

Freetown Council on Aging
227 Chace Road, Freetown, MA 02717
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 21, 2023

Members Present: Robin Kendrick, Ruth Ferland, Sonny Barros, Brenda Motta, Bruce Wilbur, Marion Rylands Evelyn Alves & Rebecca Frias (by phone)

Three town residents were also in attendance.

FREETOWN CLERK
REC'D JAN 24 2024 PM4:09

Call to Order

Robin Kendrick called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

Secretary's Report

The meeting minutes for October 12, 2023 were distributed and reviewed. Brenda Motta made one correction under Old Business stating that she was present at the meeting with the Engineering Company. Sonny Barros made the motion to accept the minutes. This was seconded by Ruth Ferland. All in favor.

A meeting with the Town Administrator, Deb Pettey and Selectman Carlos Lopes was held this morning. The pods were discussed at the meeting. Deb Pettey informed the group that the plan is moving in the right direction. It has been mentioned that the pods will be required to be placed on a permanent foundation. The possibility of a combined Library/COA building is at least five years down the line.

New Business

- Written policy for the newsletter – Rebecca introduced a draft of the Senior Profile Newsletter Policy. In order to advertise an event in the Senior Profile:
 - The event must be held in Freetown and relevant to the population we serve
 - The event is sponsored by a business/group from Freetown and is relevant to the population we serve.
- Vote on whether or not to close the COA the day after Thanksgiving.
 - Motion to close the day after Thanksgiving was made by Brenda Motta and seconded by Evelyn Alves.
 - Vote: Approved by unanimous roll call vote.
- Vote on whether or not to close the COA at noon in order for the COA team to attend the Reps Holiday Luncheon at the VFW.
 - Motion to close the the center at noon for the COA team to attend the reps Holiday Party on December 20th was made by Ruth Ferland and seconded by Bruce Wilbur.
 - Vote: Approved by unanimous roll call vote.
- Vote on whether COA Senior Clerks can facilitate activities at the center as needed.
 - Motion to approve whether the COA Senior Clerks can facilitate activities at the center as needed was made by Bruce Wilbur and seconded by Brenda Motta.

- Vote: Approved by unanimous roll call.

Old Business

- Senior Housing – At today’s meeting with the Town Administrator and Selectman the topic of Senior Housing was once again discussed with the audience. At this point in time, there is nothing new to report concerning this issue. However, a meeting with the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) is working with community members and town officials to create Freetown’s first Master Plan. The Master Planning process is a meaningful opportunity to come together as a community to develop a document that guides future planning decisions and that will serve as a valuable resource for anyone who would like to better understand Freetown’s communities. SRPEDD will be joining COA Bingo at 11:30 AM on December 12th to present the Master Plan.
- Enclosing the Pavilion – The plan to close in the pavilion has been placed on hold for the time being after receiving an initial quote.
- LULA Elevator Update – Awaiting an update regarding the grant for the LULA elevator. It was explained that the elevator would be situated on the front right outside corner.
- Update on Stove – Robin Kendrick has reached out to Jaysan Gas Services in East Freetown. They suggested the COA contact the gas inspector in order to determine whether or not it would be necessary to redo the hood prior to purchasing a new stove. Robin explained a residential 36-inch stove would not require an update to the pre-existing hood. It was also noted that the Fire Department is willing to take over our stove. Rebecca indicated we should be notified by November 30th whether or not we have been awarded a grant to purchase a new stove.
- Grant opportunity for MCOA Field Demonstration Project has been submitted. It was also noted that Senator Rodrigues has provided us with another \$5,000 to assist in our Nutrition Program.

Discussions

- A discussion took place regarding a plan to distribute ham steaks, potatoes and vegetables, along with dessert as we did last year prior to Christmas. Evelyn Alves will check with Shaws Market. They assisted us in providing a discount for the ham steaks last year.
- Brenda Motta provided an update on the Building Committee. The Chair as well as the Vice-Chair of the Committee have both stepped down. At this time there are no interested candidates to step up to either position. Directed interest in the joint COA/Library Building was discussed. It was explained that the Grant Management Office requires adherence to strict practices to include the number of meeting rooms required. Freetown has met all the requirements for the grant submission. A feasibility study will once again be performed. The application is due on May 31, 2024. The square footage cannot be below 6,000 square feet. The goal is not to raise taxes.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:15 PM was made by Brenda Motta and seconded by Evelyn Alves.

Vote: Was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Garell
Senior Clerk