

Senior Citizen Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes: April 29, 2014

Jordan Conference Room

Attendees: Chair Brett Seekins, Patricia Bredenberg, William Marshall, Bruce Nelson, June O'Neill, Barbara Page. Absent: Elizabeth Baillie

Public: Becky Bushie (sp), John Bates, Brendan Twist (The Forecaster)

Staff: David Galvan, CEPD, TRIAD, Matthew Sturgis, staff support

1. The meeting was opened at 11 am by Chair Seekins.
2. The minutes from the prior meeting were briefly discussed, with no changes requested. Motion by June O'Neill to approve, seconded by Barbara Page, the vote was unanimous.
3. Chair Seekins introduced a collection of resources that he has collected for the Commission. The significance of the resources show that many communities are seeing that senior issues are growing in significance and need. Chair Seekins is creating a library of these resources, and Matt Sturgis will scan them and link the documents to the Commission's page on the Town's website.
4. Barbara Page reported on her research into the Farm Shares program. Ms. Page reported that funding for the program has not arrived yet.
5. David Galvan, Cape Elizabeth Police Department, Community Liaison Officer, TRIAD was welcomed to the meeting. Officer Galvan introduced his background and described the role of TRIAD in the Cape Elizabeth and South Portland communities.
 - a. TRIAD meets the first Wednesday of each month from 2 to 3 pm at the Cape Elizabeth Central Fire Station. South Portland and Cape Elizabeth citizens meet, discuss issues, plan forums and other functions. At the meetings they plan budgets, the business of the group, and plan forums. Examples of forums are funeral arrangements and planning, healthy eating, protecting yourself from scams, safe driving courses, and other senior related issues. The forums are well attended. TRIAD is also working on creating a book on the resources available.
 - b. TRIAD also does the "File of Life" which is a listing of medications, listed allergies, and other health issues that seniors can have in their home. This document is useful if emergency responders need to know this info and the senior is unable to respond or is disoriented.

- c. Another program offered is the Great Starts program. This is a program where seniors calls in to Police Dispatch to check in. If no call is received by a specific time the police department does a check at the house to make sure everything is ok. There are some details being worked out at this time in regards to promoting the program as Dispatch is not completely prepared to handle the anticipated volume of calls that are of a routine, non-emergency nature. This is in process but the need that there needs to be a guaranteed pick up on one end and a check if no call is made is critical to the program's success.
- d. A question was posed to Officer Galvan regarding what is a "typical" senior call, either in or a response by the Police. Officer Galvan replied it can vary, but often it is a wellness check or there could be dementia related calls with the resident claiming an intruder in the home that is not in reality there.
- e. Officer Galvan made the point that the majority of the seniors who come to TRIAD meetings and forums are the active seniors, and not the "shut in" seniors. This raises a greater question as to what could be an outreach effort for the "shut in" population. Right now the Postal Service is a resource as they will contact the Police if a known senior has stopped picking up mail, so that is one strategy.
- f. TRIAD has a questionnaire that will be distributed shortly through the Meals on Wheels program and that may be a useful resource in identifying issues and answers.
- g. Additionally, churches have been of assistance to TRIAD in the past, but are not members of the organization.
- h. Mr. Marshall inquired as to how TRIAD was funded. Officer Galvan responded that he is a Community Liaison Officer which means that he works in schools and in the community and his position is funded in the Police budget.
- i. There was an inquiry made as to which parts of the year demand the most services for seniors. The winter seems to be the most difficult. Year round issues seem to be safety and security, with some trouble spots being identified with the mixing of senior housing with other subsidized housing.
- j. An overall question was posed to Officer Galvan as to what items the Commission should make recommendations on. He recommended locking your car, house, belongings, have a cell phone (as even without a service all call 9-1-1), use the 2-1-1 service for information as there are a wide range of services available and it is a 24 hr every day service. A

recommendation could be to increase the awareness of neighbors to each other “know your neighbor”.

- k. The police will do “wellness checks” but only on request, they will do home checks or vacation checks when people leave for the season.
 - l. Some of the concerns that impact other towns are gangs, which are not yet in Cape Elizabeth, but break ins are more prevalent as well as theft in general. A big driver for this crime is prescription medication.
6. Chair Seekins mentioned that there was an article on the Commission in the most recent Courier.
 7. The Commission reviewed the assembled columns of issues. The ideas offered at the previous meeting were collected into columns under the headings of Aging in Place, Health Care, Access Issues, Financial, and In Town Services was added to the list. Under Aging in Place Home care, access and acceptance of use was added. Under Health Care and Financial Advanced Directives and funeral planning were added. Under In Town Services Home care, RTP / transportation, in Town senior based services, and waste / trash pick up was added.
 8. Pat Bredenberg reported that she spoke with Nancy Miles from the local food pantry. The food pantry is located at the Methodist Church and is open every Tuesday from 7 am to 5 pm. Ms. Miles stated they serve 25 to 30 people each time in the winter and 30 to 35 in the summer. The pantry does not deliver, but if there were more volunteers they could. Pat also reported that on Monday May 5th the Methodist Church will be showing the film “A Place the the Table”
 9. The next meeting of the Commission will be May 13 at 11 am. Matt and Barbara Page will be contacting Maurice Geoffray to see if he can come in and speak that day.
 10. Barbara Page inquired if there is an option for fundraising to pay for a senior services book by doing an activity like the returnable bottles at the transfer station.
 11. There was a brief inquiry as to what level are the local churches involved? Is there any organized outreach to seniors? The following members stated they would reach out to their contacts at the churches to see if they will come and speak on the subject: Bill Marshall will call the Methodist Church, Chair Seekins will reach out to St Bartholomew and St. Albans.
 12. Public Participation: Before the public spoke, Bruce Nelson spoke about an article he reach on the internet that rated Maine as the 6th worst state to live in

for retirees. The primary drivers were a high cost of living, taxes (income and property) heating costs, and other high costs.

John Bates pointed out that he sees the Commission primarily focused on the most vulnerable. He asked what percentage of property tax is paid by the over 60 demographic, but why are there no programs for seniors? Issues like trash pick up for seniors, a resource guide, or other elder specific programs. Mr. Bates mentioned that if a resource guide is made for Cape Elizabeth, it should be intuitive and a more efficient resource instead of bulk information. Additionally, a van for the seniors that would take them on trips for the day might be useful

Becky Bushie stated that she thought utilizing the community center for a senior fair would be a great way to expose the available resources, as well as a chance to ask the elder members of the community what they would like to see.

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm.