

## Newton Council on Aging & Advisory Board Meeting

March 27, 2018

**Present:** E.Dugan, E. Lorant, JE Heffron, M. Knapp, N. Krasner, D. Murphy, E. Picard, J. Picard, T. Shoemaker, S. Paley, N. Brown, A. Cooper, CA Shea, E. Watkins, J. Norstrand,

**Visitors:** M. Albandalejo-Meyer, J. Bell Isle, S. Rasala, J. Pelletier, , L. Shaw, A. Sharma, J. Irish

**Notified:** H. Haywood, B. Dugan, S. Paley

**Staff:** J Colino, N. Scammon,

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- I. Meeting called to order at 7:38 p.m.; minutes were reviewed; Minutes were approved.
  
- II. Presentation: Newton Power Choice-Ann Berwick, Co-Director of Sustainability for the City of Newton.
  - Ann provided information on the process that the city is undertaking to create a Municipal Energy Aggregation program. (brochure attached)
  - The City has filed with the legislature to provide greener electricity by procuring their own energy provider that will generate greener energy that Eversource currently does.
  - If approved by the legislature residents will be automatically enrolled but with a simple opt out option.
  - Residents will be able to opt up to a higher percentage of green energy up to 100%
  - When asked about opposition Ann shared three things she is hearing;
    1. Climate Change isn't happening, it's a hoax and there is no need for programs like this.
    2. I don't want government involved in my energy
    3. Opt out-vs- Opt in program
  - How will we know if it is proceeding? The hope is the state will approve this spring/summer. There will be a mailing to residents explaining the program and the opt out option in the Fall.
  - Rates can't be discussed until the state approves and the city goes out to bid for a provider.
  - Ann is planning to do 100 community presentations between now and roll out.
  
- III. Chair's/Director's Report
  - **Appointment of new COA Chair process:**

Donna Murphy has agreed to serve and has been recommended to the Mayor as the new Chairperson of the COA. Donna speaks to what she wants the COA philosophy will be under her leadership and with the support and

cooperation of current and new members. “We need to lead by example, all of our actions need to reflect our Age-Friendly commitment.” Our succession plan for leadership and recruitment of new members is an example of age friendly civic engagement and communication. There will be a meeting scheduled with the Mayor and Donna.

**Boards and Commission appointment process:**

- The COA/Advisory Board has received many applications as a result of Mayor Fuller’s new recruitment process.
- All applicants will be interviewed by COA.
- As an Age-Friendly action paper applications are available-vs- only electronic.
- Our goal is to have everyone appointed by our September meeting, an (re-) orientation to PLAAN will happen in September and that everyone will choose one of the working groups to engage in.

**Senior Center Benchmark Group report to Mayor Fuller:**

- Joan Bell Isle and Sue Rasala report on their discussion with the Mayor about the visits that were made to surrounding towns senior centers.
- They provided a summary document of that process. ( see attached)
- They took the opportunity to point out that there is only an electronic application for the “New Senior Center” building committee and requested that a paper application be provided ( at the time of the meeting that had already been addressed)
- They felt Mayor Fuller really listened and something will happen

**Feasibility Study for new Facility:**

- The initial Working Group (primarily city departments: building, parks and rec, planning, city council, etc) meeting is scheduled to take place at the senior center on Tuesday April 3rd at 8:30.
- The Building Committee application process will remain open until March 30<sup>th</sup>. Everyone interested in encouraged to apply. This is the group that will provide community input and help to engage the larger community throughout the process.

**IV. Springwell Report:**

- Will no longer be funding a Social Day program because of the deficit in the program

V. **Senior Citizens Fund Report:** nothing new since last meeting

VI. Working Group Reports:

- **Housing:** Joyce reports that she sent a letter to Barney Heath requesting clarification of the definition of market rate housing and what will be the market rate fees within a subsidized building: Haywood House and Crescent St. She will report back.
- **Engagement:** the committee is trying to get some data about the prevalence of isolation and to gain a better sense of the problem. Jayne shared some info about data on 85+ residents that was shared on the recent discussion with Programs and Services Committee of the City Council. ( see attached) They are looking at models of programs whose goal is to decrease isolation. There is a feeling that no new programs need to be developed. The committee would like to create a campaign that promotes “Be a Friend, Bring a Friend” with the idea to encourage people to invite someone to an event that they are already planning to attend. Newton COA has started a team for **The Walk to End Elder Isolation** to be held on May 20<sup>th</sup>.  
<https://www.boston.com/event/the-walk-to-end-elder-isolation-7043779> Consider contributing or participating.

VII. **Legislative Report**

- **FY19 City Budget** process is wrapping up. NDSS is proposed to receive a \$35,000 increase to our transportation budget. We have been authorized to rehire the afternoon custodian using Formula Grant Funds. The Mayor will present the budget on Tuesday April 17<sup>th</sup>. **NDSS will present its budget to Programs and Services on Wednesday May 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

VI. **General Updates:**

- The parking plan during the Austin St construction was discussed.

- The Massachusetts Community Compact Program will be taking applications of July 1<sup>st</sup> for FY19 and it is expected that a new Age-Friendly Best Practice Compact will be available.
- NDSS will be presenting PLAAN and work force related information to a group of Newton Needham Chamber of Commerce Members on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Please let Margaret Liepsitz know if you are interested in participating.
- We will be launching a new program in April in collaboration with the Library that was a direct outcome of PLAAN; Life in the Over 55 Lane; Coffee, Tea and Conversation.

**VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25pm**