

**Minutes for COA RECREATION COMMITTEE Meeting
May 22, 2019**

PRESENT: Co-Chairs of this meeting Ruthann Dobek & Yolanda Rodriguez Committee Members: Jean Doherty, Sherry Lee, Rita d'Entremont, Clara Chin, Fran Perler, Patricia Burns, Marcia Goldstein, Monique Richardson, Maria Foster, Sara Nelson, Franklyn d'Entremont, Gerry Small, Barbara Kean, Ellen Zellner, Soo Moy and Mimi Katz

WELCOME: Yolanda Rodriguez, welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to the meeting.

INTRODUCTIONS: All present introduced themselves. Ruthann thanked Sara Nelson from the Recreation Department for reinstating the Older Active Adults page in the Summer Adult Education Catalog, the activities listed and her willingness to come and collaborate with the Brookline COA Recreation Committee. Sara's role @ the Recreation Department includes events for active older adults. Sara did say that the deadline for content for the fall catalogue is in a few days. This would not allow us to have our new suggestions included until the winter catalogue.

AGENDA: Yolanda said that the first item of the agenda was to select a Chair of the Committee. Since there was no volunteer, Ruthann and Yolanda acted as Co-Chairs for this meeting.

TOPIC: Opinions, Suggestions and Recommendations for Current and Future Activities for Active Older Adults

Topics:

1. Review of activities listed for summer:

- Jerry – Many of the activities listed for the summer are NOT for older adults, but younger adults – ex. pickleball, canoeing and bocce. Both pickleball and bocce are listed as 21+ for age
- Ruthann – 'Seniors' covers a wide range of ages – from 60 to 100+.
- **Suggestions:** Instead of 21+, divide the ages to include 'masters level'. Sara – there are multiple pickleball courts @ different levels of proficiency. She said that most who play are 60+ younger active adults rather than 21+.
- Frank agreed that 82 year olds are not interested in or could not participate in many of the activities listed. He said that seniors this age are more interested in activities that included transportation, a meal and an educational talk rather than focused on exercise alone.
- Fran said that Brookline seniors are a diverse community. The list is good for younger-older adults, but need a full spectrum of equivalent activities for older-older adults.
- Marcia said that she would like day trips with a price that included lunch and an activity.
- Mimi raised the issue of the pool fees. She said that the cost at the Brookline pool is \$45 for 15 sessions or \$200/year. Someone else said that Boston pools are \$5/year for residents and \$16 for non-residents.
- Ruthann asked Sara if they were doing any outreach focus groups to get input and feedback from older adults. Sara said yes, but they don't have specifics yet. Ruthann asked if someone at Parks & Recreation was focusing on older adult activities. She suggested liaisons, discussion groups and surveys. Sara said that she was not aware of any groups, but that a survey is in the strategic plan. Yolanda asked if it was just one survey or if it was or could be segmented into questions for specific age groups. Ruthann said that this committee will help get and give ideas on an ongoing

basis. Sara agreed that she would come as often as possible to our meetings and perhaps also to a COA meeting.

- Monique asked how many vehicles the Recreation Department has. Sara said that they have one bus with stairs that holds 14 and a few other smaller vans without stairs that might create a challenge for older adults.
- Ruthann asked if Sara had or would work with other towns to coordinate activities so they could share the cost of a larger coach. Sara said that she has been in touch with Newton and would contact them again to see if they are interested in partnering.
- Yolanda shared some trips (see below) that she had seen advertised from Waltham Recreation and their listed fees that were very low. We suspect that these fees are subsidized. Sara said that the Town did not subsidize and that Departments were expected to participate in cost recovery for activities.
- Jerry raised the issue of the Thanksgiving Dinner Train that used to be quite popular. He felt that the increased cost and lack of marketing had resulted in decreased attendance and elimination of this activity. Jerry then suggested some more activities, some of which would need transportation to get to a train or from a train to the site (see below).
- Jerry asked if it was possible to fundraise for these trips. He offered to contact some of the banks and businesses in town.
- Yolanda reminded all that if we had a lifetime Senior Pass for National Parks, we could get in free at places like the Adams Museums in Quincy with tours and a docent. Patricia said that getting the lifetime passes for \$10 is no longer available, although the existing passes are still good for a lifetime. And anyone in a car with a person with the pass also gets in free.
- Monique reminded us of a few discounts that TRIPPS had researched – a) \$10 weekend unlimited use on the Commuter Rail although getting to North or South station might need transport; b) Amtrak Downeaster could go to Old Orchard Beach or Freeport for L.L.Bean. While all other Amtrak trains do not have good senior' discounts, the Downeaster gives seniors 50% discount.
- Marcia asked about trips to the area casinos, especially to the new Encore that is so close (see list below).
- Ruthann asked all to do a bit of research about what activities and pool fees other towns provided and at what cost. She asked about chair volleyball and if Brookline had Adult Ed leagues. It was suggested that perhaps, since pickleball is new, that a demo could be done here at the Senior Center. Sara said that pickleball is usually done at Warren playground on Elliot Street in the basketball courts on Mondays. She said that it had a low tennis net and used whiffle balls and wooden paddles. She said people moved, but there wasn't the running of far distances like tennis.
- Fran then asked if it would be possible to use the Senior Center vans for transport. Ruthann said that we have two vans and 2 drivers with no backup and that she gets lots of requests for evening and weekend usage. Fran then asked if it would be possible for a Recreation Department driver to use our van. Ruthann said yes, that we have backed each other up before.
- Jerry reiterated that there needs to be a strong connection between the COA and the Recreation Department. Ruthann said that our present committee would act as an advisory board for ongoing dialogue.
- Sara said that there had been numerous requests for Bocce. She had gotten it on the schedule and has not had one person attend. Fran said that it, along with pickleball is listed as 21+ on the Active Older Adult page. If it is a multi-level activity, it should be listed as 60+ on the Active Older Adult page.

- Barbara said that issues for older adults are cost, ability and flexibility and require different planning.
- Fran asked how best to communicate with Sara. Sara's email is sanelson@brooklinema.gov or to the general recreation email with Active Older Adults in the subject line. Fran also suggested that the Co-Chairs of the committee should be one younger–older and one older–older. Ruthann then asked Fran to be the younger-older Co-Chair and Barbara or Rita to be the older-older Co-Chair.
- Ruthann assigned everyone the homework to collect more suggestions and find other towns' offerings and fees for comparison.
- Fran asked about having a membership with an annual fee like the old Golden Age Club. This could help to subsidize the pool and other fees.
- Maria said that TRIPPS would have the TRIPPS Ice Cream event on June 27th @ 1.
- Ruthann said that we should still have a Chair and asked us all to consider taking the position.

Suggested activities including meal, transport and tour/lecture

- Captain Jack's
- Long Wharf
- Lighthouse
- Lexington Green
- Venice D'Milo
- Castle Island
- Athenaeum
- Boston Public Library with architectural tour
- Forrest Hills Cemetery
- Mt. Auburn Cemetery with docent
- Gardner Museum
- Harvard Museums
- Botanic Garden Tower Hill
- Providence Waterfront by commuter rail and boat
- Cape Cod Canal
- Cape Cod Museum
- Portsmouth New Hampshire (no public transportation)
 - Strawberry Bank
 - Isle of Shoals
 - Piscataqua (?sp) River
- Festivals
- Flea Markets – Revere on Sundays
- Antique Shows – Brimfield
- State House
- Trip to New York once a year – could do overnight in Connecticut where hotels/motels are cheaper.
- Casinos - Mohegan Sun, Foxwoods, Encore Boston