



Commission on Senior Issues

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

Meeting Minutes – University City Commission on Senior Issues

June 19, 2017

Location: Heman Park Community Center
Attendees Present: Mary Hart, Margie Diekemper, Wayne Flesch, Bill Thomas, Sue Slater, Marcia Mermelstein (Staff Liaison), Councilwoman Paulette Carr (Council Liaison), Andrea Riganti (Director of Community Development)
Excused: Dorothy Merritt, Elaine Henton
Guests: Larry Slater

Ms. Mary Hart called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Roll call was done by Ms. Marcia Mermelstein

Approval of Minutes

Margie Diekemper mentioned two corrections that needed to be made. In the ITN update, the wording needs to be changed from “two informational meetings had been held” to “two informational meetings will be held on May 17 and May 24.” She also asked that a reference be added to the Council Liaison’s report that mentions Councilwoman Carr’s offer to step down as the commission’s liaison and the commission’s decision to revisit that topic at a later date. Ms. Slater moved to approve the minutes as amended and Mr. Thomas seconded. The motion passed.

Unfinished Business

- Review of Orientation Materials – Ms. Andrea Riganti, Director of Community Development, clarified that the Senior Coordinator is now reporting to her as her supervisor. She explained that the benefit of having this position in her department is that work related to senior issues intersects with most of the other facets of community development---planning, zoning, economic development, housing codes, etc.

Ms. Riganti explained that in the future if there are proposals made within the city government that could impact seniors (i.e., a possible new senior housing development), that those proposals will be shared with the Senior Coordinator and brought to the Senior Commission for their input and recommendations.

She shared the fact that once a new City Manager is hired and acclimated to his/her new position, there will be an orientation for members of every one of the city’s commissions, as a refresher concerning general categories such as Sunshine Laws.

New Business

- Senior Services Work Plan and Timelines – Ms. Riganti explained that all of the staff members working in the Department of Community Development has an individual work plan that includes project items and timelines for each project. Mr. Flesch asked if the commission can see the coordinator’s work plan---it can be shared for the purpose of input, but she clarified that the commission doesn’t dictate

the work plan or goals. She outlined several of the Senior Coordinator's major project items for the coming year:

- A survey of older adults to determine University City senior residents' needs---the plan is to develop the survey in the first quarter of the new fiscal year and implement it in the second quarter. She will want to take a look at the senior survey results summary when it is completed, so that it can possibly be incorporated into the city's comprehensive plan.
 - Updating the resource booklet for seniors.
 - Making sure any new city developments are age-friendly.
 - Continuing to answer phone calls and connect callers to resources.
 - Assisting with the volunteer home repair work days.
- Other updates/topics of concern
 - Budget - Ms. Riganti explained that there had been a recent recommended change in the city's budget that would remove the Senior Services Coordinator position from the budget. She explained that discussions were taking place to determine what else might be taken out of the Community Development departmental budget so that the coordinator position can remain, and she said she is hopeful this can be satisfactorily worked out.

During a discussion concerning the budget process, Ms. Diekemper recommended strongly that all commission members should make themselves knowledgeable about the budget--- both as citizens and as commission members. She recommended that the commission should make a strong statement to show support for keeping the Senior Coordinator position in the new budget, and Ms. Riganti said that she would carry this message back to City Council on behalf of the commission. A statement was developed, and Ms. Slater moved that it be the message delivered by Ms. Riganti. Mr. Thomas seconded, and the motion passed. Ms. Mermelstein did not capture all of the wording of the statement in her written minutes, but she said that she would listen to the recording being made, transcribe the exact statement, and send that statement out to commission members the following day. The wording delivered by Ms. Riganti was, "The Senior Commission makes a strong statement to retain the funding for the Senior Coordinator position in the fiscal year 2018 budget."

- Recruitment to fill upcoming commission vacancies – Ms. Riganti said that she would let the City Clerk know about these openings so that City Council members can do outreach.
- ITN – Ms. Diekemper reported that there would be an ITN steering committee meeting the next day, and that fundraising efforts are continuing. Ms. Mermelstein mentioned that there is optimism that some grant money may come from the Missouri Foundation for Health.

Council Liaison Report - Ms. Riganti pointed out that the liaison's role is not necessarily an advocacy role, but is designed to serve the purpose of carrying messages back and forth between the commission and City Council.

Ms. Carr shared information concerning block grant money that has been approved to be used for home maintenance and repairs for older citizens. She explained that the city is facing a difficult budget situation, and that if the coordinator position goes back into the budget something else will have to come out. The hope is to generate more business revenue. The search for a new City Manager began last week, and the plan is to make a selection by September, with the new person starting in November. There is the possibility of a new assisted living facility moving into University. She shared that there was a meeting scheduled the next evening at Mandarin House to discuss the MSD proposal.

Senior Coordinator Update - Ms. Mermelstein reported that the computer tutoring program will begin on June 28, with four student/teacher pairs. She met with the University City Schools Superintendent recently, and hopes some new intergenerational programming will come out of that discussion. There are now 475 names in the Senior Database.

Mr. Flesch moved that we adjourn and Mr. Thomas seconded. The motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, July 17, at 6:00 PM. – Heman Park Community Center