

Minutes of the Age Friendly Cities Committee (AFC)

September 14, 2021

Present: Saul Feldman, Ruthann Dobek, John Seay, Matt Weiss, Yolanda Rodriguez, Carol Caro, Saralynn Allaire, John VanScoyoc, Lynne Karsten, Josh Cooke, Henry Winkelman, Sarah Kaplan. Guest: Rita McNally. Staff: Jessica Milley-Gee.

1. Review of minutes of previous meetings:
 - a. Unanimous approval of minutes with corrections.
2. Designate note taker
 - a. Matthew Weiss
3. COVID-19 update
 - a. Ruthann Dobek
 - i. Over 65 population is 99% vaccinated with at least one dose.
 - ii. No information available re 3rd dose or booster.
 - iii. Supply of vaccine is good for local pharmacies and dispensaries.
 - iv. No other information available now.
 - v. CVS at Commonwealth gives COVID-19 shots not Harvard.
 - b. Sarah Kaplan – Link re vaccine data:
<https://www.vaccines.gov/results/?zipcode=02445&medications=779bfe52-0dd8-4023-a183-457eb100fccc,a84fb9ed-deb4-461c-b785-e17c782ef88b,784db609-dc1f-45a5-bad6-8db02e79d44f&radius=1&appointments=true>
4. Discussion of ARPA funds
 - a. Ruthann – Presented at the BrooklineCAN LCAC meeting.
 - i. CoA is pursuing issues related to the use of the funds.
 - ii. AFC should be involved in discussions related to use of funds.
 - iii. Be prepared to receive and provide feedback.
 - iv. Awaiting timeline for submittal of narrative by department heads.
 - v. 6 Categories of needs – Transportation (loss of Uber funds due to COVID), Isolation/Mental Health (induced by COVID), Job Opportunities (lost jobs due to COVID), Food Insecurity, IT Infrastructure (COVID caused needs), Home Care Workers (creative possibility).
 - vi. Replace lost transportation funds, funds for geriatric social worker hours, job training for older adults, continued COVID food support funding, IT equipment and simulcasting), find Brookline residents to do home care.
 - vii. Capital improvement – New vehicles that are “green”.
 - viii. AFC needs to input/affect other department spending to obtain increased age friendly results.
 - b. John VanScoyoc – ARPA calls for a community engagement process.
 - i. Process will proceed about 10 weeks through early November.
 - ii. Question is how consultation with department heads such as Ruthann will take place if at all.
 - iii. Need clarity as to relation of community engagement process and department requirements.
 - c. Rita McNally – Need to address communication/liaisons with BHA housing perhaps using some of the ARPA funds.
 - d. Sarah Kaplan

- i. Link to provide input to ARPA funds prioritization:
<https://stories.opengov.com/brooklinema/published/alukqlnNI>
 - ii. Link to Disparity Report which will identify 15 areas of need for the funds:
<https://www.brooklinema.gov/1898/Disparity-Report>
- 5. ReiMagine Age and Dementia Friendly Summit – September 27 and 28
<https://aarp.cvent.com/events/aarp-ma-reimagine-age-and-dementia-friendly-summit-ma-9-27-28-21/event-summary-3391c566169842e2c8fa55fc4.aspx>
 - a. Ruthann – Presenting BrooklineCAN to the summit session on 9/27 at 10am.
- 6. Update on Boston Age-Friendly Initiative
 - a. Ruthann – Boston Age Strong rep reaching out to Brookline continuing dialogue.
 - i. Brookline Bank in Brookline is an Age Friendly Business (AFB) and Boston would like to add all Brookline Bank branches as age friendly.
 - ii. Boston is working with chains to encourage them to become age friendly.
 - iii. Considering AFC and/or BrooklineCAN working with chains such as Tatte, Café Landwer.
 - iv. Some movement with CVS and their clinics.
 - v. All be aware of connecting to chain management.
 - vi. Note Boston also cut back on age friendly initiatives due to COVID.
 - b. Carol – Consider AFB connections at the Rotary.
- 7. Review of Springwell Area Agency on Aging public hearing on August 24th
 - a. An area plan draft is here: www.springwell.com/area-agency-on-aging
 - b. Stress statewide and national efforts similar to Brookline locally despite COVID.
- 8. Pedestrian issues from Pedestrian Advisory Committee
 - a. Warrant Article 6 has been proposed to address sidewalk obstructions.
 - b. Erin Gallentine and Sarah Kaplan *****
- 9. Let's Go initiative
 - a. Ruthann – Senior Center intern in a Doctoral program is addressing pedestrian issues in Brookline and the item will remain on future agendas.
 - b. Sarah Kaplan and Erin Gallentine have proposed the Warrant Article.
- 10. Review of Accomplishments & Goals document
 - a. Ruthann and Matt will work to contact people to obtain inputs to the document.
- 11. Subcommittee Reports
 - a. Transportation – Ruthann reported
 - i. TRIPPS extremely active including a DOT grant to produce videos with BIG with a brie CDBG grant for \$31K which will be voted on this evening.
 - ii. Foreword by Mike Dukakis.
 - iii. Medical block grants for transportation including setup for call-ins.
 - iv. Issue is outreach to ensure those in need of these programs are made aware of their existence.
 - v. Carol – BrooklineCAN Newsletter is distributed to 1000 people and Senior Center Newsletter has a wide distribution.
 - vi. Increasing number of physical copies of the BrooklineCAN Newsletter.
 - vii. Rita McNally – Need for distribution of newsletters to Public Housing and to religious institutions (Note Tab not widely distributed any more).
 - viii. Rita – Rotary and business groups would be good distribution vehicles.
 - ix. John V – Brookline and other organizations have difficulty in communicating with people despite the available technology. Need to

