

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

April 15, 2020

The April 15, 2020 meeting of the Advisory Board of Directors of the St. Joseph County Commission on Aging was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Chair-Person Debra Davis at 1:35 PM. Roll call was taken by Chuck Thompson.

PRESENT: Sarah Apwisch, Lee Austerman, Al Balog, Steve Boland, Deborah Davis, John Gelvin, George Letts, Jim MacTavish, Chuck Thompson, Jon Withers.

ABSENT: Ed Stemen.

OTHERS PRESENT: Tim Stoll, Executive Director; Kris Butler, Finance Clerk; Ruth Mancina, Marketing Outreach Manager; Nicole Notestine, Residential Services Manager; Amanda Newman, Life Enrichment Coordinator; Robert Tomlison, Three Rivers Commercial.

AGENDA:

Mr. Stoll requested a revision to the agenda, adding the response to COVID 19. A motion was made by Mr. Boland, supported by Mr. MacTavish, to accept the agenda as with the revision to New Business. Motion carried 10-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. MacTavish, supported by Mr. Withers, to approve the February 2020 minutes as presented. Motion carried 10-0.

Mr. Stoll welcomed new COA Advisory Board Members Sarah Apwisch and John Gelvin.

OLD BUSINESS:

Rivers Enrichment Center Atrium Project – Artificial plants and trees have been ordered and are scheduled to be delivered in May. This project was placed on hold due to the shutdown of the building but hope to have this completed very soon.

NEW BUSINESS:

COA Response to COVID-19 – Essential services such as Home Delivered Meals and limited Personal Care continue to be offered once a week. Other services have been placed on hold until further notice. Some office staff are working from home as much as possible and come in to the office once a week to pack meals for the following week's deliveries.

The county continues to pay all staff based on average hours worked year to date. This will be in effect through the end of April at which time the Board of Commissioners will meet to decide on the next steps for the county.

Ms. Apwisch asked for an estimate of how many seniors have access to the internet to be able to access the newsletter and other information as it becomes available. Mr. Stoll explained that we do currently email newsletter to some members as they request this service but are unaware of how many members currently have access to the internet.

Mr. Boland asked if there are any concerns for residents at Rivers Enrichment Center. Mr. Stoll explained that the residents do have access to the afterhours number if needed and have been offered Home Delivered Meals. Some residents are still playing cards in the atrium area on a daily basis.

Ms. Davis expressed concern for the mental impact to seniors during this time of social isolation and asked if any online activities are currently being offered. Mr. Stoll explained that this has been discussed and Ms. Mancina is currently planning some online activities.

PROGRAM REPORT:

Ms. Notestine updated board members on Personal Care Services which are currently being provided by only one aide (Daneen Buel-Birky) to limit the amount of exposure during this time. Homemaking and Respite Care Services are currently on hold. Ms. Davis asked for protocol of clients who may have symptoms. Ms. Notestine explained that there is a plan in place starting with regular communication with the clients and diligent use of PPE and hand sanitizer.

Mr. Stoll expressed his appreciation of donations from GT Independence (\$15,000) and Fibre Converters (\$10,000) to assist with meals during the pandemic.

Ms. Hughes updated board members on Home Delivered Meals which are being packaged and delivered once a week in an effort to limit exposure. 441 bags of 7 meals each are being delivered daily. Breakfast is being offered as well with the donations that have been received. A total of 3100 meals are being delivered per week compared to an average of 2,000-2,500 per week. Congregate meals are not being offered on site however congregate members have been offered Home Delivered Meals until the sites reopen. Some restaurants are offering carry out for COA meals.

A new client began receiving meals yesterday after being released from the hospital with COVID-19. Precautions are in place to keep exposure limited.

Ms. Apwisch asked about PPE supplies on hand. Ms. Hughes explained that we do have a supply on hand and continue to order as available. Handmade masks were donated for the drivers to use while delivering meals.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Boland supported by Mr. McTavish. This motion carried 10-0. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Thompson, Secretary