



**Senior Advisory Committee
Minutes for the Regular Meeting of June 1, 2026
Assembly Hall
395 Magnolia Road
Pinehurst, North Carolina
03:00 p.m.**

The Senior Advisory Committee held a Regular Meeting at 03:00 p.m., Monday, June 1, 2026, in the Assembly Hall of Pinehurst Village Hall, 395 Magnolia Road, Pinehurst, North Carolina.

The following attendees were present:

Ms. Kathy Beeman RN, SAC Member
Bill Grover MD, PhD., SAC Member
Ms. Suzanne LaFollette-Black, SAC Member
Mr. Mike Pearce, SAC Member
Ms. Lisa Smith, SAC Member
Ms. Patricia Smith RN, SAC Member
Ms. Marti Harrigan, SAC Member
Ms. Beth Wilson, SAC Member

Mayor Patrick Pizzella
Mr. Kevin Fitzpatrick, Council Member
Mr. Doug Wilderson, Village Manager

1. Call to Order & Opening Remarks

Mayor Pizzella called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM. A round of introductions and brief remarks followed. The mayor reiterated that the goal of the Senior Advisory Committee (SAC) is to help the VOP, well known to be a safe and supportive municipality, to become an even more age friendly community. Mr. Fitzpatrick then greeted the many members of the community in the audience. A flip chart was placed at the entrance to Assembly Hall and attendees were encouraged to jot down their thoughts as to what "An Age Friendly Community Mean to Them". Mr. Fitzpatrick also distributed two books recommended by our Working Group, Dr. Grover and Ms. LaFollette-Black. These are: *This Is Where You Belong: Finding Home Wherever You Are* and the *New Rules of Aging Well*. These books will be discussed by the full committee and the working groups.

2. Working Group Organizational Model

It was determined, at the SAC's first meeting, that the Committee's initial objective would be to develop a clearer understanding of the current state of ageing in Pinehurst. To help organize and focus on this work, several potential areas of concentration were discussed. The Senior Advisory Committee identified four initial focus areas:

- Demographics
- Healthy Aging
- Communications
- Safety and Security

These focus areas are intended to help guide the Committee's early research, discussions, and future recommendations to the Village Council.

Committee members were asked to volunteer to serve on two of the four Working Group and a Chair for each Working Group was appointed.

Demographics Working Group:

Chair – Suzanne LaFollette-Black Mike Pearce

Members – Micheal Pearce, Patricia Smith, Lisa Smith

Communications Working Group:

Chair – Marti Harrigan

Members – Patricia Smith, Carolyn Horton, Kathy Beeman, Lisa Smith

Healthy Aging Working Group:

Chair – Bill Grover

Members – Marti Harrigan, Beth Walker, and Suzanne LaFollette-Black

Safety and Security Working Group:

Chair – Beth Walker

Members – Bill Grover, Kathy Beeman, Carolyn Horton

The Working Group Chairs have been coordinating meeting with their Working Groups and good progress is already being made.

3. Working Group Chairs Progress Reports

Demographics Working Group:

Chair – Suzanne LaFollette-Black Mike Pearce

Members – Micheal Pearce, Patricia Smith, Lisa Smith

Ms. LaFollette-Black reported that the demographics' working group has been collecting data from publicly accessible resources to understand the profile of our senior community in Pinehurst. We are also benchmarking that demographic profile against municipalities throughout North Carolina. Suzanne shared data that the AARP has been collecting about Pinehurst and its third-party evaluation of Pinehurst as a rather successful age friendly community.

The working group's next task will be to identify and implement survey instruments that can help us to better understand the needs and desires of Pinehurst seniors. We are currently reviewing some survey resources from AARP. We think it would be valuable to be able to compare our results using a psychometrically validated instrument that would allow us to compare ourselves against comparable municipalities throughout the US.

Mayor Pizzella commented on the growing issue of social isolation and referenced the book, *Bowling Alone* by Robert D. Putnam. In it the author argues that Americans have become increasingly disconnected from civic, social, religious, and community organizations, leading to a decline in what he calls "social capital", the networks of relationships and trust that strengthen society. Putnam contends

that this erosion of community engagement has weakened civic life, reduced social cohesion, and diminished the collective ability of citizens to address common challenges. which documents the erosion of formal and informal community organizations.

