MEETING MINUTES
Commission on Aging
Thursday, March 5, 2020 at ~4pm
Levy Senior Center, 300 Dodge Avenue

Members Present: Mary Signatur, Litrea Hunter, Jeanie Ramsey, Tom Giller, Bonnie Lockhart, Dave Sutor, and Frank Fennell

Members Absent: Mark Payares, Adrienne Allen, Rick Gergerian, Catherine O’Brien, and Lonnie Wilson

Staff Present: Audrey Thompson, Community Services Manager; Callie Sadler, Senior Services Advocate

Guests: June Price, Regional Ombudsman

Presiding Member: Alan Factor, Chair

DECLARATION OF QUORUM
Chair Factor called the meeting to order at 4:19pm once quorum was achieved.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES of February 6, 2020
The COA minutes from February 6th, 2020 were approved as written.

COMMITTEE REPORTS
Long-Term Care Committee (LTCC)
1. LTCC Chair Litrea Hunter reported that the Committee discussed potential topics for the Fall Presentation during last month’s meeting. The date for this year’s event has not yet been secured, but members have expressed an interest in exploring the topic of considerations for medical care.
2. Ms. Hunter also mentioned that Committee members attended the first long-term care facility site visit of the year on Thursday, February 27th at Symphony.
   a. Commission members who also attended the site visit provided feedback on the tour, noting that it was nice to have an opportunity to meet the new Administrator.
b. Attendees reported that there were not many residents in evidence during
the tour, as many doors were closed and participants were told that it was
because the rooms were empty and being used for storage; however, the
number of “empty” rooms did not seem to match with the census number
previously cited by staff.
c. Site visit attendees discussed the increase in complaints regarding care
issues at Symphony over the years and ongoing issues with staffing. The
latter issue was made glaringly obvious when two floor staffers were
observed making derogatory comments about their employment while
members were taking a tour of the facility. The issue was reportedly
addressed and resolved quickly and appropriately by the Administrator.

**Dementia-Friendly Evanston Initiative (DFEI)**

1. Ms. Ramsey was unable to attend the last Dementia-Friendly meeting, but she
received word from those who attended that “Initiative” has been added to
Dementia-Friendly’s name in order to better fit with the other off-shoots of the
Age-Friendly Task Force such as the Age-Friendly Business Initiative.
2. Ms. Thompson reminded Commission members of the upcoming DFEI event
from 1-3pm on Thursday, March 12th at the Evanston Public Library. The event
will feature the screening of a film entitled, “Too Soon to Forget” and will include
a discussion on the film and training on becoming a Dementia Friend
immediately after the film. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.
3. Ms. Ramsey received an invitation from the Family Action Network for DFEI to
serve as a sponsor for one of their upcoming events in April.
4. At the February meeting, attendees discussed the drafts of the DFEI application
for membership as well as the DFEI rules. Revisions were proposed and another
draft crafted in response; the next draft will be sent to members and hopefully
approved at the next meeting.

**Affordable Housing (AH)**

1. Chair Factor reminded attendees of difficulties he had getting in touch with the
organization that manages the waitlist for affordable units in the Evanston area
(Community Partners for Affordable Housing, or CPAH); the same organization
held a community meeting on February 18th and when Mr. Factor attended, it
was noted that he had actually been contacting the cell phone of a CPAH
employee.
   a. Chair Factor noted that he was impressed by CPAH’s Director, who
      provided additional details on the senior buildings that are in the works in
      Evanston.
2. Chair Factor informed Commission members of the American Society on Aging’s
(ASA) roundtable presentation scheduled for April 3rd, which will focus on
housing for older adults and feature Ms. Thompson as one of the speakers.
CHAIR REPORT
Chair Report integrated into report on Affordable Housing.

VICE CHAIR REPORT
No Vice Chair report this month.

STAFF REPORT
Community Services Manager Ms. Thompson provided the following information:

1. Ms. Thompson advised Commission members that she recently attended a meeting with Connection for the Homeless personnel to discuss challenges finding and accessing services for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in Evanston.
   a. After expressing some consternation with past efforts to get in touch with Connections staff to coordinate services, an offer was extended to have Senior Services and Youth and Young Adult staff tour Connections’ transitional housing setting(s) and discuss how to improve communication between the City’s departments and Connections.
2. The new Robert Crown Community Center has been open for some time; however, as of Monday it is also serving as the site of a drop-in center for individuals under the age of 21 who wish to access computers and telephones, take a shower, receive a hearty snack, and gain access to additional services and resources.
   a. Additional precautions have been taken and training provided to staff at Robert Crown in order to ensure safety of individuals using the drop-in center. This includes providing shower access in a private area, and creating documents that can be turned in to front desk staff to indicate the need for help without having to delve into their personal situation.
   b. Participants will be able to collect a hygiene kit and snacks by accessing a locker when they check in at the front desk.
   c. The resource packet each drop-in client receives will contain information on how to find additional resources and supports in the community, including the phone number to a 24/7 hotline operated by Youth & Opportunity United (Y.O.U.).
3. As mentioned in last month’s Commission meeting, Ms. Thompson secured a grant from AgeOptions to integrate information on the 2020 Census into presentations on senior services and the Ombudsman program at designated sites throughout the City.
   a. Presentations began this week with the first event taking place at Over the Rainbow.
   b. Evanston Township High School students will assist residents in completing the Census online in April.
4. Despite nationwide (and local) reports of incidents of the COVID19 virus, there have been no reported cases of the respiratory illness in Evanston. Ms. Thompson received additional guidance on illness prevention from the Health and Human Services department earlier today, and will forward the details to each of the long-term care communities in the City. Precautions are basically the same as they would be for the cold and flu outbreaks.

5. Ms. Sadler provided an update on activities by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) in Evanston’s long-term care facilities since the last meeting.
   a. Alden Estates received one tag as part of their Life Safety Code survey in January and three related to Emergency Preparedness.
   b. The Grove had two tags deleted from their annual health survey, from the original four. However, they also received 15 Life Safety Code tags and two related to Emergency Prep. An additional IDPH visit at the end of January was in response to a complaint and facility-reported incident; no deficiencies were identified so no additional details were provided as to the nature of the complaints.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
1. Commission members were encouraged to register for the Access Evanston tour on March 20th; Ms. Sadler sent members a link to the registration page last week.
   a. Two additional Access Evanston tours are scheduled for 2020, including one two-hour event during the Aging Well Conference on May 1st.

NEW BUSINESS
1. The City’s new Regional Ombudsman, Ms. June Price, started on Monday, March 2nd. She introduced herself to the Commission and provided information on her background. Commission members welcomed her to the City and the Commission, and are looking forward to working with her.

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 4:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Callie Sadler, Senior Services Advocate