



MEETING MINUTES
Commission on Aging
Thursday, May 4, 2017 at 7:00pm
Levy Center, 300 Dodge Avenue

Members Present: Rick Gergerian, Jane Wickenkamp, Dorothy Strong, Dave Sutor, Jessie Macdonald, Donna Feldman, Alan Factor, Marcia Achenbach, Sue Canter, Bonnie Lockhart, Louise Love

Members Absent: William Green, Beverly Shearer, Barbara Roberts, Catherine O'Brien

Staff Present: Audrey Thompson, Regional Ombudsman/Program Manager; Callie Sadler, Ombudsman Assistant

Guests: Tom Giller – North Shore Senior Center; William Kobin, Daily Northwestern;

Presiding Member: Mary Signatur, Chair

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Signatur called the meeting to order at 7:08pm.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES of April 6, 2017

There were no corrections to the minutes from April made during the meeting. A motion to approve minutes was seconded. One correction was made after the meeting by Mrs. Lockhart verifying her attendance at the April meeting. Mrs. Lockhart was incorrectly noted as absent for the April meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Long-Term Care Committee (LTCC)

Ms. Macdonald reviewed the topics discussed during the LTCC's most recent meeting on April 10, 2017.

1. The Committee discussed the upcoming Fall Presentation, including the selected topic: "Boost Your Brain and Memory." The presentation on September 28th will kick off a six-week series for attendees to learn more about bolstering cognitive skills through a variety of means, such as nutrition, exercise, and emotional health.

RELEVANT COMMITTEE REPORTS (AGE FRIENDLY EVANSTON)

1. Mr. Factor discussed his attendance at the April 11th meeting regarding affordable housing options in Evanston. Attendees agreed that a market feasibility study is needed; Ms. Margaret Gergen plans to speak with an attorney in order to get linked with a developer to facilitate the study.

2. Mr. Factor explored the benefits of members attending groups and meetings to remind the City of their Age-Friendly commitments.
3. There was general discussion about a building at Dempster and Pitner, and whether it would be used for affordable housing. Mrs. Audrey Thompson explained the City's Affordable Housing fund, estimated at \$1.8 million, and hopes for using some of these funds for Bridge Housing. Mrs. Thompson also described additional programs and plans for funds that could be used to pay off back taxes for individuals at risk of losing their homes, or to cover the cost of property rehab services.
4. Mr. Factor previously mentioned the property at 831 Emerson and its deposit of \$2.4 million into the Affordable Housing Fund. However, the building itself has no rentals allocated to low-income individuals. Mr. Factor discussed how ongoing construction of houses and apartment buildings impacts commercial opportunities. For example, while the Evanston population densifies with these new buildings, the City struggles to keep up with parking accommodations for shoppers and other residents in the area.
5. The Intergenerational Committee is pairing with Evanston High School students at the Space 900 Gallery. Attendees were encouraged to attend the Linking Generations Exhibition and Reception on May 18th from 7:00pm to 8:00pm at 1042 Wesley Ave.

CHAIR REPORT

1. Chair Signatur reviewed the film shown during the Aging Well Film Festival on May 3rd, entitled "A New Color: The Art of Being Edythe Boone," describing it as an "exemplification of Aging Well." She encouraged those who had not seen it to check it out, literally, as it was donated to the library after the showing.
2. There is a general consensus that the Dementia Awareness Committee should be a part of the Age Friendly Initiative, though no other updates were forthcoming at this time.
3. Members were encouraged to enjoy the updated calendar provided to attendees.
4. The LTCC meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 10th at 9:30am; the next COA meeting will be on June 1st.

STAFF REPORT

LTC Ombudsman, Audrey Thompson, discussed the following highlights:

1. The Aging Well Conference will be held on Friday, May 5th at the Levy Center. There are 252 registered participants, and for the first time, two buses will be available to facilitate transportation.
 - a. Although Robyn Gabel was initially slated to participate, she will be unable to make it. Instead, Jonathan Lavin, CEO for Age Options, will be presenting to attendees.
2. Mrs. Thompson explained the pending strike of front-line staff (CNAs, dietary staff, etc.) at several local nursing homes, and how it was ultimately averted. She further described the role of the Ombudsmen if the strike had occurred, including increasing their presence in the affected facilities to check in on residents and identify to the Illinois Department of Public Health any areas for concern. Reasons behind the strike were discussed, including desire for improved pay, benefits, and staffing levels.

3. Rebuilding Together efforts continue for several more projects in the community. The first day of work occurred on April 29th, with additional Saturday projects added on due to the extensive assistance needed.
4. Attendees were provided with information on the TransAssist 4 Evanston (T4E) pilot programs, and reminded that Mrs. Thompson hopes to lobby to make one or both programs permanent if the pilot program is successful.
5. Although referenced earlier in the meeting, Mrs. Thompson explained in greater detail the Bridge Housing program. This grant would allow the City to choose two to three older adults each year who are waiting for placement in subsidized housing. For these individuals, the City would pay a portion of a market-rate apartment's rent in select buildings (where they might not otherwise have an opportunity to live due to restrictive income guidelines that often require residents provide proof of income three times higher than the rent). Residents would therefore live in Bridge housing until their names come up on the subsidized housing lists. Mrs. Thompson also hopes to someday establish shared housing in some buildings; she hopes that the new employee at Open Communities might be receptive to this idea in the future.
6. Senior Services Intern Irene Gonzalez will be graduating on May 8th, but will continue to provide additional support and assistance to the long-term care Ombudsman program. Attendees were treated to cupcakes after the meeting, while Ms. Gonzalez detailed her plans for the future.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

No unfinished business this month.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Ms. Lockhart informed attendees of outgoing Alderman Delores Holmes' room dedication, and reminded members of all the hard work Alderman Holmes put in during her tenure.

COMMUNICATIONS

No communications this month.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was moved and seconded to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved at 8:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Callie Sadler, Ombudsman Assistant