ensure information is searchable and shows up near the top of the results and is clear and kept up to date.

- b. Housing
 - i. Carol – six existing spaces will remain and remaining spaces will be for visitors and caregivers.
 - ii. Issue is the fact that the number of HCP spaces are also being reduced.
 - c. Health – Lynne Karsten reported
 - i. 40 confirmed COVID-19 cases last week none hospitalized.
 - ii. Booster shots approved for immune-compromised at this time.
 - iii. Dr. Jett has resigned and interim position not yet identified.
 - iv. Stable group at Health Department and can move forward as needed.
 - v. Flu clinic is 10/18 at the Senior Center and 10/24 at Brookline High School is a Flu clinic from 9am to 1pm online registration required.
 - vi. Farmers Market coupons program \$40 coupons very well received at public housing, Senior Center and other site for qualified people.
 - vii. 99% of people over 65 have been vaccinated in Massachusetts.
 - d. Library - Report by email from Anne Reed re Library of Things at the Library.
 - i. Note link to the ideaSPACE - [Update on COVID-19 | Public Library of Brookline \(brooklinelibrary.org\)](https://www.brookline.org/ideaSPACE/)
 - ii. Adult Craft Along kits are now available.
 - iii. Programming remains virtual at this time.
 - e. Council on Aging (CoA) – Ruthann
 - i. Ruthann – CoA sent in nominating letter to the Select Board and Ruthann requested John V move it forward and he responded that he would.
 - f. Recreation
 - i. Carol – Stressed need for transportation/parking for recreation activities such as swimming.
 - ii. Josh – Summer camp over, no Brookline Day, 5K September 12th 8:30am at Park school
 - iii. Josh – Pickleball is a “hot topic” with great demand for 5 sessions for seniors at Warren Field on Elliot Street starting October 4th 8:30-10:30am \$3 per session and filled up.
 - iv. Carol – Requested bocce and indicated that communication needed re where and when it is held.
 - v. Ruthann – Ping pong restored at the Senior Center Friday afternoons.
 - g. Commission on Disabilities update – Saralynn Allaire
 - i. Opening on the Commission with applications online on the Town website with applications sent to the Select Board for decision.
 - ii. Saralynn – Retiring due to health issues.
 - iii. Committee expressed gratitude and praise for the work Saralynn has performed on the Brookline Commission on Disabilities.
 - iv. James Miczek will be acting Director.
- 12.** Age-friendly TV plans – Matt Weiss reported.
 - a. Change report in future to Information Dissemination.
- 13.** Date and main agenda for next meeting – October 19, 2021 at 1pm, virtual.
- 14.** Miscellaneous
 - a. None.
- 15.** New business

- a. *****Potential composting program with Black Earth which would recruit older adults.