

MINUTES
Committee on Elderly and Needy Citizens
Monthly Meeting

January 28, 2020, 8:30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Fran Johnson, Chair
Debra Hanley, Brightview Senior Living
Len Parrish, Director of Community & Economic Development, Harford County Government

OTHERS:

L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator
Kevin Bianca, Town Commissioner
Rowan Glidden, Senior Planner
Sergeant Robert Pfarr, Bel Air Police Department
Sue Niewenhous, Resident
Kathi Santora, Recording Secretary

NOT PRESENT:

Reverend Harold Hubble
Peggy Mannone, Town resident

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Ms. Johnson called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m.

II. Meeting Minutes

Ms. Johnson introduced the agenda as well as the meeting minutes from November 26, 2019.

Mr. Parrish noted the misspelling of his name on page 5.

Ms. Hanley moved to accept the minutes with the correction. Mr. Parrish seconded the motion.
All in favor. Motion carried.

III. News article, Bel Air Bond, Spring 2020

Mr. Bane asked the committee for suggested topics for the Spring 2020 *Bel Air Bond*, to be delivered about 3/21.

Ms. Johnson suggested that every issue mention the two publications offered by the Office on Aging. They are the Resource Guide and the Caregivers Guide. They are also online. Hard copies are available at the Office on Aging. Mr. Bane said they are available at Town Hall; the stock does not last long.

Mr. Glidden shared information about the State of Maryland's Info Portal, which includes information about day care, elder care and more.

Ms. Johnson stated that *Harford's Heart's* next issue will include resource information from Harford County Government and the Census 2020.

IV. Gift disclosure form

Mr. Bane advised committee members to submit these forms, which are required annually. He provided copies. The deadline is January 31, 2020. All appointed committee members and commissioners must complete the forms.

V. Scam Awareness Initiative

Mr. Parrish stated the fraud/scam awareness event has been scheduled for March 4, 2020 at McFaul Activities Center. The speaker is coming at no cost. He suggested that money previously earmarked for this purpose could be directed elsewhere. The event is targeted to the community as a whole. The Office on Aging is promoting it and Mr. Parrish suggested the use of social media as well.

Sgt. Pfarr confirmed that the BAPD is aware of the date.

VI. Census 2020 Update

Ms. Johnson asked if there were additional discussion items about Census 2020.

Mr. Glidden stated that the multi-agency Census Complete Count Committee (CCC) met in early December. Another is scheduled for February. He expects more work assignments will come out of that meeting. Mel Velez from LASOS is the chair of the CCC.

Mr. Parrish stated that a Census 2020 agenda item regarding hard-to-reach populations is on the agenda for today's continuing care meeting.

Mr. Glidden stated that the CCC advises that county leaders continually talk about Census 2020 in every public event possible.

Mr. Bane clarified that Cindy Mumby at Harford County Government's communication office is the point person for the county's social media. Mr. Bane advised that Bel Air will soon hire a public relations staff person. He would like to ensure that the offices work in coordination.

VII. Aging in Place/The Village Movement

Mr. Bane suggested that the committee dedicate an entire meeting in the near future to this topic. He distributed a photocopied presentation that took place at the August 2020 Maryland

Municipal League meeting about the Village Movement. He asked the committee to review and prepare for a discussion in the future meeting. He cautioned that it has the potential to be a very large project and that care should be taken to decide on realistic actions.

He stated that he hopes for the committee to eventually make recommendations to the commissioners about steps that can be taken to serve people who are elderly in Bel Air. It is hoped that any recommendations could support aging in place in Bel Air.

Ms. Johnson voiced support for this approach. She recently discussed the model with people who are involved in the Seattle, Washington movement. She stated that people sign up and pay a fee. Some are both volunteers and consumers of service. She asked the committee to research various models and prepare to discuss them in the February 2020 meeting. She noted that the commissioners will soon review the upcoming fiscal year's budget.

Ms. Johnson noted that the Village Movement could work well along with services offered by the Department on Aging. Mr. Parrish observed that the Office on Aging could potentially be a referral source.

Mr. Bane noted that a nonprofit entity operates most models. The Town is not in a position to administer such a program. It would make sense to gather interested people and explore options. The town already has established precedent for a nonprofit operation at Rockfield Manor and the Bel Air Downtown Alliance. There are other models beside the Village Movement in existence, though it seems the most comprehensive. The population of senior people in town is growing. There are few supports in Town for them. He sees Harford's Department on Aging as a participant in the planning.

Mr. Bane suggests that initial planning would include a forum and a guest speaker with all stakeholders present. The stakeholders would then drive the model that would work best locally. Ms. Johnson asked the committee to think about who should be considered a stakeholder.

Mr. Bane noted that Ms. Niewenhous has attended recent Elderly and Needy Committee meetings since she is interested in this issue. She has the professional background that could be helpful in planning and execution of such a project.

VIII. Other Business

Mr. Parrish stated that Harford County is in the process of preparing its consolidated plan. It is a 5-year plan that outlines how the County will spend federal funds. He expects a draft to be released sometime this month. There will be forums, surveys and other outreach through the Spring. Topics of concern to this committee include seniors and people in need.

Ms. Johnson offered to prepare a formal statement for this purpose from the Committee on Elderly and Needy Citizens. Mr. Parrish offered to have County personnel present an overview

of the plan at a future meeting. He added that most federal funds are targeted to low-to-moderate income populations.

Mr. Bane also stated that the committee should also look at local homeless population needs. The Town recently cleaned up an abandoned homeless camp near Bel Air High School. There is another active one in Town now. He asked if a future meeting could also include a presentation from a Harford County representative government about this issue. This would assist the committee in addressing these needs. He believes the homeless population in town is beginning to grow.

Mr. Bianca noted that the Point-in-Time Count was just completed last week. Mr. Parrish stated that the Community Action Agency is the lead in this initiative. Mr. Bane suggested that this topic be the focus of the March or April meeting. He added that he expects homeless people in Town will become more visible when the weather warms. The Town recently removed a bench on Main Street where some people were congregating and harassing passersby.

There is no facility in Town to accommodate people who are homeless. During very freezing weather, the BAPD allows a few people in the lobby. However, this is not a secure location nor a long-term solution. There has been a request that the Town find a suitable facility and take its turn in the rotation shelter system that currently exists.

Sgt. Pfarr noted that many of these local individuals have substance abuse issues. Shelters cannot accommodate them. These are people who are typically found in the encampments.

To sum up, the February committee meeting will focus on Village Movement; the March meeting will focus on the county's consolidated plan; the April meeting will focus on homeless services.

Ms. Johnson asked for a brief summary of last week's Project Homeless Connect. Mr. Parrish stated that the Point-in-Time count was the previous night, so most were invited to attend the next day's service event at the Harford Community College. There were about 50 vendors, including dental and vision providers. He estimates about 500 guests and 300 volunteers were on hand. Bags with supplies and clothes were available for giveaways. There were 142 vision exams and 185 dental services provided.

The Point-in-Time count may be lower than last year. There are less children in the shelters this year. He added that the HCC/APFCU location is the county location that can accommodate the largest number of people.

The next meeting will be Tuesday February 25, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Kathi Santora, Recording Secretary