

**New Bedford Council on Aging  
Advisory Board Meeting  
March 10, 2016  
181 Hillman Street, Bldg. 9**

**MINUTES**

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE  
NEW BEDFORD, MA  
2016 APR 14 P 3:30  
CITY CLERK

**Board Members Present:**

Bruce Duarte, Chair  
Patricia Costa, Vice Chair  
Virginia Morrison, Secretary  
Esperanza Alejandro-Berube  
Joan Halter  
Inez Mello  
Stanley Oceisa  
George Smith  
Mary Sullivan  
Joan Swain  
Jane Stott

**Also Present:**

Debra Lee, COA Director  
Cynthia Wallquist, Community Services Director  
Pamela Amaral-Lema, COA Administrative Specialist  
Karen Main, Buttonwood Senior Center Coordinator

**The meeting was called to order at 9:03AM by the Chairman, Bruce Duarte**

**Secretary's Report**

Mr. Duarte asked the board members to read over the minutes to see if there were any questions.

**A motion to approve the minutes from the February 11, 2016 meeting was made by Ms. Swain seconded by Ms Stott. The motion was unanimously approved.**

**Appearances**

**Karen Main- Buttonwood Senior Center Coordinator**

Ms. Main gave a synopsis on all of the programming at Buttonwood senior center. Ms. Main stated the attendance has been consistent during the winter months largely due to the fact that there hasn't been as many snow storms this year compared to last year. Ms. Main spoke positively about the My Senior Center electronic system and how it is easier to report accurate attendance numbers. Ms. Main reported that she will have a large event next Thursday, Bingo Brunch, which she has sold over 70 tickets for this event. This event consists of breakfast, catered by "The Oaks", storytelling with Mr. Bates and bingo. Ms. Main mentioned how smoothly SRTA transportation has been with the bus dropping and picking up seniors right in front of the center. Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Main for her participation and communication with SRTA to help transportation run more easily to and from the center. Ms. Main also reported Pet Eats Too program has increased in participation. There are now 45 regulars seniors picking up food for their pets on a monthly basis. Mr. Duarte and board members thanked Ms. Main for a job well done.

**Old Business**

### **Social Day Program-**

Ms. Lee informed everyone that she has applied for funding from Community Development Block Grant for the potentials salaries of the social day staff. Ms. Lee hopes the grant will be approved.

### **SNAP-**

Ms. Lee stated that the Council on Aging needs 53 more SNAP applications to reach their goal by May.

### **MassDot Grant-**

Ms. Lee stated she is going to apply for the MassDot grant. This grant pays for 80% of the costs while the Council on Aging funds the 20% towards a new van for transportation services. The total cost of a new van is \$65,469 with a 20% down payment of \$13,094.

### **Food Bank-**

Ms. Lee reported March 25th will be the first Food Bank food distribution date. Seniors who have signed up and received an approval letter will be able to pick their food up at North Baptist Church. Seniors will receive two large brown bags of non perishable foods and a two pound block of cheese. Ms. Lee reported there are 24 seniors signed up for the first date.

### **Chairman's Report**

Mr. Duarte stated that he told a few seniors about the Boston transportation from New Bedford.

Mr. Duarte asked about the funding for Clear Path and whether there was enough funding. Ms. Wallquist funding has been fine since there hasn't been as many snow storms this year, and whatever monies are left over would be used for minor home repairs.

Mr. Duarte asked about the "Love is in the Air" event. Ms. Amaral-Lema stated 125 seniors were in attendance and that it was a huge success.

**A motion to accept the Chairman's report was made by Mr. Oceisa and seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion was unanimously approved.**

### **Director's Report-**

Ms. Lee stated that everything that was in the report had been already discussed.

**A motion to accept the Director's report was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Costa. The motion was unanimously approved.**

### **Community Services Director's Report-**

Ms. Wallquist reported that the "Fresh Start" program has been extremely busy. Individuals have donated furniture to help seniors in need of furniture for their new residence.

She also talked briefly about EOEA and the move to contact representatives for an increase in the formula grant.

**A motion to approve the Community Services Director's report was made by Ms. Sullivan and seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion was unanimously approved.**

The next meeting will be Thursday, April 14, 2016

**A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Swain, all affirmatively approved.**