



TOWN OF HUDSON

Hudson Senior Affairs Committee



12 School Street • Hudson, New Hampshire 03051 • Tel: 603-886-6000 • Fax: 603-598-6481

Senior Affairs Committee Minutes 12/18/14

Call to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance taken.

Attendance: Roger Coutu - Selectmen Liaison

Joe Cannava

Sue Hovling

Shirley LaFreniere

Steve Porter

Joanne Snook

Non Members Attending:

Lori Bowen Senior Services Coordinator

Dave Yates Recreation Director

Welcomed new alternate member Joe Cannava and Joe told us a little about his background, experience and why he decided to become a member. Joe has helped at the Senior Center volunteering and helping out whenever he can.

Public Input:

As part of the "Public Input" segment Selectmen Liaison Roger Coutu stepped forward and read an email that had been sent to him. The individual's email stated that they went to the Senior Center on a Tuesday morning and the doors were closed and locked and there was a sign explaining that Lori Bowen was not there and would be back at a certain time. The individual indicated that this was not the first time this had occurred and had recommended that some volunteers be coordinated to cover and help out should Lori have to be away from the Senior Center office, be out a few days, or need help with answering phones. The individuals also made recommended that the Senior Center be open one evening a week and one weekend day and that Senior Center volunteers be trained and approved by the BOS for overseeing activities beyond normal Senior Center hours. This email came from Selectmen Patricia Nichols. Selectmen Coutu and Nichols were concerned that there was no plan of action in place if Lori is out and if the Senior Center is open other times beyond normal business hours. Selectmen Coutu stated that the Town Administrator had told him he had

not been approached about finding some help for Lori. Selectmen Coutu was concerned that this operation is operating on a "shoe string" and that there is no plan in place and that perhaps there is a need to have the Senior Center operate directly under the Town Administrator. He also suggested perhaps a subcommittee be formed to ensure that there are people to cover when Lori is out, to help out at the Senior Center and also in the event that the budget does not pass. Selectmen Coutu stated that if the Budget does not pass then the BOS will have to cut approximately \$450 thousand. Selectmen Coutu was very concerned that there is no plan in place.

Chairmen Porter stated that he was given an emergency plan in place that was given to him by Dave Yates and asked for Dave to explain the plan. Dave first addressed the email that Selectmen Coutu read stating that Lori had opened the doors at the Senior Center on that particular Thursday but had to do some official business related to the Senior Center at the Town hall for a short time frame. But that the Senior Center was open and that the Emergency plan does not address when Lori is not there for short time frames. Lori added that there are volunteers at the Senior Center in the morning who are responsible for certain activities and that from time to time (for a short time frame) she has to go and get things done related to Senior Center.

Selectmen Coutu reiterated some of the comments made in the email and that perhaps Selectmen Nichols had the wrong day. After some discussion it was realized that the Senior Center was open but it was the office that was closed because Lori had gone off to do Senior Center business at town hall.

Committee member Sue Hovling suggested that perhaps a few volunteers be found to cover the phones and provide information to people that attend the Senior Center should Lori need to run out for other Senior Center business. Sue Hovling stated that she could do this on Tuesday's because she attends the Senior Center on Tuesdays.

Committee member Joanne Snook thought it was a good idea and stated she could help out as a volunteer on other days as well. Alternate member Cannava suggested we find some volunteers to cover on a regular basis should Lori need to do Senior Center business outside of the Senior Center and then long term come up with a permanent person to cover.

Committee member Joanne Snook stated that we need the equipment to support the office (copy machine etc) and that all of these issues appear easily correctable. Joanne stated that on the Tuesday morning Lori was out that there were numerous responsible people that were at the Senior Center.

Committee member Shirley LaFreniere wondered if volunteers could do some of the tasks that Lori needs to do so that she does not need to leave the Senior Center. Shirley stated that this could also alleviate the burden. Shirley stated

that she did not see any of this as a problem (Lori having to go to town hall for business) because for years Seniors would open and close Lions Hall (Community Center) for activities that were being conducted there, with no problems.

Selectmen Coutu reiterated that Lori can't do everything herself and that the BOS appreciates what she does. Selectmen Coutu stated again that there is no plan in place and that it is imperative that the Board be aware all of the needs of the Senior Center.

Selectmen Coutu had to excuse himself from the meeting and a 10 minute recess was taken.

Last meeting minutes were approved 5-0.

Agenda item Emergency Plan. Dave Yates and Lori Bowen put together an "Emergency Plan" should Lori need to be out. Dave Yates stated that he and Lori have weekly meeting and regularly discuss topics. Dave went over what the procedures were in place when Lori had to be out. Dave had his administrative assistant Chrissy Petersen cross trained and cover for Lori when she was out and Dave also helped out with some task as well. Dave stated that they have already formulated a plan for coverage when Lori takes time off in the summer as well. Dave stated the building will be open and closed at appropriate times and that perhaps a volunteer list can be formulated to cover those short time frames when she is out.

Lori went over the formal plan that included what documentation is in place so that if she is out that individuals such as Dave Yates or Chrissy Petersen would have some direction/instruction as to what programs are being conducted for that particular day.

Dave stated that her leaving the Senior Center is rare. Chairman Porter asked for a list of volunteers who can help out on specific days in case Lori has to leave for Senior Center business, for the next meeting.

Policy revisions were reviewed and Policy was approved 5-0

Registration numbers were reviewed and total registrants was 589 at 12/18/14. Percentage of residents and daily averages were comparable. At any one point in time 86 were the most number of registrants at any one point in time. It was decided to table the discussion about opening one night a week and one weekend morning for the next committee meeting since Selectmen Coutu had to leave.

Lori did put together a list of normal operating hours that Senior Centers are open in other towns and cities, that was briefly reviewed

Committee member Hovling stated that she found most other Senior Centers were only open beyond normal operating hours for special events

Lori went over briefly new activities added since our November meeting..

Committee member Cannava suggested that action items be assigned to individuals for the Grant writing and the federally funded program. Joe Cannava agreed to volunteer and research on what types of grant writing tutorials/training is available and Sue Hovling agreed to look into what government/federally funded programs would be available and what needs to be done, to get part-time help at the Senior Center.

Briefly discussed what was the “skeleton” plan should there be no approval of a budget and what will be done if registrant rates are too high. Dave stated run three days now and if budget is approved then go to four days next year. If registration continues to increase put in a budget for Lori at full time the following year and then have the Senior Center open five days a week.

Joe Cannava suggested building a database to more granularly identify ages of registrants to determine what types of activities or programs may be of interest to more specific groups.

The possibility of opening up one more day a week was broached by Sue Hovling and Joe Cannava due to the overlapping of program times that has resulted in moving some activities to alternate sites. It was agreed to wait for liaison Coutu at the next meeting for discussion.

Dave briefly went over the new cleaning schedule that was implemented to ensure that the Senior Center is cleaned more regularly.

Additions to the Center (a capital expenditure wish list was discussed). Some of these items included an additional ramp, a hold bar I one of the restrooms and a partition by the game room. Selectmen Coutu let the Committee know that at the end of the Budget year that the BOS entertains request items for additional items. So if the Committee deems necessary certain items could be brought to the BOS at that time.

Motion to adjourn was approved 5-0.

Public session 1 Hour and 29 minutes