

**Council on Aging (COA) Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes for January 13, 2020**

- I. **Sign-in:** The following Board members were present: Joyce Dastou, Mary Donnelly, Beverly Gonsalves, Andrew Hostetler, Eric Lamarche, John Lawlor, Amy Pesia, Vincenzo Milinazzo, Lil Hartman (Director). Guests: Ken Ashley, Anne B. Higgins, Joyce Shanley, Frank LaPan, Vivian LaPan, Gilda James, Jerry Avila, John King

- II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

- III. **Approval of Minutes from December 9, 2019:** The minutes were unanimously approved.

- IV. **Chairperson's Report:** Andy provided an update regarding the status the Age-Friendly Lowell initiative, including a current grant application that the leadership team is working on. If successful, part of the grant-funded project will involve forming an advisory committee comprised of older adults to discuss their needs. We will also need volunteers to help with different assessments, including walk audits of neighborhoods with a high proportion of older adult residents. Andy also reported that, as previously discussed, Gena Greher from the Music Department at UMass Lowell will be bringing a live karaoke band from one of her courses to perform at the Center, including songs that would be familiar to seniors. Lil indicated that this would need to be scheduled for no earlier than March.

- V. **Director's Report:** The full report is attached. Lil sought feedback on the issue of what to do with the malfunctioning of the Pepsi machine. After some discussion of different options, the general consensus was the we should contract with Coke instead, while seeking healthier options in addition to soda.

- VI. **Items for Discussion**
 - a. **Old Business**
 - i. **Updates on Board Appointments:** There were no new updates; there are twelve applicants total, and the City Council will vote on them.

 - ii. **Committee Reports**

1. **Outreach Committee:** Beverly and Amy visited the Dracut Senior Center and spoke about their programs. Also, Mary and Beverly attended a Memory Training Class at the Bedford Senior Center and will give a presentation in the future to Senior Center members. Andy contacted ROTC at both Lowell High and UML to inquire about students helping with the shoveling program, but was told by both that this is not the kind of thing they currently do. However, Lil contacted the high school ROTC separately, spoke with someone else, and was told that, although the program was discontinued, it may start up again.
2. **Healthy Aging:** Lil will attend a relevant training on Thursday and will bring back resources to inform our efforts. Joyce spoke about the challenges associated with getting seniors to eat healthy food, based on her experience.

b. New Business

- i. **Assessment tools:** there are program evaluation tools available from the state of Florida, and a Massachusetts certification process that includes evaluation. No great tools identified yet for facilities planning.

VII. Other

- a. **Parking issues:** It was reported that the exercise instructor has a hard time finding a parking spot. Lil reported we are entitled to 76 spaces but we are 9 spaces short. Parking is particularly difficult when there is an event here or trip. It was suggested that, although Rite Aid tows, we might want to talk to Rite Aid about parking in some of their spaces when we have events.
- b. **Guests had the following questions and concerns:** Jerry Avila asked about how the Center can generate more money and suggested flea market or cake sales. But Lil reminded us that only the Friends can fundraise. Anne Higgins further addressed the parking problem, mentioning that people park too close to the building and this makes the walkway unpassable. She mentioned a specific incident wherein a truck completely blocked the sidewalk. She also talked about general problems with bus service, including difficulties encountered by seniors from nearby towns who want to participate in trips. Buses from these

town drop off riders at Gallagher Terminal, where they can be picked up for trips, but Lil will look into specific transportation challenges seniors are having and see if there are additional options. Jerry Avila shared his concerns about melting snow on the roof, which can fall and hit people and cars. Lil reported that the city and landlord have exchanged opinions about this issue. Lil will bring most recent agreement to next meeting.

Next Meeting: Monday, February 10, 2020 @ 9:00AM