

**AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY MEETING
MINUTES
MARCH 20, 2018**

ATTENDEES: Leroy Walker, Jan Biron, Stephen Martelli, Belinda Gerry, Larry Pelletier, Mike Davis, Jim Horn and Alfreda Fournier

Special guests: Peter Crichton and Tizz Crowley

Prior to the meeting, Peter Crichton indicated that he will invite Mr. Bill Post, Town Manager of Bowdoinham to an April meeting.

Leroy Walker opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed.

Leroy stated that we are using the AARP Roadmap to Livability as a guideline. Jim Horn and Mike Davis had some great ideas brought forward at the last meeting. Jim Horn was asked to expound on his idea of using the ELHS studio for people to document their lives and Mike Davis was asked to review the foster grandparent program.

Mike Davis provided flyers from Penquis, which Jim Horn distributed. Foster grandparents must be at least 55 years of age and be able to work 15 hours a week. There are only four programs in Auburn. Grandparents go through a background check and decisions are made as to matching children with the grandparents. The program takes place at the local schools.

Tizz suggested that another way to engage the community is for the city to invite Maria Staples to speak to our senior groups and eventually have a meeting to include all people 55 and over to hear her speak and become involved.

Leroy indicated that Peter Crichton is going to invite the town manager of Bowdoinham, Mr. Bill Post, to come to a meeting as well.

Jim Horn reviewed his idea for community service for the high school students. His idea (for Community Service Day, May 18, 2018) was for students to help people who need help around their houses, using the high school as a clearinghouse.

The video lab is an untouched resource and he is anxious to get this program underway. He spoke about videotaping the stories that seniors have so that they won't expire with them, i.e. history of Auburn, their lives, etc. He spoke to Shawn Rice who has a videography class at the school's video center. High school seniors could interview senior citizens who want to speak (for Community Service Day), asking them open ended questions. He brought the idea to Leroy Walker, and told him that Mr. Rice is set to go. Kids will be ready with cameras and we just have to get senior citizens who want to record their stories. They could record what it was like living in Auburn way back when they were younger. They would use the facility at the high school, or cameras can be brought to the senior center as well.

Larry stated that there are a lot of stories about the shoe factories. Peter Crichton suggested inviting Rachel Desgrosseilliers to come and talk to the group about veterans.

Tizz emphasized that if we don't capture the stories now, we will lose them. We could possibly play the stories on Great Falls TV.

Larry was asked about the "Take a Vet to School" program. They would like to reinstate the program. Larry used to go to school with his grandson for this event (around Veteran's Day), and it was eventually a great success. The first one was sparsely attended, but grew considerably. After an event was all over at Park Avenue, a little boy came in with his mom. He was crying because he had missed the event. The vets got together with this little boy and took a picture with him and he was very happy. It was very important to him to meet a real military veteran. We have to promote that feeling to other students.

Belinda suggested that since Veterans Day falls on a Sunday and the schools will probably do "Take a Vet to School" program either on the Friday before or Tuesday after, (because they are off on that Monday Nov. 12th) that we could possibly promote the whole weekend of various events that may be planned to honor our veterans with the focal point being on "Take a Vet to School" with it being the kick off or ending event.

Leroy said that listening to some of the stories is heart-rending. Some of the things they went through while on active duty are unbelievable. Some of the stories have never been told because they have no one to tell.

Alfreda said that we should "pick people's brains" to get all the history and information we can. Create an organizational chart with a list of the people who are heading up various programs, to call. Veterans Day 2018 is on November 11th. Once the school decides on a date to do the program, this group could help to get the word out to the students, find veterans who want to participate, etc. The school department will decide on the date. Liz can develop a flyer with all the information on it. She will put some questions together to ask the veterans who are interviewed.

Tizz suggested that we look at Veteran's Day (Nov. 11th) and recognize it in some way. A few years ago, there was a concert by Larry Gowell. Jonathan LaBonte is planning something for the 150th anniversary as well.

Steve Martelli suggested April 22nd (Earth Day) to plant trees, clean trails, program on recycling, water conservation, where clean drinking water comes from, river clean-up, etc. This may not be possible this year, but could be done next year. Last year, a teacher tried to put a program together, but it failed. He is going to do it again, including the process of taking water out of the lake, flushing it down a toilet, following it to the treatment plant, etc. This will be videotaped. The City of Auburn has worked with the conservation group in the past. The first full week of May is when Arbor Day takes place. There is also a program where residents can return electronics, medications, etc. We need to get the information to Liz ahead of time so she could get the word out.

Belinda had a meeting with LATC (transportation). The bus goes by Sacred Heart Church about every hour. The bus company is going to time the route from Dennison Street into Pettengill Park and out to the Auburn Mall so that seniors can have transportation to the senior center.

Peter asked if there was a cost for doing that. Belinda said there there won't be if it doesn't add time to the schedule. Steve rides the bus frequently and stated that no one is ever waiting for the bus at the mouth of Dennison Street, but there are people on Winter Street. If the bus went up Gamage Avenue, through Pettengill Park and back out onto Winter Street, no one would be bypassed. The bus company hesitates trying different things if there is a cost. Tizz suggested looking at the transportation data to determine whether or not it is cost efficient to make changes. Steve speaks up at the meetings and has gotten the bus company to make many changes.

Jim Horn came up with another idea. He suggested having some of the kids who know how to repair computers and have them educate the older folks on how to use computers. Kids could come in to the senior meetings or to a lunch & learn to get instruction, or set up a program where all they would have to do is make a phone call and be talked through a problem.

Larry shared an article from the "Forcaster". A sergeant was honored with the humanitarian award when he stopped to do a welfare check on a veteran. The man's house was not livable and had no food. Sgt. Burgess cleaned his house, cooked him a meal and continued to check on him.

Tizz urged this group to support Meals on Wheels, which is a very valuable program. A conversation needs to take place with the CDBG committee about the importance of the Meals on Wheels program that was cut in the past.

Leroy thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

As a side note: We want to thank Peter Crichton for coming to the meeting. We also want to thank him for asking what the city can do to help us and for his support of this program.

Respectfully submitted:
Jan Biron