

**New Bedford Council on Aging
Advisory Board Meeting
April 14, 2016
181 Hillman Street, Bldg. 9**

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
NEW BEDFORD, MA

2016 MAY 19 A 8:16

MINUTES

CITY CLERK

Board Members Present:

Bruce Duarte, Chair
Patricia Costa, Vice Chair
Esperanza Alejandro-Berube
Stanley Oceisa
George Smith
Joan Swain
Jane Stott

Also Present:

Debra Lee, COA Director
Cynthia Wallquist, Community Services Director
Pamela Amaral-Lema, COA Administrative Specialist
Marisol Grant, Hazelwood Senior Center Coordinator
Kristine Arsenault, Asst. Chief of Staff to Mayor Mitchell

Excused:

Virginia Morrison, Secretary
Joan Halter
Inez Mello
Mary Sullivan

The meeting was called to order at 9:02AM 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 March 10, 2016 meeting was made by Ms. Swain seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion was unanimously approved.

Appearances

Marisol Grant- Hazelwood Senior Center Coordinator

Ms. Grant reported that all of the activities are going well at the Hazelwood senior center. Ms. Grant spoke about the gardening club and the participation going into this planting season. There are 10 raised beds at the Hazelwood garden and this will be the third year that seniors have participated in growing vegetables, herbs and plants. She received a large donation of soil, seeds and herbs made by Mr. Camara to the garden. Ms. Grant also spoke about My Life/My Health which is a six week presentation on chronic illnesses. There will be a large luncheon/dance event on May 19th featuring, Jordan Paiva. Ms. Grant anticipates around 70-80 seniors in attendance. Ms. Grant closed by stating that the window has been placed outside of her office and thanked the board, Ms. Arsenault and DFFM for their assistance. Ms. Swain commented on how much the atmosphere has changed with the new paint job and decorations that it has brought a positive feel to the Hazelwood center. The board thanked Ms. Grant for her hard work and dedication.

Mr. Oceisa stated that the handicap entrance should be added at the corner of Hillman St. and Ash St. for seniors to have better access to the administrative building. He expressed concerns about handicap access to the administration building.

Old Business

Social Day Program-

Ms. Lee reported that the Community Development Block Grant wasn't approved for the social day funding. The Grant was approved for Senior Services which funds the Coordinators salaries. Community Development has a cap on the amount of funding that can be earmarked for Community Services, and giving it all to the COA would leave nothing for anyone else.

Ms. Lee stated that she was approved for a grant in the amount of \$125,000 to help with Mental Health services in the community and the development of a Elder Mobile Outreach Team (EMoT). This grant will help fund additional hours for the fresh start team, a licensed social worker that will provide group and individual therapy at the Administrative Office and at the new Social Day Program.

Because the grant money from Community Development did not come through, it forced us to look at an existing center to operate the Social Day. This way the salary of the Coordinator is already in the budget of the Senior Center Grant Funding. The anticipated increase to the EOEIA Formula Grant, combined with the grant from ARAW for Social Day, will help to fund the additional salary expenditure for the Assistant Recreation Leader, Program Aide and Driver Ms. Lee did report that the census the Brooklawn senior center was chosen for a variety of reasons. Because it is a single room it does not lend itself to multiple activities happening at the same time like the other centers. It also does not bring in the numbers of people and is the lowest attended center. It is also handicap accessible, has ample parking, the drop off and pick up points are ideal for the vans to transport. The facility is also a single use facility which is ideal for this stand alone program. The accessibility of the park also lends itself to making this an ideal location.

Ms. Lee informed the board that the activities can move to Hillman St. and to Buttonwood and that no group was going to be displaced. Ms. Lee stated that she wants to inform each group individually of the changes to ensure that they receive accurate news.

The COA advisory board was in agreement that this service is desperately needed in such a large city like New Bedford. They are pleased with the positive changes and are looking forward to this new and exciting endeavor.

The anticipated opening of the Adult Social Day Program will be early July 2016.

A motion to use the Brooklawn Senior Center as the new Adult Social Day Program was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Alejandro-Berube. The motion was unanimously approved.

SNAP-

Ms. Lee stated they have reached their quota of 500 seniors in the SNAP venture.

Food Bank-

Ms. Lee reported that there was a positive response to the first food bank pick up. Seniors were happy with the product and the easy location and pick up. There were 24 seniors on the March 25th and stated there will be close to 50 seniors receiving assistance on April 22nd.

Community Development Block Grant-

Ms. Lee reported that the community development block grant was approved for senior services which covers the coordinators' salaries.

Budget Breakdown-

Ms. Lee gave a breakdown of the FY16 COA funding sources.

- Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA)- 18,765 seniors from the 2010 census at \$9.00 per elder equals \$168,885. This grant helps fund the salaries plus fringe benefits for the following positions: dispatcher, outreach worker, receptionist, drivers and program aides
- Title III- The Title III grant comes from Coastline Elderly Services, Inc. It helps fund part of the drivers' salaries.
- Community Development Block Grant- It funds the coordinators' salaries and fringe benefits.
- City of New Bedford- Salaries and fringe benefits of the director and administrative specialist along with additional hours for the coordinators when the centers have special events along with additional programming costs.
- ARAW- Helps fund the outreach worker's salary, snow removal, discretionary fund to assist single senior women over the age of 70 via an application process which determines income eligibility.
- MCOA- Funding a portion of the salary for the Food Bank program aide.
- SNAP- Funds the salaries of SNAP outreach staff.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Duarte stated that everything had been discussed. Mr. Duarte did state that he is very pleased with the New Bedford Council on Aging progress since Ms. Lee and Ms. Amaral-Lema have started.

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

Director's Report-

Ms. Lee reported that there will be a volunteer recognition luncheon on May 20th @ the Low Tide Yacht Club. She invited all board members to attend. Ms. Lee stated that there will be a citation to honor Jeannine Wilson's service to the community. Jeannine Wilson is retiring at the end of May.

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. There are 77 current Fresh Start clients.

Ms. Wallquist stated that the Mayor will present the FY17 budget to the City Council on May 11th.

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

The next meeting will be Thursday, May 12, 2016

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