

MANSFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING

MINUTES OF MARCH 11, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am

PRESENT: Will Bigl (2021), Laurie McMorrow (2020), Don Nolan (2020), John Riesen (2021), Nancy Trawick-Smith (2020), Martina Wharton (2020), Dorothea Mercier (2020)

ABSENT: Bev Korba (2021), Judy Bigl (Jensen's), Diane Carson (Juniper Hill Village)

SENIOR CENTER LIASON MEMBERS PRESENT: Pat Schneider, Director of Human Services, Sarah Taylor, Senior Center Supervisor, Marie Hakmiller, (MSCA)

COMMUNITY LIASON MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adamcik, (Wright's Way), Fran Chesko (Glen Ridge)

GUEST: Joanne Sousa, Lida S. Bilokur

February 11, 2019 minutes accepted as written.

CORRESPONDENCE: None at this time.

Guest Speaker:

Derrick Kennedy, Mansfield Town Manager, was the guest speaker today. He stated that he is concentrating on the town budget. There are challenges to the gross proposed budget. He is faced with decreases in State aid for education, decreases in the State's contribution to the teacher's retirement system. Mansfield is especially affected because more of our teachers are tenured, thereby commanding higher salaries. Derrick stated that the town budget is in better shape now than it was at this time last year. Good news; the town's bond rating has gone up. Derrick will addressing the Town Council tonight to update them on where the budget stands. Moving forward he would like for the town to be able to fund what needs to be funded.

The sewer project at Four Corners is going in as scheduled. As for capitol improvements; there are a dozen development request for that area. If these are approved the next budget proposal should include assessments on them. This will garner new tax revenues that can be used towards capitol projects.

Someone asked if Masonic Care was still interested in developing in Mansfield. Derrick answered that they still own property here and are still interested in developing it.

It was asked if anyone has shown an interest in developing different types of senior housing. Derrick stated that there has been some interest however, 60% - 70% of the calls were about developing student housing.

Derrick spoke about future projects. This year, he and the Town Council would like to establish a town wide building facilities committee. This would be a permanent committee not an ad hoc one. Will stated that the Commission would like that committee to not just upgrade existing reports, that include such things as making renovations to the Senior Center, but would consider looking into building a new Senior Center.

Other projects discussed were a water harvest project, the need for consolidating the schools, site selection for the new school, and the building of new housing across the street from the senior center.

PAT SCHNEIDER'S REPORT:

- The Senior Center is fully staffed now. The clerical hours have been filled.
- Pat said that there is a need for an Assistant Program Coordinator.
- Pat is looking at the building to determine what areas should be rehabbed next.
- The accreditation process is going forward now that the center is fully staffed.
- In the future, Pat wants to hire a strategic planning person who will assess the needs of the senior center and determine how services respond to those needs.
- Pat is already thinking about a 5-10 year plan of action.

SARAH TAYLOR'S REPORT:

- Sarah passed out the February Outcome Based Measure Results. This month's assessment addressed social and recreational programs. Twenty eight people participated in the survey.
- Sarah is moving ahead with her part of the accreditation process. She will be assisted by Joan the newly hired outreach coordinator. Joan will be at the center on Tuesday, Friday and 1/2 day on Wednesday.
- Sarah is looking at regional resources for the seniors of Mansfield.
- Sarah is also looking forward to serving the Saint Patrick's Day dinner. She is also excited about the upcoming presentation of the play "To Whom I May Concern".
- Other events planned are the Volunteer Appreciation luncheon on April 11th and the Intergenerational Dinner on April 23rd.

MARIE HAKMILLER'S REPORT:

- The pancake dinner was cancelled due to in-climate weather. It is now scheduled for the end of April.
- The Mansfield Senior Center Association is planning to participate in the town wide tag sale again this year.
- Applications for the Arts Grant are being distributed. Last year the association funded 5 projects.
- There are currently 143 members of the Senior Center Association.

COMMUNITY LIASON REPORTS:

Glen Ridge:

Fran Chesko reported that there is currently one home for sale.

Wright's Way:

John Adamcik had to leave the meeting without reporting.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION:

Lida S. Bilokur addressed the Commission with her concerns. She would like better advocacy for the seniors of Mansfield. She asked if there were statistics on how many seniors live in the Mansfield area and if anyone knew their needs. She was assured that the town has those numbers. Also, the social worker, various residential coordinators and even those who deliver Meals On Wheels look into and report issues. Lida also brought up the issue of transportation. If a senior in Mansfield does not drive they cannot attend meetings at the town hall or the senior center. There is virtually no transportation for seniors after the senior center closes for the day. It was suggested that perhaps senior center staff could go to the town council to request more driver hours.

Joanne Sousa stated that she is waiting to hear from the town about her appointment to the Commission on Aging.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00am. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2019 @ 9:30am at the Senior Center.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Martina Wharton