

Age Friendly Chelmsford Implementation Committee Meeting

2/23/2022, 9am, on Zoom

Attending: Fred Brusseau, Paul Cohen, Debra Siriani, Lisa Marrone, Deputy Colin Spence, Jen Melanson, Louise Meyers, Kim Raymond, Vickie Turcotte

Introductions – the team welcomed Deputy Colin Spence of the Police Dept to the meeting.

New Business

Progress reports from sub-committees

Deb Siriani, Social Participation domain: Recently had a great brainstorming meeting and got some good ideas for working on their goals. They plan to partner with other groups such as UMass Lowell, Chelmsford High School, AgeSpan (formerly Elder Services) and more. They recently increased multicultural and intergenerational programming, such as a March program on Russia at the Senior Center. The goal of training businesses in Dementia Friendly practices is on hold as it is still a difficult time for businesses due to COVID. They are starting to look at the “Know Your Neighbor” program but looking for inspiration.

Jen Melanson - Transportation and Community Supports: The Select Board recently approved ARPA funds to get the Supplementary Volunteer Transportation Service Plan off the ground. They are putting together a dispatcher job description and anticipate it will be at least 4-6 months before they can serve residents. Jen was congratulated on the nice presentation they made to the Board.

Lisa Marrone – Civic Participation and Employment: COVID interferes with event and program planning, and the Discovery Center has been unable to make the next step to get results from the business community in hiring seniors. MassHire is the state program for matching jobseekers with businesses and they are not trying to replicate that office. Many of the businesses in Chelmsford are looking for people with higher skill levels and technology, and it is a trying time for placing mature workers. The Discovery Center’s initial workshops were very well attended, but there has been no interest in appointments after that – a result that is similar to that in other towns. In the area of Civic Participation, there is a lot of carryover with the Senior Center and the Library.

Becky Herrmann – Communication and Information: (Written report submitted before the meeting.) The Library group went through the goals of all the domains and noted where goals were already accomplished or ongoing with the Library’s help, as well as indicating where the Library could be of assistance to other domains. Vickie Turcotte encouraged all domain teams to do the same.

Committee member appointment to Master Plan Implementation Committee. The Select Board recently approved the new Master Plan and the Age Friendly Committee is responsible for designating one representative to the Master Plan Implementation Committee. Jen Melanson nominated Fred, which was immediately seconded by Deb Siriani and Lisa Marrone. He graciously accepted the nomination, and as chair, appointed himself. Fred said that he sees a lot of Age Friendly goals represented in the Plan, and as a member of the committee that wrote the Master Plan, he learned a lot about how the town works.

Unanticipated Topics/Open Discussion

Fred Brusseau asked if anyone knew if the Open Meeting exceptions would be continuing? Paul Cohen said that the remote meetings were extended through July 15, 2022, and would likely become permanent after that.

Fred Brusseau suggested meeting in person at least once or twice a year. The Senior Center would be available for an in person meeting, so it was decided that the next two meetings would be on Zoom, and the next meeting after that would be in person.

Deputy Spence spoke about a SafetyNet Tracking Program currently being used in Tyngsboro and Dracut. Residents who are at risk for wandering are given a tracker that Police can use to locate them in an emergency. He was looking into the pricing, which is approximately \$5000 for startup (incl. 2 trackers) and \$449 for additional trackers. He will pursue grant funding, and Deb Siriani suggested applying for an AARP community grant. Jen Melanson said that she thought the SafetyNet tracker was already in use for one resident in the town. Deputy Spence clarified that there is one resident with a tracker that can only be tracked via the K9 officer. He is looking into implementing the full system that connects to dispatch.

Approval of minutes of the 26 January 2022 meeting There were two corrections to the list of attendees: Lisa Marrone was listed twice, and Kim Raymond was not listed at all. Lisa Marrone moved to accept the minutes as amended, Jen Melanson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting March 30, 2022, 9am, on Zoom

Adjourned at 9:35