



MEETING MINUTES

Commission on Aging

Thursday, December 7, 2017 at ~7pm

Levy Center, 300 Dodge Avenue

Members Present: Alan Factor, Jessie Macdonald, Marcia Achenbach, Sue Canter, Louise Love, Mike Iverson, Dave Sutor, William Green, Jane Wickenkamp, Catherine O'Brien, Tom Giller, Donna Feldman, Dorothy Strong

Members Absent: Bonnie Lockhart, Rick Gergerian

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

Guests: Doreen Price

Presiding Member: Mary Signatur, Chair

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Chair Signatur called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES of November 2, 2017

There were minor corrections to the minutes from November. The motion to approve minutes as corrected was seconded.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Long-Term Care Committee (LTCC)

The Long-Term Care Committee met on November 2nd, 2017, and discussed the following:

1. Members discussed the Fall Presentation held on October 5th, 2017 as well as feedback from the evaluations.
2. Ms. Louise Love will be the next LTCC Chair starting in January 2018.

RELEVANT COMMITTEE REPORTS

Age-Friendly Evanston

1. The Committee is developing a checklist for businesses to use to determine how age-friendly they already are and learn how to improve their operations to become more accessible to older adults. Businesses can work toward being included in a business guide that will direct interested shoppers to which businesses in the community meet age-friendly criteria.

- a. The checklist would take into account physical accessibility, customer service, places to rest, accessible restrooms, affordability, safety, amenities, etc.
- b. Volunteers will be needed to serve as “secret shoppers” to visit various businesses and assess their age friendliness. Volunteers will receive training on how to use the checklist and perform the assessments.
- c. It was noted that the Dementia-Friendly Committee’s upcoming focus groups (discussed below) will also address suggestions for how businesses can help build Dementia-Friendly communities.
 - i. Mr. Tom Giller suggested reaching out to larger companies or corporations such as McDonald’s to consult with their safety experts and occupational therapists who ensure each of their sites are accessible.
 - ii. Ms. Sue Canter noted that several cities (such as London and New York City) have developed guidelines to assist other communities in adopting and achieving Age-Friendly standards, such as training staff to provide older adult-friendly levels of service, having places to sit or rest readily available, etc.
- a. The next Age-Friendly meeting will be held on December 14th, 2017.
 - iii. Mr. Patrick Hughes from Inclusion Solutions has been asked to attend to review the checklist as it currently stands and provide feedback for possible next steps.

Dementia-Friendly Committee

1. The Dementia-Friendly Committee plans to host its pilot focus group at The Mather in February 2018 to discuss what supports family members and caretakers for individuals with dementia and memory loss are currently using, or feel would be beneficial in the future.
2. Attendees received a copy of the PowerPoint presentation used during the Committee’s last meeting entitled, “Alzheimer’s and Related Dementias.”
3. The Committee plans to hold at least one focus group for family/caregivers, and another for the individuals in early stages of memory loss.
4. The next meeting is scheduled for December 15th, 2017 to review the questions for the focus groups.
 - a. The next steps will include crafting a flyer, recruiting Northwestern students to help, and gaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the use of audio recording, informed consent forms, etc.

CHAIR REPORT

1. All participating Commission members were thanked for their generous gifts for the Grandparents Raising Grandkids group. The gifts are intended to ensure all parties are shown appreciation; the children receive their gifts from a variety of other sources but the Commission traditionally provides the gifts for the Grandparents.
 - a. Gifts will be wrapped on Friday, December 15th by Commission volunteers. The group will enjoy their annual holiday party the following day at the Levy Center.

- b. Additional volunteers will be needed to provide additional support during the holiday party.

STAFF REPORT

LTC Ombudsman, Mrs. Audrey Thompson, discussed the following:

1. Meals At Home is having a fundraiser on Friday, December 8th at Talbots. The store will contribute 10% of the pretax sales price to Meals At Home.
2. Since the last Commission meeting, two more long-term care facilities in Evanston completed their annual IDPH surveys.
 - a. Ombudsmen had the opportunity to speak with IDPH surveyors at Alden Estates.
 - b. Another facility, Presbyterian Homes/Westminster Place received 11 tags, which is higher than what the facility typically receives.
 - c. Mrs. Thompson noted that the IDPH survey process has changed to ensure surveyors are spending more time on each floor interacting with residents.
 - d. The Ombudsman office now receives information on all facility-initiated discharges, including the Involuntary Discharge/Transfers that were previously received. The office also now has an email address that is intended to provide facilities a dedicated channel for providing this information.
3. Mrs. Thompson provided more information on the upcoming changes to the City's taxicab program. Presently, fewer than 40 individuals are using 45% of the City's transportation budget due at least in part to fraud or misuse.
 - a. The Human Services Committee presented an update regarding transportation on December 4th, 2017.
 - b. With the current transportation program, the taxicab ordinance removed the City's authority to license taxicab companies, which in turn limited the City's ability to provide appropriate recourse in the face of cab driver complaints. With the new proposed program, taxicabs will essentially be in greater competition with other transportation providers such as Uber or Lyft, which will lessen their monopoly in the program and hopefully improve willingness to cooperate with program enrollees.
 - c. With the proposed program, there will no longer be a \$4 coupon subsidized by the City. Instead, the City will match 50% of the rider's purchase (up to \$150 total value) and riders will pay the full fare of whatever option they use, to any location in Illinois.
 - i. For example, if a rider puts the full \$75 on their fare card, the City will contribute \$75 as well. The rider can then use Uber, Lyft, taxis, or even Amtrak/Metra using the fare card; however, they will be responsible for paying the full fare each time. Once that \$150 is spent, they must wait until the next month to put more money on the card.
 - d. Tipping is not necessarily required for Uber/Lyft, but can be deducted from the fare card directly. With the current coupon program, tips are recommended but must be given in cash.

