

MANSFIELD COMMISSION ON AGING

OCTOBER 21, 2019

Meeting called to order 9:30 AM

PRESENT: Laurie McMorrow (2020), Martina Wharton (2020), Bev Korba (2021), Don Nolan (2020), John Riesen (2021), Dorothea Mercier (2020) Will Bigl (2021)

ABSENT: Joanne Sousa, Nancy Trawick-Smith, Rosemary Beecher, Sarah Taylor

GUESTS: Kathy Ann Easley, Adult Services Social Worker—Lida S. Bilokur

STAFF LIAISON MEMBERS: Pat Schneider, Director of Human Services—Marie Hakmiller, MSCA

The minutes of September 9, 2019 were accepted as written.

PAT SCHNEIDER'S REPORT:

- September (Senior Center Month) was successful offering many interesting programs.
- New door counters will allow center to have a more accurate accounting of visitors.
- Business is booming in the newly opened Maple Road Café.
- Menu items are affordable and new volunteers are being trained.
- Café menu offerings are all homemade.
- Aprons, hats and gloves with logo are available for volunteers.
- Laundry room has been gutted and passed inspection.
- It will be the centers new Wellness Room offering more visibility to members.
- Budget review is still in progress.
- Dial-a-Ride services are not meeting the needs of seniors especially those needing rides to doctor appointments.

MARIE HAKMILLER'S REPORT:

- Post cards along with a descriptive explanation regarding need to assess the future of the MSCA were sent out to all members prior to the October 9, 2019 meeting. 40 members voted to disband and 30 voted to continue the association.
- On October 9, 2019 the MSCA voted to disband.
- Association will decide on the allocation of remaining funds at 12/11 meeting.
- Allocation focus will be on the transportation needs of the Senior Center (buying a new van)—Ongoing program needs of seniors in the community & a farewell gift of support to a Senior Group that submits a request for assistance in a specific area.

- Marie stated that the MSCA is not an arm of the Town of Mansfield and governs itself within its own policies & procedural guidelines.
- The MSCA's treasure's report is available for the public and is posted at the Senior Center.
- A celebration of the MSCA's accomplishments will be held on January 16, 2020.

Today is Marie's last meeting with the COA. We all wish to thank her for the work and dedication she has put into the success of the MSCA. She is a valuable resource for seniors and her expertise will be missed especially by COA members who have benefited from her informative input in every meeting. We know she will continue to be a part of other worthwhile causes. A special thank you from all the COA members.

COMMUNITY LIAISON REPORTS:

Will Bigl from **Jensen's** reported that all 31 home sites have been sold to Sun Community. Jensen's had a successful tag sale.

Fran Chesko will no longer represent Glen Ridge Cooperative.

Marina Wharton reported that Rosemary Beecher was unable to attend meeting as representative for **Juniper Hill** because she is recovering from recent surgery. Juniper Hill residents are not happy with the present services offered by WRTD. Bus times are not acceptable, and drivers do not stop long enough to allow riders enough time to embark.

Pat Schneider suggested that COA members make a formal request to the Mansfield Town Council to address the need for more transportation opportunities for seniors. An additional van is needed to help those seniors needing rides to doctor appointments. She encouraged COA members to e-mail, text or call council members to ask for their support. Laurie McMorrow and Martina Wharton will draft a letter to the council and present it at the next COA meeting for review.

JOHN RIESEN'S REPORT: "Charge" amendment will be updated to remove the MSCA and will be submitted to the Committee on Committee for approval.

- Survey Sub-Committee Members, John Riesen, Laurie McMorrow, Martina Wharton, Joanne Sousa and Dorothea Messier will meet on November 7, 2019 at 10 am in the Juniper Hill Library to further discuss survey ideas. Three (3) non-COA members will be invited to join the group.

A suggestion was made to update information in Sparks regarding COA. It should include the officers and the committee's goal to help all Mansfield seniors enhance their quality of life by

helping them access the services they need. Laurie McMorrow will be contacting Jordan at the Senior Center to update.

KATH ANN EASLEY'S REPORT:

Kathy has served the town of Mansfield for 10 years. She has been with the senior center for 6 years. Her job includes a large spectrum of clients. She does in office, home, nursing home and hospital visits. Kathy states some of the most troubling problems have been finding adequate transportation for her clients. Especially those seeking rides to doctor appointments. Helping those seniors who wish to "age in place" can be a problem when they are unwilling to accept help. They often need help with finances and express their frustration with the loss of independence and feeling vulnerable in situations they sometimes do not understand. She has been a valuable resource to the community and lauded by many who have found help for others through her efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am. Next meeting will be held on November 18, 2019.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Bev Korba, Secretary