**Committee Members Present**: Maureen Booth, Mary Kelley, Peggy Muir, George Oliver, Barbara Rollins, and Deb Smith

**Absent**: George Oliver, Karen Mayo, and Chris Whitney (Age Friendly Coordinator)

**Guests**: Kathryn Harnish

**Call to Order**

A quorum was established.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was amended to include 3 additional items: a discussion on inter-generational activities; requests made to the Committee from a HealthReach Social Worker and an AARP Fraud Watch volunteer; and the June 28, 2022 presentation to the Select Board.

**Approval of MinuteS**

The minutes of the May 9, 2022 meeting were approved as distributed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Conversation with Kathryn Harnish**

After the Committee’s May meeting, Maureen Booth contacted Patricia Oh, Maine Center on Aging, about the possible placement of a student intern during the summer to assist the Committee with conducting focus groups with persons working directly with older adults and adults living with disabilities. Prior to the meeting, Patricia arranged a Zoom introduction with Peggy Muir, Maureen Booth and Kathryn Harnish, a field placement student working with the Center on Aging, a leader of age-friendly Houlton and an advocate working with the Elder Abuse Institute of Maine. Kathryn was invited to the Committee meeting to give her a broader understanding of the Committee’s interest in conducting stakeholder focus groups, the range of questions to be considered and the specific individuals to invite as participants. Ideas for inclusion in the focus groups included:

* The major challenges faced by older adults
* Resources or supports needed by stakeholders to better assist their clients
* How can the Town be more supportive to older adults, caregivers and organizations who work directly with them
* Areas where collective action among public and private agencies/organizations would be helpful
* How can we change the conversation to “normalize” asking for help/services
* Opportunities for relieving social isolation; reaching those who are marginalized

The Committee reviewed its preliminary list of invitees: sheriff, fire/rescue, Town General Assistance, Rides in Neighbors’ Cars, Food Pantry, librarian, church pastors, select board chair, respite providers; hardware store, country store, and CHANS. Kathryn asked about available health care services in the area and whether the agency on aging and community action program played large roles in the community. It was agreed that residents use services from a broad area and that the availability of home-based services was restricted due to travel times and the lack of available staff. After discussion, additional invitees were added: community school principal, spectrum generations, hospital discharge planner, Community Action Program, Richmond Senior Center, and Spectrum Generations.

Following Kathryn’s participation, Mary Kelley raised concern that Kathryn should be reminded that her role was not to serve as content expert or problem solver during the focus groups but that her role was to facilitate discussion among participants and to listen to their comments and ideas without interjecting her personal opinions.

Follow-up Action:

* Kathryn will draft a preliminary focus group protocol for review which will be circulated to Committee members for their comments.
* Maureen will follow up with Kathryn regarding her role as focus group facilitator
* Maureen will draft a letter of introduction to each invitee including a doodle calendar for selecting invitee availability

**De-Briefing from June 6, 2022 Age Friendly Gathering**

The Committee was unanimous in its assessment that the event was a huge success: beautiful day, delicious food, good attendance, and engaging speakers. Members felt that advance planning paid off in allowing the prep, set up and serving to go smoothly for a first time effort. Maureen relayed George’s specific comments: person should be assigned to taking photos; music should be more upbeat; assistance with mikes should be available; practice makes perfect but we will not have enough practice so must contend with a certain amount of chaos; recommends a final luncheon in September; activity needed to engage attendees (paper/pencil game, variety show; musical group; line dancing demo; talking puppet; comedy routine; contest).

Member Ideas for improving promotion: temporary road sign and using the upper half of the current poster as a template for all Age Friendly events. Eight people asked to be added to the Age Friendly Mailing List.

There was agreement that eating events take significant time, organization and energy and that, going forward, should be the responsibility of a sub-committee. Deb Smith offered to lead a sub-committee and invite George and non-members to join in the effort such as Diana Mosher, Linda Baker and Lynn Sanford. One such event may be a “Harvest Meal” during Celebrate Bowdoinham. Similarly, it was agreed that Barbara Rollins would lead an Event Sub-Committee focused on field trips and other one-time activities. Barbara will approach Edna Seeley about joining the sub-committee as well as others. Thought needs to be given about how to support those who are unable to fund their participation on a field trip which may include entrance fees and lunch. Maureen offered to work with the Town on options for doing so.

