

Freetown Council on Aging
227 Chace Road, Freetown, MA 02717
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 12, 2023

FREETOWN CLERK
REC'D NOV 30 2023 PM3:30

Members Present: Robin Kendrick, Rebecca Frias, Ruth Ferland, Sonny Barros, Brenda Motta, Bruce Wilbur

Absent: Marion Rylands, Evelyn Alves

Two other residents were also in attendance.

Call to Order

Brenda Motta called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM.

Secretary's Report

The meeting minutes for October 12, 2013 were distributed and reviewed. Sonny Barros made the motion to accept the minutes. This was seconded by Ruth Ferland. All in favor.

Treasurer's Report

Bruce Wilbur, Treasurer, met with our Director, Rebecca Frias to discuss operating expenses. Upon review, it was noted at the present time we have \$91,000 from donations and grants. Therefore, the COA has an abundance of funds to utilize to help our seniors, enhance activities or our physical building.

New Business

- A survey was sent out to 1,600 Senior households in June. +Sixty-seven surveys were returned. Highlighted comments included the following.
 1. The majority of responses were in favor of the combined COA/Library plan. The main opinion against the proposal is a possible increase in taxes.
 2. Senior housing concerns – Seniors are very concerned regarding the lack of senior housing in the community. Bruce Wilbur indicated the lack of senior housing topic has been around for many years. However, there has been no movement to improve the situation. Bruce suggested writing a letter to each individual on the Housing Committee to bring this matter to their attention.
- Rebecca reported there are two large grant opportunities from the MCOA currently available that she is currently working on. First is for a Nutrition Innovation Program with the idea of offering lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays and also a plan to hire a chef.

The second grant opportunity is for Senior Center modernization. Discussion ensued concerning closing in the pavilion at the COA. Several options were discussed which included the idea of attaching garage doors or barn doors to close it in. This concept would provide additional space for entertainment and provide comfort from the wind and rain. It was also expressed that the picnic

tables can be somewhat dangerous for our seniors while getting in and out of the benches and suggested the possibility of purchasing folding chairs as an alternative.

The grant deadline is November 9th. Deb Pettey, Town Administrator, is in support of this program.

- Rebecca requested that the COA Board approve \$5,000 of the Formula One Grant monies to be used for various programming.

VOTED: Bruce Wilbur voted to approve the \$5,000 from the Formula One Grant

This was seconded by Ruth Ferland.

Old Business

- Rebecca provided an update on the pods. Rebecca, Carl Bizarro and Sonny Barros met with the engineering firm. It was reported that it is a very complicated project. Consequently, the engineering evaluation came in extremely high. Additional vendors will be pursued.
- Kitchen Stove Update – Bruce reported he spoke with Highland Restaurant Supply to discuss a price for an electronic start stove. The vendor stated he will attempt to give us a deal to return the current stove. This will be discussed with Deb Pettey, Town Administrator to ask if it would be possible to return the stove, if Highland Restaurant Supply agrees to the deal. Rebecca also noted she is applying for a grant for a new stove.
- Mass Cultural Council Submission – Rebecca discussed the submission which would include a six-week music therapy session. Also, a program to include physical wellness.
- Lakeville Bus Trips – The plan is to partner with the Lakeville COA for bus trips which will probably begin in the spring months. Rebecca will be asking Seniors for recommendations on which trips they would be interested in. There is a minimum of twenty-five participants between the two Senior Centers.
- Creation of Friends of Freetown Entity – As noted at the previous meeting, a meeting will be scheduled with Rhonda Silva to explain her role in the group when it was active. This meeting will be separate from the scheduled Board meeting.

Discussion Concerning Pavilion

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM. Sonny Barros made the motion to close the meeting. This was seconded by Robin Kendrick.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Garell
Senior Clerk