy booths).

PILOT SITE CRITERIA

COMMUNITY READINESS CRITERIA	<p>Core leadership team that directs the age-friendly community work</p> <p>Completion of a plan that is guiding age-friendly</p> <p>Commitment to expand capacity to connect older residents with resources</p> <p>Ongoing communication with residents, the municipality, & other partners</p> <p>Experience building partnerships and openness to form new collaborations</p>
COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY CONNECTOR PILOT	<p>Capacity to develop a job description, recruit a community connector, and interview candidates to confirm a good fit for the role and the community</p> <p>Commitment to welcome a community connector from a diverse ethnic, cultural, or socio-economic background reflective of your community</p> <p>Capacity to orient the community connector to local resources and people who can help the connector identify additional resources</p> <p>Commitment to create a work plan in line with your mission and action plan</p> <p>Capacity to provide support and supervision for the Community Connector</p> <p>Ability to identify a physical space for the Connector to meet with residents</p>
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITY CONNECTOR	<p>A high degree of initiative, independence, and tenacity</p> <p>Lifelong learner committed to participate in the orientation and trainings</p> <p>Outstanding organizational skills & ability to prioritize competing demands</p> <p>Strong oral and written communication skills; comfortable communicating by phone, in-person, and electronically</p> <p>Comfort using technology and willing to learn new computer applications</p> <p>Team player who works well in a group setting</p> <p>Compassionate listener who respects privacy and maintains healthy boundaries</p> <p>Comfortable connecting residents to resources</p> <p>Leadership skills, including adaptability to changing situations or needs</p> <p>Understanding of community diversity and commitment to being inclusive</p> <p>Ability to diffuse conflict</p>

READY TO LEARN MORE?

Please reach out to Patricia Oh (patricia.oh@maine.edu) to set up a meeting to discuss your goals for participation and explore how the pilot opportunity can build on the work you have started.