Follow-up Activities:

* Deb Smith will take the lead for proposing an idea for a Harvest Meal or other food-related event in the Fall.
* Barbara Rollins will approach Edna Seeley and possibly others to consider options for a field trip during the summer.
* Maureen will facilitate access to Committee resources to help promote and fund activities.
* Maureen will consult with Mark Dube about using his poster template for future events.
* Peggy and Maureen will plan a table at Celebrate Bowdoinham

**June 28 Select Board Presentation**

In an effort to keep the Select Board updated on activities of the Committee, Peggy and Maureen requested time on the June 28 Select Board agenda to provide a summary of the first half of 2022.

Follow up Activities:

* Peggy and Maureen will prepare and present summary report to the Select Board

**NEW BUSINESS**

The following items were discussed as part of an effort to set priorities for the summer.

**Intergenerational Ideas**

Mary Kelley reported on conversations she had with Kate Cutko and the principal of the Bowdoinham Community School about potential intergenerational ideas. Several ideas surfaced:

1. World War II American Girl Doll. The doll comes with a suitcase that could be used to put items reminiscent of the era. Peggy Muir noted that a British woman came to Bowdoinham during the war and could be the foundation for building a story around the doll. Judith Beam, herself British, was suggested as a possible source for more information. The idea than developed further into the concept of dressing the doll in various clothes of current Maine immigrants along with items in a suitcase. Maureen suggested that Martha Stein, Executive Director of Hope Acts working with asylum seekers in Maine, may have ideas for engaging her clients in this effort.
2. Electives Program at Community School. This program would involve a Committee member or members sharing a skill with a group of 4th, 5th and 6th graders for one hour per week for 4 weeks. Ideas included: anthropology of old age; knitting; line dancing.
3. Walk with Elders: Either as part of the school year or separately arranged, older residents would team up with younger residents to go on a walk.

Follow up Actions:

* Mary will follow up with Kate regarding the Committee’s interest in working on the WWII American Doll project and with the principal regarding the Electives Program.
* Peggy will follow up with Judith Beam and others about preparing a story to go along with a WWII girl coming to Bowdoinham and identify possible items for the suitcase.
* Follow up discussion is needed to determine the requirements of the Electives Program and candidates to assume responsibilities.

**AARP Fraud Watch**

Maureen reported that Grace McCarthy contacted her about making a presentation in Town on Fraud. Aga is a new volunteer with the AARP Fraud Watch Network and also lives in Bowdoinham. Members thought it was a great idea and that an email to our mailing list should be sent out to gauge the level of interest and best dates.

Follow up Action:

* Maureen will follow up with Aga about possible dates and send an email to our mailing list to assess interest.

**Older Adult Support Group**

Maureen reported that she was contacted by Aga Smith, a social worker working with the Richmond Senior Center who is employed by HealthReach. Aga proposed establishing a support group in Town similar to one she is planning for in Richmond. The group suggested inviting Aga to the July meeting to learn more about her experience and ideas.

Follow-up Actions:

* Maureen will contact Aga about attending the July Committee meeting.

**Window Dresser Program**

Earlier this year the Committee became aware of a program that provides assistance to residents in winterizing their windows. Jeff deBlieu in Bowdoinham is a volunteer with the program and provided information about both how to volunteer to work on the program as well as how to request assistance. At that time, George Oliver offered to submit an article to the Bowdoinham Newsletter as it got closer to the Fall months.

Follow-up Actions:

* Maureen will contact George about submitting an article on the program for the August/September Newsletter, due at the end of July.

**Lessons from Conversation with Mount Vernon Age Friendly Program**

In April Maureen and George had a zoom meeting with Tom Ward, Chair of Mount Vernon’s Age Friendly Committee, about their efforts to conduct outreach to at-risk residents. A summary of that conversation was shared with the Committee but no discussion has taken place to consider its implications for Bowdoinham.

Follow-up Actions:

* Lessons from Mount Vernon will be included on the Committee’s meeting in July.

**Benches**

This topic was put on hold until George was in attendance

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2022.