



Commission on Senior Issues

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

Meeting Minutes – University City Commission on Senior Issues

May 21, 2018

Location: Heman Park Community Center

Attendees Present: Margie Diekemper, Wayne Flesch, Elaine Henton, Sue Slater, Marcia Mermelstein (Staff Liaison),

Absent: Gloria Nickerson, Stacy Clay

Ms. Margie Diekemper called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Roll call was done by Ms. Marcia Mermelstein

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Diekemper asked if there were any corrections needed for the minutes, and there were none. Ms. Slater moved that the minutes be approved, Mr. Flesch seconded, and the motion passed.

Unfinished Business

- ITN Update – Ms. Diekemper reported that the official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of ITN/Gateway had taken place on May 9. After the first two weeks of operation, there are more riders than drivers in the new county program; the majority of the riders are in University City and the majority of the drivers are in Chesterfield.

Director Susan Kallish-Bailey has fielded 70 calls since May 9 in her office, and Ms. Diekemper has had 20 inquiries in the first two weeks.

Ms. Diekemper was congratulated for her more than two years' consistent hard work that she has put into getting this service up and running in St. Louis County.

- Budget Proposal - On June 9 at a City Council public hearing, Ms. Diekemper will speak to the council about the Senior Commission's budget proposal for creating an ITN scholarship fund, and she will give statistics about the number of riders from University City in the first month of operation as part of that presentation.
- Older Adult Survey – According to Adam Brown in Community Development, it is possible that a summer intern in the Community Development Department will be able to compile the data from the surveys.
- May 6 "Engage At Every Age" Program – Approximately 100 people attended the program, which was accomplished through the assistance of a very helpful planning committee. Although city officials including the mayor, city manager, and all city council representatives were invited to attend, the only city official who came to the program was Tim Cusick. Ms. Mermelstein indicated that she had sent him an email thanking him for attending. In general, the feeling was that this program was a good first effort, and that something similar should be planned next year in May for "Older Americans Month." Ms. Mermelstein said that she would be meeting with the planning committee to do a formal evaluation.

- Report on County Older Adult Commission – Mr. Flesch reported that UMSL Professor Tom Meuser, who has been very involved with the county’s older adult commission, will be leaving UMSL and moving out of St. Louis. He also stated that the county’s commission is having the same challenges as our commission in terms of recruiting commission members.

They would like to schedule a session where all of the municipalities that have a commission or a staff person who has responsibilities related to older adult issues would meet as a group to exchange ideas and share resources. Members of our commission indicated that they would definitely be interested in participating. Mr. Flesch said that this is in the early planning stage, and that he will update us about when such a meeting might happen.

- Recruitment of New Commission Members – Various individuals from University City have been recommended over the last year to Councilwoman Carr, there are currently two positions that have had no appointments made, and there will soon be two additional openings when Ms. Diekemper and Ms. Slater’s terms end. It is the responsibility of the council liaison to recruit commission members, and we are hopeful that we can work with Mr. Clay in coming months to have all positions filled.

New Business

- Potential Impact of New Olive/170 Development on Senior Residents – There are questions we should be considering in terms of how many seniors may be displaced by this project, and what kind of relocation assistance will be made available. We discussed whether our commission should pose these questions to Mr. Clay, our council liaison, and then have him share the questions with Ms. Paulette Carr because she sits on the TIF Commission. Ms. Slater moved that the Senior Commission address the impact of the acquisition of senior-owned housing with the TIF, and also address the plans for affordable relocation. Mr. Flesch seconded the motion, and it was passed. Ms. Diekemper said that she would share this information with Mr. Clay.
- Implications for Senior Commission Concerning Impending Transfer of Senior Coordinator to Parks and Recreation Department – Ms. Mermelstein passed out copies of a flow chart showing departmental changes that are being recommended by City Manager Gregory Rose. If this new structure is approved as part of the city’s budget discussion, the Senior Coordinator position will be moving from the Community Development Department to the new Parks and Recreation Department. Her office would be moving from City Hall to Centennial Commons. There was some concern about whether the Senior Coordinator’s job description will be changing at all with this move, and it was decided that a letter needs to be sent to Mr. Rose to let him know that the commission members would like for it to stay the same. A suggested statement that could be put into a letter and sent by Ms. Diekemper to Mr. Rose was: “The Senior Commission has just learned about an impending organizational structure change that would move the Senior Coordinator’s position from the Community Development Department to the Parks and Recreation Department. Since it is this commission’s responsibility to advise the city administration on matters related to senior issues, we unanimously agree that the current job description for Senior Coordinator, Marcia Mermelstein, continue to apply to the way commission members originally intended for this staff person to work with senior residents.” Ms. Henton moved that this statement be sent in letter form to Mr. Rose. Ms. Slater seconded. The motion passed, and Ms. Diekemper said that she would send the letter to Mr. Rose.

Senior Coordinator Update - Ms. Mermelstein did not have any additional information to share.

Next Meeting: Monday, June 18, at 6:00 PM. – Heman Park Community Center