

St. Joseph County COA

Senior Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Members present: Catherine Brady, Janet and Harold Bolden, Marge Perech, Wilma Gillete, Pat Culp, Regina Sanders, Laura Klinger, John Gelvin, Paul Pursel, and Dewayne Jordan.

Staff present: Ruth Mancina (Marketing and Life Enrichment Manager), Katie Hughes (Nutrition Manager), Sherry Swartz (In-Home Services Manager), Tim Stoll (Executive Director), Cassie Graber (Nutrition Assistant), and Kelsey Larsh (Life Enrichment Coordinator).

Meeting was called to order at 9:07am.

The meeting began with a recap of the previous meeting's discussions. Life Enrichment Coordinator Kelsey asked for feedback on Bingo and the new cards. Janet and Harold Bolden reported that the bingo cards purchased in 2017 are not particularly popular with bingo players as they are stiff and cause glare. They wondered about the possibility of purchasing more bingo cards with money remaining in bingo funds.

COA member, Pat Culp, requested an explanation of why the restaurant program is now offering breakfast or lunch/dinner tickets, instead of one ticket for all as last year's program did. Tim Stoll explained that by using two different tickets, the COA is able to reimburse the restaurants who participate in the program at differing rates depending on the meal. By reimbursing at different rates, the COA is able to entice more restaurants to be involved as they are more likely to profit from the new reimbursement rate as compared to the old rate. COA Member, Dewayne Jordan reported that since the 2018 changes in the restaurant program have come about, he has noticed significantly smaller portions at the Savory in Sturgis. He also reported that the Savory is now known as Cosmos. Nutrition Manager, Katie Hughes, stated that because the restaurant program was taken out of grant funding, it is expected that more restaurants will participate as nutritional guidelines were lifted.

COA member, Pat Culp, asked what percentage of the budget goes to reimbursing restaurants who participate in the restaurant program. Tim Stoll explained that this program is "budget neutral" and explained that even with the changes in reimbursement rate per ticket, the overall amount of money used for reimbursing remained the same.

Nutrition Manager, Katie Hughes reported that the Catholic Church in White Pigeon has been added to the restaurant program and explained that they host a pancake breakfast once per month and now accept COA tickets. Many COA members reported that the American Legion continues to provide great meals to COA members who use the restaurant tickets.

In-Home Services Manager, Sherry Swartz, introduced herself to the meeting attendees as this was the first Senior Council meeting that she has attended. Sherry gave an explanation of the services managed within her department. COA member, Catherine Brady, whom utilizes in-home services, expressed concern of inconsistency of the times and dates which her aid is able to come to her apartment. Catherine stated it varies each time depending on the aids schedule and the inconsistency causes

inconvenience as she expected to be there when the aid is present. Sherry reported that Catherine does not need to be present for the aid to come to her home to clean and that Catherine may leave a list of duties for the aid to complete if she is not there. Sherry reported that she is willing to address these concerns with the aid if Catherine is unsuccessful in doing so.

COA member, Pat Culp, expressed frustration over the lack of explanation within the newsletter of each exercise class. He reported that he assumed "Silver Sneakers" was a walking program at the Doyle Center and found out upon arrival to the Doyle that Silver Sneakers is a structured exercise class. Culp requested that explanations of each class be included in newsletter. Marketing and Life Enrichment Manager, Ruth Mancina, reported that she would gladly include these descriptions.

COA members raised questions regarding individuals who are out-of-county and/or out-of-state residents using COA programs. Tim Stoll explained that any individual who is not a resident of St. Joseph County can be a member of the COA as long as he/she is 60 years or older.

COA member, Catherine Brady, asked whether any sort of restaurant ticket reciprocity had been developed between counties allowing use of our restaurant tickets at out-of-county restaurants. Nutrition manager Katie explained that other counties may not have established restaurant programs, or may have restaurant programs which are structured in a different manor that wouldn't allow for reciprocity between tickets.

Catherine then expressed concern for lack of handicap parking around the Enrichment Center. She pointed out that the north entrance to the building does not have a button for automatic opening of the door. Tim Stoll commented that though installing a button would be helpful, it is not an item that had been budgeted for in 2018, and that seniors should avoid parking in the north parking lot if they are unable to open the door independently.

COA member, Marge Perech, brought up the quiet room and number of books on the bookshelves, asking whether these books could be thinned out as the number of books continues to grow quickly. Marge suggested donating some books to the Sturgis "Friends of the Library" booksale. Life Enrichment Coordinator, Kelsey Larsh, commented that she had taken 3 boxes of worn & unread books to goodwill in the fall to thin out books, but also informed that the Sturgis Library has donated many boxes of books to the COA at the conclusion of their "Friends of the Library" sale in 2017 as they were unable to sell them.

Marketing Manager, Ruth Mancina, reminded seniors to fill out the Senior Satisfaction Survey which can be found in the newsletter, on the COA website, and should have been mailed to each member's home address. Surveys will be available through February. COA member, Pat Culp asked if COA members will have the opportunity to see the feedback provided from the survey. Tim reported that results of the survey will be posted in newsletter after sufficient time to organize results.

COA member, Regina Sanders informed staff that the computers in the quiet room appear to be experiencing spam issues. She volunteered her knowledge in attempting to install software to aid with this issue. Regina also discussed the possibility of offering a tech support and facebook class.

COA member, John Gelvin, asked whether offering a Chair Yoga class was possible in 2018. Life Enrichment Coordinator, Kelsey responded that staff have been discussing this possibility, but have yet to address this with an instructor.

Marketing manager, Ruth Mancina, informed meeting attendees that the COA would begin offering Laughter Yoga at the end of February. She explained that laughter yoga is a mix of stretching and breathing combined with laughing exercise. This class will be instructed by COA member, Laurel Cordes. It will be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays in Three Rivers and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays in Sturgis.

Ruth informed members that a Journal-sketching class would be offered at the Enrichment Center beginning at the end of February. Ruth also mentioned the possibility of adding a strength training focused class in the future.

The next meeting will be held on March 20<sup>th</sup> at 9am in Three Rivers.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:13am.