



Commission on Senior Issues

6801 Delmar Boulevard, University City, Missouri 63130, Phone: (314) 505-8563

Meeting Minutes – University City Commission on Senior Issues

June 17, 2019

Location: Heman Park Community Center
Attendees Present: Wayne Flesch, Gloria Nickerson, Karl Reid, Kathy Straatman, Elaine Henton, Sanra Hewitt, Senior Services Coordinator, Marcia Mermelstein

Mr. Flesch called the meeting to order at 6:07
Roll call was done by Senior Services Coordinator, Marcia Mermelstein

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Nickerson moved moved to approve the minutes of the January meeting as written. Ms. Straatman seconded, and the motion passed.

Sandra Hewitt, a new Senior Commission member, introduced herself, and other commission members introduced themselves to her.

Unfinished Business

- **Senior Center Program Update** – Ms. Mermelstein shared that an agreement has been reached between the city and Aging Ahead concerning the Senior Center program. Starting on July 2, there will be a co-sponsored program happening from 9:00 – 1:00 on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Community Center. Aging Ahead will continue to provide lunches and OATS van transportation, and the city will provide the meeting space and Ms. Mermelstein as the program coordinator. There was discussion about possible senior center program ideas: providing a monthly calendar showing activities; offering field trips; inviting the City Manager and/or the Mayor to come talk to the participants; providing more structure to the program (not so much sitting around and just talking.) Other ideas included having a picnic each year; instituting a “pen-pal” program with students from one of the U-City schools and senior center participants, with the students coming over to the center meet their pen pals; consulting with senior center participants to find out what kind programming ideas they can suggest. The recommendation was to make slow programming changes, rather than trying to change everything all at once.

Ms. Mermelstein stated that her office will be moving to the Community Center building---she will be using the small office that had been used by the social worker employed by Aging Ahead. There was discussion concerning her safety if she is in that building by herself when the seniors are not present, and she was asked if that space could perhaps be considered a satellite office, so that she could maintain her current office space in the Community Development Department. After discussing these concerns, Mr. Reid moved that that Mr. Flesch write a letter to Ms. Mermelstein’s supervisors, stating the following: “The Senior Commission does not approve of the Senior Coordinator being in an office space by herself for 2-3 days each week.” Mr. Flesch said that he would send a copy of the letter he writes to all commission members, via email.

- **Senior Survey Update** – Commission members had all received a copy of the survey data summary, but they had not been given a copy of the original survey. Ms. Mermelstein was asked to bring copies

of the survey to the next meeting, so that everyone can see what information had been asked, in order to better understand the survey results.

New Business

- **Recruiting more volunteers to help with home maintenance/yard work** – A list of all of the University City churches and synagogues was distributed to commission members. Everyone was asked to inquire at their own church or synagogue to see if they could find a member who might be willing to serve as a volunteer coordinator (like Christ the King and Our Lady of Lourdes currently do.) Any names of those volunteer coordinators should be given to Ms. Mermelstein, who will add them to her contact list for future meetings to plan city volunteer work days.

It was pointed out that Make A Difference Day should be included on the U-City calendar. It was also recommended that “Older Americans Month” be noted on the May page of that calendar, and that the date of the city’s special Sunday program in May should also be included in the future.

County Older Adult Commission Update – Mr. Flesch stated that St. Louis County did a proclamation this year to recognize Older Americans Month in May, and he suggested that we ask City Council to do a similar proclamation for University City next year. We will bring this suggestion to the attention of Mr. Clay at the next commission meeting.

He also stated that the county’s commission is hopeful that the “Seniors Count” initiative will be brought back on a future ballot, but they don’t think it should be on the 2020 Presidential election ballot because it will be a long ballot. In order for the measure to pass, it needs a 51% “yes” vote of those who vote.

Mr. Reid announced that census workers will be needed for the upcoming census process. He has information concerning how to become a census worker (pay will be \$15 per hour.) He will share the contact information with commission members via email.

Senior Coordinator Report – Ms. Mermelstein stated that there are currently 822 names in the city’s senior database. She also shared information about a new program being offered by the Visiting Nurses Association, called “Visit-A-Bit.” This program matches seniors still living at home with a volunteer who commits to visit once a week. Commission members were given a copy of a flyer with information about the program, and encouraged to recruit both senior participants and volunteers.

Other Updates/Topics of Concern – The mayoral appointee to the Senior Commission has been approved. Her name is Diane Clark, and she will be attending the next Senior Commission meeting.

Mr. Reid moved to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Straatman seconded; Mr. Flesch adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Next meeting will be held on Monday, July 15, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. at Heman Park Community Center.