- e. A local bank will be providing assistance educating the community on using debit cards (for those who are unfamiliar) and budgeting their fare card funds to ensure they are used effectively.
 - f. The proposed program aims to diversify riders' transportation options rather than limiting rides to taxicabs in four designated regions. In the new program, riders will be able to travel anywhere in Illinois provided they have the funds available on their card.
 - i. A potential down-side of the new program is that riders need to check their balance by calling 311; partial payments are not allowed. For example, if a user has \$5 left on their fare card and the ride comes to \$7, they will not be able to pay \$5 on the card and the rest in cash.
 - 1. Additionally, groups that currently purchase coupons in bulk would be unable to do so. It has been proposed that one group be issued multiple cards with the same group name on each one.
 - ii. The fare cards cannot be used for anything other than transportation.
 - iii. Drivers would not be able to tell that the rider was using a subsidized program, and would therefore be unable to discriminate against program users. This has been an issue with some drivers under the current coupon program.
 - iv. Complaints could be handled through other avenues, rather than by contacting the City (depending on what form of transportation was used). For example, Uber/Lyft could be contacted directly with issues regarding a ride, and drivers can be rated directly by the rider.
 - v. The program would involve the same eligibility requirements (age, income, residency, disability) as the current program.
 - vi. Lost/stolen cards can be deactivated right away, with replacement cards being sent out within three to five days.
 - g. The City is working toward developing a user guide and FAQ for the new program, once approved.
 - h. In January 2018, individuals who purchased coupons in 2017 will receive a letter with more information about the program changes; they will be encouraged to exchange their coupons for the value to be transferred onto the new fare card (up to \$75). The following month, all other Evanston Benefit Card recipients will receive the same information. Coupons will not be exchanged or accepted after the end of February 2018.
4. Approximately twelve Rebuilding Together applications have been completed as of this date; Committee members are encouraged to contact Mrs. Thompson with any potential referrals.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- 1. The Boost Your Brain and Memory program has wrapped up for the year; overall, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive!

- a. Jacob Blake Manor's series will be rescheduled for 2018; Perlman and Walchirk will both host the series starting in January 2018.
- b. Once these three sites have concluded, the City will consider hosting another Levy Center series.
2. Commission members were reminded to send a brief biographical sketch to Chair Signatur. They will be used internally to help new members get to know established members and vice versa.
3. There were no updates on community events attended by Commission members. Attendees were reminded to remain alert for an update on the proposed January 2018 meeting regarding Affordable Housing, as the date has not yet been established.
4. After some discussion, the City Council decided to make the Levy Center Recreation Manager position full-time; however, the most recent Manager left the position in November. Once the City's budget is formally approved, the position will be open for applications. Karen Hawk will be serving as the acting manager until a new manager is hired.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Attendees opted to forego the Commission's January 2018 meeting.
2. The Commission is seeking two to three new members in the upcoming year. Mr. Giller, long-time attendee of COA meetings as a Guest, has formally joined the Commission as a full member. The Commission looks forward to further diversifying its ranks.
3. The Levy Center will be closed the week of December 18th.
4. Members discussed potential affordable housing options and various upcoming construction projects.
 - a. Mrs. Thompson mentioned the brochure on shared housing that was emailed to Commission members. Attendees agreed to allow the executive director of the organization to present at a COA meeting in the future to learn more.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Mrs. Canter mentioned an Evanston RoundTable article regarding an intergenerational theater program at the Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center. Mrs. Thompson was honored with the Community Service Award at a recent NAACP banquet.
2. The next COA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 1st, 2018, while the next LTCC meeting will be on Wednesday, January 10th, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was moved and seconded to adjourn. A voice vote was taken and the motion was approved at 8:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Callie Sadler, Ombudsman Assistant