

COMMISSION ON AGING

LONG-TERM PLANNING

MINUTES

June 2, 2014

Present: Commission members Helen de Keijzer, Nina Daniel, Laura Smits, Peggy Anderson, Don Gumaer, Bruce Lorentzen, Margarita Shapiro. Senior Center Director Wendy Petty and Program Coordinator Pam Wilson; Social Services Director Charlene Chiang Hillman; SWCAA liaison Meta Schroeder; Woody Bliss.

Meeting convened 9:25 a.m.

May Minutes: Approved by consensus.

Social Services: Charlene noted the need for more hours or part-time help for people aging in place and needing assistance. Discussion ensued about how this situation is addressed in other towns. Charlene stated that at this time there are approximately 50 people in this category. Charlene is looking for some assistance, perhaps a volunteer to help her enroll people for the fall fuel assistance programs. This person must be familiar with privacy/ethical issues since part of assisting those eligible involves individual's financial information.

Tax Abatement/Relief Programs: Woody suggested that we have a group representing the Commission look into the details of the program including the income limits which may need to be updated. Nina and Meta offered to be a part of this effort.

Transportation: Gordon stated that by law he is required to have two physicals within the year since he is over the age of 70 to maintain his commercial driver's license. There are only a few doctors approved by the state to perform the physicals and some of them do not take health insurance. Bruce has contacted Joe LaMetta in Public Works about the van's lifespan, who stated that the van has approximately another year left before it needs to be replaced. Bruce would like to form a group that includes some seniors to review the specs for a new bus and come up with a report before September's Commission meeting.

Senior Center Facilities Report: Wendy stated that Gayle already has someone working on all of the details related to the renovation of the new additional space in South House. Wendy is working with the school's food service to have a schedule for lunches. Helen asked if there was interest in creating a fitness room. Margarita suggested that perhaps we need a sub-committee to explore all the possibilities including the use of a certified fitness instructor. Discussion ensued. It was determined that while this was a good idea—it is a bit ambitious at this time. Nina offered to work with Margarita on this to tease out details. Meta suggested some other services that may be of interest to seniors including having a barber/stylist available. There is a desire for a game room/hangout room. Pam suggested adding a few kitchen appliances and stated that there is a demand for a full working kitchen to hold cooking classes etc. There was also a discussion of the need for a ramp vs. a lift. There is also a desire for air conditioning in the south facing rooms.

This is difficult due to the existing room structure, possibility of wall units. Bruce will work with Wendy on finding an energy-efficient solution.

Interior Design Needs: The additional rooms will need to be painted.

Equipment Needs: There is a desire for a color copier/printer for the office. There may also be a need to duplicate some equipment in the additional rooms (such as a coffee maker). Woody suggested that once details have been ironed out to compile a list of items that are needed.

Furniture: Wendy wants to have a room where tables can be left set-up. Margarita has a person who might volunteer to help with interior/set-up design. Pam suggested that we take a walk-through the entire space at our next meeting to get a better picture of the space.

Staffing: We have said as a board that if we acquired the additional space it would require additional staff/or hours for existing staff. There was a continued discussion about staffing levels based on current and future use.

Funding: There are a number of funding sources available to the Commission including the Friends and the Elderly Assistance Fund, as well as grants, sponsorships, and fund-raising ventures such as the car show and gift show. Helen stated that there is still \$150,000 available to us in the Elderly Assistance Fund.

Activity and Programming Review: Helen and Wendy are trying to create an annual calendar of activities. Pam mentioned that we might want to add an additional trip next year. Pam and Wendy are working on the volunteer program to gain additional coverage on trips etc. that will include training.

Commission Special Projects: Helen has a contact who specializes in helping rural towns address alternate housing options for seniors. Bruce and Margarita suggested that for a discussion about housing we need to bring in all of the other stakeholders, P&Z etc., so everyone in town can be on board. Helen suggested that we could have a program about this subject, perhaps in conjunction with the League of Women Voters.

The new name for the Weston Senior Center will be “The Hub”.

Center Website Presence: Wendy mentioned that either she or Pam have to be the contact for the website manager to streamline communications. There are approximately 120 seniors on the email lists. Charlene pointed out that as the younger people age more info can be distributed via the internet.

Center Newsletter: Helen asked if there are ways to expand the newsletter, and/or using color on the cover.

Grand Opening of the Center: Nina asked if there was a plan for a Grand Opening in October of the newly renovated space. Nina suggested that we put an insert in the Weston Forum publicizing the event. Pam asked if we should also do an insert for the Classic Car Show in September. Wendy will contact Dave Pross at the Forum for details about cost and timing.

Center Visits: Helen asked if there was any interest in taking tours of other centers. Nina suggested we get two people to do this and report back to the other members for the September or October meeting. Don, Bruce and Nina volunteered.

Other Business: Bruce asked what the center will do in the future when the school population declines further.

Meeting adjourned at 11:20, but will be continued on July 2nd at 9:15. There will also be a meeting on August 4th at 9:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Smits