

AGING FRIENDLY COMMUNITY MEETING MINUTES MARCH 6, 2018 5:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Leroy Walker, Jan Biron, Steve Martelli, Belinda Gerry, Larry Pelletier, Frank Pippin, Barry Schmieks, Alfreda Fournier.

Leroy Walker opened the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Some members were unable to attend.

Other city staff were invited to the next meeting through the city manager's office.

A board will be established soon. Anyone who is interested has to sign up and wait to be approved. The board should be established in May.

The minutes were reviewed by all present.

Steve Martelli worked with the Androscoggin Land Trust. They are always looking for people to help out with the trails. They want to make them more senior friendly. Some bridges have been installed on the Barker Trail and some hand rails are going to be installed this year. He also attends the AVCOG meetings. He made mention about having the City Link bus come into Pettengill Park. The bus does not currently extend into Pettengill Park. Currently, there is no funding to divert the bus from Dennison Street into Pettengill Park. A suggested route was from Goff Street onto Gamage, then onto Wilson Street, Field Avenue, through Pettengill Park, exit onto Winter Street and go back onto Dennison Street. The normal route would go from Goff Street directly onto Dennison Street.

Belinda, who sits on the Lewiston Auburn Transit Committee, would like to have the bus company that runs the local bus service to time the whole route with the suggested new route change to see if it's doable within its current run time. If it is, she will recommend the change.

Barry suggested that someone man the department van to go and pick up people who want to participate to being them to programs. He feels that getting one small thing accomplished would be encouraging to the group.

The police chief has stated that he wants to join forces with the recreation department and have PAL work directly with the rec department. He wants to purchase a bus that could

be used for both programs. Jim Horn also said at the last meeting that he would check with the school bus program to see if he could get any help with transportation.

It is a better idea to have the bus situation taken care of before expanding programs so that people would have transportation to get to the senior center.

Steve walks all over the city all the time and was asked what barriers are out there. He stated that it is difficult to use the sidewalks in the city. They are not maintained very well with walkers in mind. Wheelchairs have to ride in the road because the sidewalks are not maintained with wheelchairs in mind. It is impossible to get to the "walk" button because the snow is piled too high to get to it, especially in front of the laundromat in New Auburn. Mailboxes are hit by the plows or the windrow all the time.

Leroy explained that Public Services should push all the snow that falls (on Center Street) to the middle of the road and then pick it up from the center as soon as possible so that there is no snow build-up near/on the sidewalks. It would prevent people from turning into businesses on the opposite side of the street for a day or two, but would greatly improve walkability on the sidewalks. The snow would be removed after every storm.

Wheelchair charging stations were discussed again. We need to come up with some locations. This is not an expensive project and there may be some funding for its implementation. There needs to be a shelter of some kind in which to get out of the weather and charge their wheelchairs. Belinda stated that there are solar charging stations as well. There are some charging stations that can charge two chairs at the same time.

Mr. Horn had some great ideas at the last meeting about filming seniors and having them record the stories of their lives for their families. Mamie Ney has tablets at the library that could be used as well to record people's histories.

Larry suggested the "Take a Vet to School" program be continued or reinitiated. This program was supposed to happen in November, but didn't take place. We would like to get it reinstated. Steve is planning to have a program at Barker to have a fishing program with Ed Desgrosseillier's son. He would like to have it this spring. Someone questioned Leroy about why the trail is not drier during this time of the year. Steve responded that there was only so much property that he can work with. Larry asked if those areas could be filled in with gravel. Steve would like to set some blocks on top of the gravel to resolve the situation. Not a lot of people using the area to keep it cleared of debris. If it was used more, it would stay clearer.

Great Falls TV is available to the people of Auburn, along with the school, for filming individuals who want to promote our program, i.e. veterans, grandparents, etc.

Foster Grandparent program - Maria Staples is the contact at Penquis. Mike Davis brought up her program at the February 27th meeting. Leroy will contact Mike to see if he can get Maria Staples to come to a future meeting so she can help us to understand the program and maybe help us to set one up.

Seniors Plus would be able to help us to get organized. Frank will talk to them to see if anyone could come to one of our meetings.

Leroy and Belinda will have to get together to decide what four or five issues we should tackle first. We need to get volunteers to man the senior center so that we can expand our programs. Leroy suggested that the building should be open on Monday nights so that people could come to the senior center to watch the council meetings.

Adjournment - 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Jan Biron