

COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 1, 2020

Stoughton Room, Stoughton Area Senior Center

Present: Bob Barnett, Sid Boersma, Cathy Christman, Roz Gausman, Lou Havlik, Barb Manson, Bob McGeever, Faith Schuck, Jeanne Schwass-Long, David Sharpe, Susan Wollin

Staff Present: Cindy McGlynn, Hollee Camacho

Absent & Excused: Mary Onsager,

Call to order: L. Havlik called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

October Minutes: Moved by S. Boersma, R. Gausman seconded to approve; passed unanimously.

Comments by Director:

- Our staff continue to be very busy. With the last increase in COVID numbers we have split and staggered our in-office shifts so if any of us or our kitchen volunteers should get exposed we can still operate. It has been hard on staff not to be able to see each other, but we are getting better at communicating with email, phone and Zoom meetings. It has been especially difficult for our participants with mental health conditions.
 - In addition to usual problem-solving with clients, case managers are assisting with Medicare Part D enrollments, which take much longer to do over the phone.
 - We continue to deliver meals daily and offer Kim's Homemade Meals pick-ups two Thursdays a month. We are thankful for the nice coverage our Veterans Day Meal Pickup received from the Courier-Hub. S. Boersma emphasized that it was well-attended, provided great food and a great substitute for our usual in-person event. L. Havlik added her kudos and noted that much of the community happenings listed in the Hub lately are from the Stoughton Library and Senior Center.
 - We are increasing our online and call-in programming offerings each month. This month we are collecting holiday cards to send to isolated seniors to fill their mailboxes with cheer and to let them know someone is thinking of them.

Re-Opening Status: We have no plans for reopening soon. We are taking cues from Public Health. Right now they are recommending that people stay home as much as possible.

Annex Update:

- The proposal drafted by L. Havlik and reviewed by COA was given to the City Council Finance Committee last Tuesday. Cindy was disappointed with the concerns it raised. Instead of our intent to explain our need for additional space to provide the services desired and needed by our community seniors, the focus turned into us vs. tenants.
- Cindy stressed her job is to advocate for the Senior Center. The need for additional space especially to provide large-group classes has been evident for years and regaining the Annex space has been discussed ever since we lost use of the space 12 years ago. Also, a

discussion point is the challenge of parking. As our attendance increases and more businesses have been added to the annex the sharing of already limited spaces has become more and more difficult. Rather than move or rebuild the Senior Center, a cost-effective solution is to issue the next door City-owned building to improve City service offerings. Discussion followed with the avenues we've tried and still need to improve on.

- Better outreach to town halls –we are grateful for the generosity our local towns have extended in offering us space, and hope to provide more programs there. However the spaces are not large enough for the requirements of many exercise and wellness classes.
- Better partnerships with schools, Youth Center, Stoughton Health and churches – while we have good connections, these can always be improved. However, there are few instances where these organizations' schedules allow for coordination of our ongoing weekly activities.
- Better communication –Cindy admitted we have not yet effectively communicated our need for space. B. McGeever questioned whether involvement of the City's Community Affairs Committee would help. L. Havlik offered to meet with Cindy and Hollee again to draft another rationale to improve on the emphasis of this. C. Christman encouraged using personal stories from our participants.
- Better planning – should the City even consider the space for Senior Center use it will be years before the Center will have the funding needed to renovate the space. S. Boersma shared his intent to "keep the peace" as a COA member and City Council representative and suggested helping the current tenants with relocation as a way to rectify their concerns. Further discussion seemed to reflect that our main responsibility is to make our need for expansion evident.
- Next steps: We will circle back on this once we have drafted another rationale. Cindy asked that people contact her if they have questions or stories.

Committee Reports:

Evaluation:

- The 2019/2020 survey results are now posted on our website.
- E. Hanson of the Committee wrote a fun ad in the form of a Yelp review for us to highlight the survey's results and to direct people to read the full report.
- The Committee has reviewed our annual COA self-evaluation survey and to make it more useful, has made recommendations for it to be more goal-oriented, to focus on member's strengths and for its results to be considered when we do business. A draft of the survey will be available for review at the January's COA meeting.

No other committees have met: Cindy added that even though it has been a difficult year and we weren't able to do our usual fundraisers and meals, we did reach our fundraising goal of \$29,500. Since there are plenty of community organizations still actively fundraising, Cindy has made the decision to wait until January to restart focus on our fundraising goals.

Legislative Update: We have been very fortunate through this whole pandemic that we have not seen much decrease in funding. A few townships have scaled back their annual contributions. Budgets are hard. We are grateful that many townships have welcomed Cindy's offer to speak at their meetings and town residents have reached out for information on our services.

Remaining Remarks: The American Legion is providing Christmas Day meals by pick-up or delivery; the Senior Center is taking reservations. J. Schwass-Long emphasized what a gift it was for her and her husband to start their Thanksgiving Day by delivering meals through our partnership with Stoughton Health—adding that the hospital's food is wonderful!

Meeting Adjourned: Moved by S. Boersma and seconded by B. McGeever to adjourn the meeting. Carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

Next Meeting via Zoom: Tuesday, January 5, 2020 at 11:00 AM

Include with Jan. 2021 agenda:
-latest COA self-evaluation draft
-space needs rationale?