

Senior Citizens Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes: September 16, 2014

Jordan Conference Room, 11:00 am

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

Visitor: Melissa Morrill and Michael Coon, Volunteers of America

Staff: Matthew Sturgis

1. The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am.
2. The minutes of the prior meeting were reviewed, and no changes were made.
Motion to accept minutes by Barbara Page, Second by William Marshall, motion approved 4-0.
3. Matthew Sturgis introduced Melissa Morrill and Michael Coon of the Volunteers of America (VOA).
 - a. Ms. Morrill stated that they were interested in what the Commission has been focusing on, and expressed her support in the focus on care needs of residents over 60.
 - b. Michael Coon gave a history of the creation of the VOA, with their focus on working with poverty stricken people and helping them improve their lives.
 - c. VOA is a national organization with chapters in 32 states. They work with individuals transitioning from correctional facilities, mental health issues, and senior housing.
 - d. VOA is one of the largest providers of senior housing in the US, and they have 11 properties in Maine. Some of these are group homes, helping people get "back on their feet".
 - e. VOA also runs Camp Postcard, which is a summer camp for 5th and 6th graders who would be unable to otherwise go to camp. They have partnered with a summer camp in Poland, with a staff of 75 serving 150 kids. The staffing is provided by police officers who volunteer their time.
 - f. VOA also provides some housing for veterans, and their property in Saco is one such example.
 - g. Also the VOA provides senior housing, recently purchasing 80 units in Old Town. They believe the aging in place model is critical. At their senior properties they have nursing care, via visiting doctors and nurses and wellness programming. Their programming is offered to residents and other community members.
 - h. Traditionally the funding for developing facilities was HUD 202 program, but that model has ended, being replaced by portable rent vouchers and construction funding via low income housing tax credits.

- i. The VOA also runs a program called the PACE program, which is all inclusive care that is provided at a person's residence.
- j. Barbara Page asked if any of their services are available in Cape Elizabeth. How do people go about getting some of these services? Do they call VOA?
- k. Ms. Morrill responded that they do not have a property in Cape Elizabeth. Their services can be provided, but one would need to contact VOA. An example was of the Fay Garman house on Peaks Island. Jerry Garman wanted to see something there for seniors on Peaks Island. The City of Portland owned a piece of land, they donated it, and VOA did the planning, design, and went through the HUD 202 program to provide funding, and now the project is complete.
- l. Bruce Nelson asked if their properties are limited to residents of the town the property is located in.
- m. Ms. Morrill responded that they are not, however there are waiting lists for all of their properties. Mr. Coon followed up by stating their properties have large community spaces, beautiful grounds, involved programming, etc. The need exceeds the supply for affordable senior housing, and if one was to construct new units they would be filled immediately.
- n. Elizabeth Baillie asked if they manage their own properties.
- o. Mr. Coon responded that yes they did. They do maintenance and also all of the programming, and they roll any profits at the end of the year back into the properties they own.
- p. Elizabeth Baillie followed up by asking if they employ care givers.
- q. Ms. Morrill responded that they do provide care givers (personal care attendants) at some properties, while at others they hire outside assistance. Mostly the care is private pay, while there are some grants available for funding.
- r. Barbara Page inquired as to what are the tax credits that are being referred to.
- s. Ms. Morrill stated that investors will buy the tax credits to provide funding for the project.
- t. Barbara Page followed up by asking what is a tax credit and pilot.
- u. Matthew Sturgis explained that the tax credits that Ms. Morrill is speaking of are a funding method for constructing low income housing. This is performed by the Federal Government providing tax credits for a specific period of time to promote the development of low income housing. The credits are sold as a commodity through the financial markets to people who need tax credits to offset their income, and the sale of the credits provides the funding to construct the properties. Pilot is something altogether different, as that is a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) that takes place when an property that is exempt from taxes makes a voluntary payment to the town they are located in to help offset the tax burden of services provided that they would otherwise be paid for if they paid taxes.
- v. Elizabeth Baillie asked if they need investors to make the projects work.

- w. Ms. Morrill responded that they need investors to buy the credits, but they often acquire land reasonably, so that helps the projects at the start.
 - x. Elizabeth Baillie asked of what forms of programming exist for non-residents.
 - y. Ms. Morrill responded that they have educational programming and also have advocacy for seniors, help them find long term care, and other assistance. There is a team the properties have that will work with a client and help them find assistance. Often times it will be a family member who reaches out to VOA on behalf of an older relative.
 - z. Bruce Nelson asked of what percentage of staff is volunteers.
 - aa. Ms. Morrill responded none, they are all paid. There are community groups that may volunteer at their properties though.
 - bb. William Marshall asked of what is their operational budget.
 - cc. Ms. Morrill responded that revenues last year were around \$10 million. There has been solid growth historically.
 - dd. Mr. Marshall followed by asking if there are any active cases in Cape Elizabeth.
 - ee. Ms. Morrill responded no, but there are in Scarborough, Falmouth, Cumberland, and Yarmouth.
 - ff. Barbara Page responded that it is difficult out here for seniors to know about their programming because there are little to no information sources for seniors to access.
 - gg. The session with Ms. Morrill and Mr. Coon ended with a general discussion regarding the island nature of Cape Elizabeth, with difficulties in providing information as there is not a service center or much in the form of linkages to other communities or programs. There is a strong need for at least a resource directory.
 - hh. The Commission thanked Ms. Morrill and Mr. Coon for coming and sharing their information.
4. Elizabeth Baillie reported on her meetings with Paula Banks of Living Innovations, St. Bartholomew's and Tom Kohan. She submitted a report on her information gathering, and it is attached to these minutes.
5. Chair Seekins, Councilor Walsh, and William Marshall will be at the September 17th meeting of the Community Services Advisory Commission.
- a. The Commission expressed their desire to have Jen DeRice come and speak at the next SCAC meeting on Sept 30th.
 - b. Pat Bredenberg spoke of the former senior day care at St. Joseph's Manor and that it was a good model for seniors.
 - c. Elizabeth Baillie identified that Cape Memory Care has space and the proper licensing to have an adult day care, but running such a program would be a financial loss. Such a program would need a partner who could subsidize the cost.

- d. William Marshall commented that if such a program was Medicaid based any program would need to be at least 6 hours of care and would be highly regulated, while if it was private pay there could be limited roles for the service provider but it would not be economically feasible.
- e. The Commission members will review the questionnaire and have recommendations at the next meeting (9/30).

6. The meeting adjourned at 12:55 pm.