Communications Working Group:

Chair – Marti Harrigan

Members – Patricia Smith, Carolyn Horton, Kathy Beeman, Lisa Smith

Ms. Harrigan reported that the working group has been given considerable attention to understanding the many communications channels that are available to us via the village of Pinehurst. The working group is also cognizant that there are many different learning styles within our senior community. These range from individuals who prefer print media to individuals who prefer verbal communications from trusted resources. Communications through the faith-based community, online information or the use of social media newspapers etcetera.

All these different media channels will need to be considered and utilized as we go forward. The working group has also been considering how best to establish a bidirectional exchange of information between the senior residents of our municipality and the working group.

One important step in that direction will be a joint meeting of the Pinehurst neighborhood advisory committee and the senior advisory committee to be held in Assembly Hall on June 15th at 3pm. We believe this could be one of the best channels for bidirectional communication available to us. Ms. Harrigan has also been working on an internal database and internal communications system that would allow all the members of the committee to be up to date as to the activities and the thinking of each of the working groups.

Safety and Security Working Group:

Chair – Beth Walker

Members – Bill Grover, Kathy Beeman, Carolyn Horton

Ms. Walker Reported that the safety and security working group has been discussing physical and home safety and security as well as online fraud. The working group discussed home falls, and the data that we have available as to their frequency and location.

The working group concluded that the most beneficial and impactful program would be an initiative aimed at online fraud risk reduction. It has been reported that there were over \$4 million in online fraud losses in calendar year 2025. Perhaps there is no issue of crime in Pinehurst that is as prevalent and vexing as online scams. The working group has been collecting information from organizations such as AARP, First Bank and others that might form a template for programs that we could conduct throughout the community. Perhaps there's even a train- the -trainer model similar to Doctor or Sullivan's Brain Change ambassadors.

To make sure that we're operating in true partnership with the Police Department members of the working group will be meeting with chief Webb tomorrow to discuss the issue of online fraud and abuse and to brainstorm opportunities where maybe we may help in risk reduction efforts.

Healthy Aging Working Group:

Chair – Bill Grover

Members – Marti Harrigan, Beth Walker, and Suzanne LaFollette-Black

Dr. Grover reiterated that the goal of this Working Group is to advocate for a preventative medical approach to healthy aging, with dissemination to the Pinehurst community of the choices available offered by scientifically proven studies in the areas of nutrition, exercise, socialization, avoidance of toxins, etc.

The necessary first step is to understand the current state of our senior community's health. A sound starting point is to examine all the existing sources of data including EMS, Fire Rescue, Demographic and ER Data.

EMS Data

Councilman Fitzpatrick gave an overview of county EMS data for 2025. This includes EMS emergency responses to homes of seniors in the 28374-area code. The data includes 840 calls, broken down by incident type as follows:

Top 5 Call Types:

- Breathing Problems — 184 calls
- Falls — 137 calls
- Sick Person — 82 calls (whatever that means!)
- Chest Pain — 75 calls
- Cardiac/Respiratory Arrest — 43 calls

It was noted that the rate of cardiac arrest in 28374 is 4 – 4x higher than the average municipality. This can be partially explained by the mean age of our residents, but it also points out the need for civic.

We will be meeting with Chief Clouston to discuss EMS and Fire Department call data in 28374. We're especially interested in residents who may be experiencing multiple falls and calls for lifts. Chief Clouston is compiling the location of all the AEDs in the village and also Geo mapping their locations. We think that the SAC can be very useful in helping drive awareness of these devices and also to encourage basic life support training within the community.

4. A Presentation from Dr. Karen Sullivan

Doctor Karen Sullivan is a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist and founder of Pinehurst Neuropsychology in Pinehurst, North Carolina. She specializes in brain health, memory disorders, dementia care, and neuropsychological assessment, and previously served on the faculty of the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. Dr. Sullivan is widely recognized for her leadership in advancing dementia-inclusive communities through initiatives such as the Engaged Brains Project and her work promoting brain health education throughout Moore County.

Dr. Sullivan shared with us the work she and her 60 Ambassadors are doing to keep individuals with brain change connected to the community. She also shared with us her vision of a brain change sanctuary allowing care partners a respite and a safe place to remain actively engaged. She spoke about the synergy she sees with her work and the work of the SAC. Her presentation was, as always, inspirational as well as a call to action.

5. Closing Remarks

The committee solicited comments from attendees and the audience, and the valuable and lively discussion ensued with many offers of help and alliance. With the word of congratulations on a very productive meeting mayor Patrick pizzella gaveled the meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Next Meeting: Monday July 6th 3pm Village Hall

Respectfully submitted, Councilmember Kevin Fitzpatrick