

**AGING FRIENDLY COMMUNITY
MEETING MINUTES MAY 1, 2018**

ATTENDEES: Leroy Walker, Belinda Gerry, Peter Crichton, Jan Biron, Larry Pelletier, Stephen Martelli, Frank Pippin, Jim Horn, Alfreda Fournier, and Mamie Ney.

Special Speaker: Dana Moreau from Seniors Plus.

Leroy Walker opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. sharp.

Minutes were reviewed and accepted as presented. All in favor.

Alfreda Fournier handed out minutes of an AARP Age Friendly meeting that she and Leroy attended.

Leroy introduced Dana Moreau from Seniors Plus, and he filled her in on what the group has been doing so far. Peter Crichton commented about another Age Friendly group located in Bowdoinham, and is impressed with the programs that Seniors Plus is involved with. Dana spoke about older adults living better, living at home, and keeping people healthy, being a big drive for their organization.

People need to have access to resources in order to stay at home as long as they can, i.e. food resources, housing, Mainecare, facilities that may be a better fit for them, etc. She distributed brochures. They also do meals on wheels, making sure that folks have food and access to information that is available to them. Transportation to medical appointments and to get groceries is another aspect of their offerings. They will help to find a volunteer driver, however, they do not transport themselves. They have a volunteer coordinator who helps to coordinate community projects like clearing stairs, mowing lawns, etc. They get in touch with the schools to schedule students to do their community service. Peter Crichton spoke about having students remove branches from yards, etc. to help seniors. Jim Horn stated that his students are scheduling a lot of these projects for their Community Service Day coming up on May 18th. He asked Dana if he could just contact Seniors Plus when there are students who want to volunteer. She said they would be happy to have them get in touch with Seniors Plus. They also offer programs like Tai Chi for elder adults. There are groups in Bethel and in Auburn right now. There is an education center that offers a variety of subjects of interest to elders and older adults, as well as exercise classes, all in an effort to keep them healthy.

They also have a financial program to help people with the finances.

Meals on wheels is a donation program. Those who cannot afford to donate, get their meals for free. This covers the tri-county area. Individuals can just call to get a meal, but must qualify first. They have to be home bound or have a difficult time getting out to get food. If someone is coming out of the hospital or rehab, they will get 4 weeks of meals, 4 times a week, Monday through Thursday. If wheelchair bound or have no access to cooking apparel would get 7 meals a week (noon meal.) The containers can all be put in the microwave for heating, and are low fat and low sodium. A milk and a fruit is also included, as well as a dessert. Meals are prepared fresh in the Seniors Plus kitchen. They are very organized and efficient.

Frank will look into giving members a tour of the facility.

Dana also talked about helping people get used to working with technology, computers, tablets, phones, etc. They have computers but no monitors. Mamie stated that Geiger Bros. had many monitors and didn't know what to do with them, so they were destroyed.

Alfreda asked about transportation and whether or not Dana could identify any ways that we can improve on providing transportation. Dana stated that they encourage people to use the City Link. Many times other transportation is not available or is not reliable. In some towns, volunteers pick people up and take them to their appointments for donations. The Dempsey Center has volunteers who take people to their cancer related appointments.

Alfreda asked about a lack of housing. Dana said that there is a lack of housing and if they can't afford to go into a hotel or motel, they have to go into a shelter. Low income people are on waiting lists, and for people who want assisted living there isn't much available. Leroy said that the apartment complex that is being built on Troy Street will be workable housing for people earning \$22,000 to \$26 or \$27,000.00 per year. There is very little housing available to young people who are just starting out.

Belinda added that the city has taken an approach to help seniors to get the senior center, and with more usage and future funding, it is hoped that we will be able to have the other two bays. We need a new kitchen. The building will be used to offer leisure services for seniors to play games, read, make puzzles, play Bingo, etc. as well as have seniors meetings. Stephen added that he and others are working to get Pettengill Park on the bus route so that seniors can get to the seniors programs.

Belinda asked if there was a program where Seniors Plus could send someone to work with the seniors coordinator here in Pettengill Park. Dana indicated that they could do that. Mr. Post from Bowdoinham talked at an earlier meeting about volunteer transportation. He suggested giving volunteers a gas card as thanks.

Stephen asked if any seniors are interested in getting out and walking? He and Larry work with the Androscoggin Land Trust, maintaining trails, and they would like to see more people utilizing them.

Frank mentioned that there is a loan closet at Seniors Plus for hospital beds, canes, etc. People who have a need can borrow items and equipment. This is for temporary situations.

Leroy stated that the group wants to put together a tri-fold brochure with numbers for contacts for various situations, i.e. transportation, medical equipment needs, lawn mowing, light maintenance, etc. Belinda stated that we would put some of our brochures at the library to help to get the word out.

Jim Horn stated that he has access to a video lab and could use that for getting out a listing of all of the services that are offered. Leroy suggested that Dana contact the high school to make a video of all the services that Seniors Plus offers. He suggested that she contact Phil Larlee to set something up. Jim Horn stated that there are a wide variety of program subjects like cooking shows, gardening, etc. This is an advantage for the aging. He suggested that Dana put together a 10 minute blurb about how people can get assistance, and who to call. Jim also told Dana that Shawn Rice from the high school was going to interview some seniors at one of the elderly housing projects and video seniors who will speak about what it was like living many years ago. This would help people to understand where they came from. One of our seniors who was born in 1916 will be 102 years old on May 22nd will be interviewed for Community Service Day and tell her story about what she has lived through.

Leroy explained that Mamie Ney from the Auburn Public Library is promoting using tablets so that seniors can Skype with their loved ones. The committee is planning to move forward with this project. Dana asked whether or not we have a confidentiality plan, which we don't. Pictures can't be taken and used in advertising without waivers, etc.

Jim asked what is missing at Seniors Plus that we could be doing? We would like to collaborate with each other to get more done. We need a community partnership so that the right hand knows what the left

hand is doing. Leroy stated that this is why the tri-fold is important so that we can share phone numbers with everyone so that they have contacts for whatever they need. We can make each other work better if we work together.

Alfreda stressed that each topic should be addressed, i.e. clothing needs, help with medication, meals, etc.

Larry explained that his pet project is the Take a Veteran to School Day. He got involved with his grandson many years ago. The kids loved being able to thank veterans for their service (and they also got a chicken dinner!!!) We want to bring this program back, but everything costs money and takes time. We would like to set a specific date each year, choose a school to host it, and get it done every year.

Patricia Oh from AARP will be present to speak at our May 15th meeting. (5:00 p.m. at the Senior Center in Pettengill Park.)

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Biron