



Commission on Senior Issues

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

Meeting Minutes – University City Commission on Senior Issues

March 20, 2017

Location: Heman Park Community Center
Attendees Present: Mary Hart, Elaine Henton, Margie Diekemper, Bill Thomas, Dorothy Merritt, Sue Slater, Marcia Mermelstein (Senior Coordinator), LaRette Reese (staff Liaison), Councilwoman Paulette Carr (via phone conference)
Excused: Wayne Flesch
Guest: Mardie Foggy

Ms. Mary Hart called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Roll call was done by Ms. Marcia Mermelstein

Approval of Minutes

Under "Attendees Present" a correction was made to Mr. Bill Thomas' name (it had said "Bill Williams.") Ms. Diekemper moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of February 21, 2017; it was seconded by Mr. Thomas. The motion passed.

Unfinished Business

- ITN/Gateway – Ms. Diekemper said that the next steering committee meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 23, 2017. A number of marketing materials have been finalized, and she did a presentation to a group recently who showed a lot of interest. Outreach is now happening and fund raising efforts are taking place. Ms. Diekemper said that she was going to be writing letters to several potential donors. Startup fund of \$50,000 is needed by May. She and Ms. Mermelstein will talk about scheduling some informational meetings in May. Actions needed---1) creating a subcommittee to develop scholarship guidelines and to do follow-up fundraising for fund; 2) recruiting drivers. We discussed whether we should be recruiting drivers for both CORP and ITN/Gateway, and the decision was to focus on ITN/Gateway.

New Business

- Future Directions for Commission
Chairperson Hart led a discussion about possibly following the AARP guidelines for becoming an age-friendly community. She talked about the short list of requirements that Jodie Lloyd had prepared for us to refer to, and questioned whether we might want to adopt a mini-plan modeled after St. Louis county's plan. Our focus should be to look at U-City programs/services thru the lens of whether they are age-friendly.

Pro's to using the AARP guidelines---

- 1) U-City would be the first city in Missouri to become an age-friendly city
- 2) The resources are already there---we just have to use them.
- 3) It would commit the city to develop a plan, getting the city council's involvement and commitment
- 4) Could give us leverage for funding opportunities.

Ms. Slater pointed out problems with curbs and streets that need to become accessible, and said we need to find out if adequate funding is available. Before any street repairs are made, the Commission's role would be to make sure that age-friendly concerns would be taken into account.

Ms. Hart said that if the commission decides this is the direction we choose, the commission would need to make a recommendation, which she would take to Jodie Lloyd in Community Development. The two of them would draw up a letter of commitment to ask City Hall's approval. If that happens, this effort would be institutionalized in city government, and all departments would be making efforts to make their programming services age-friendly. A question was raised about who would serve as the coordinator, and Ms. Hart said she would find out if the Community Development Department would take the lead.

If we do not adopt the "Age-Friendly Community" guidelines, other suggestions for future directions were:

- 1) The commission develops services/programs as needs present themselves, continuing as it has functioned so far.
- 2) Perhaps each commissioner could come up with one area that he/she thinks needs to be worked on, and work on it with city staff from a particular department, reporting back to the commission on progress. During this discussion, Ms. Carr pointed out that we would need to clarify the difference between "age-friendly" and "ADA compliant." Ms. Hart said she would look at AARP's "Livable Communities" webpage to learn about additional age-friendly concerns that go beyond ADA requirements.

Ms. Diekemper suggested that we look at the list of requirements to become age-friendly and check off things from that list to see what we've already accomplished.

Discussion was held about whether we should focus on identified needs (poorer residents living north of Olive) or try to develop new programs for residents who don't seem to have specific needs or who don't identify themselves as "older adults. There was some consensus that we should focus on known gaps in service.

Mr. Flesch brought up the idea of scheduling a "Fall Prevention" program, possibly using a Wash. U. staff person as facilitator. Ms. Mermelstein said that she knows OASIS does a yearly fall prevention program, and that she would contact someone there to clarify whether our scheduling a similar program would be considered a conflict. During the discussion, it was suggested that firefighters can refer people to resources when they go to houses to help pick them up if they have fallen. If we schedule a program, we can give firefighters a flyer to hand to people to encourage them to attend. Mr. Flesch, Ms. Mermelstein, and Chairperson Hart said they would talk further about developing this program.

- Relationship between Senior Coordinator and Senior Commission

Ms. Hart passed out a handout from the white binder outlining the role of the professional staff people and the role of commission members. She also passed out a sheet listing Ms. Mermelstein's current job responsibilities. She asked everyone to read both handouts and she can address any questions at the next meeting. She also reminded everyone to make an appointment with Ms. Mermelstein and Ms. Lloyd for an orientation session about serving on a commission.

Senior Coordinator Update

Ms. Mermelstein provided us with the following information

- Copies were shared of a new Senior Services brochure
- Coffee Talk will now be a monthly program instead of weekly
- April will be the final “First Friday Free Film” due to poor attendance
- A fall prevention program co-sponsored with OASIS will take place on May 18, 2017, at 1:00 at the U-City Lib
- We are full for the April 8 “Make a Difference Day” program and wait-listing for June
- The Community Development Department is working on getting a substantial amount of block grant money shifted to a fund that will be specifically used as grants for seniors’ home repairs
- There will be a two-page insert about senior services in the August and January ROARS newsletters.

Council Liaison Update

Ms. Carr updated us concerning the national search for a new City manager, which should take about four months. She said there will be a meeting of City Council members with the Economic Sales Tax Fund, and that there are new opportunities for developers to bring in new business to revitalize the Olive & 170 area. City Council had a study session with someone from Kirkwood who has been involved in revitalizing the Mission area there. The Council is looking at hate crime legislation, but it has not been passed yet.

Other Updates/Topics of Concern

Ms. Slater asked any handouts to be emailed to her ahead of time. Ms. Merritt asked that hard copies of minutes and agendas be mailed to her.

Public/Citizen Participation

Guest Mardie Foggy was introduced.

Closing Comments

Ms. Hart asked commission members to let her know between now and April 17 if there are issues they would like to see included on the next meeting’s agenda.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 17, 2017 at 6:00 PM. – Heman Park Community Center