

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The September 16th, 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 Deb Davis, at 1:30 PM. Roll call was taken by Chuck Thompson.

PRESENT: Sarah Apwisch, Al Balog, Steve Boland, Deb Davis, John Gelvin, George Letts, Chuck Thompson, Jon Withers.

ABSENT: Lee Austerman, Jim McTavish, Ed Stemen.

OTHERS PRESENT: Tim Stoll, Executive Director; Katie Hughes, Nutrition Manager; Ruth Mancina, Marketing Outreach Manager; Dan Cherry, Sturgis Journal; Robert Tomlison, and Clark Fries; CMH Kinship Care Program, Diane Wood, COA Member.

AGENDA:

A motion was made with support, to accept the agenda as Presented. Motion carried 8-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

MINUTES

A motion was made and supported, to approve the August 2020 minutes with no revisions. Motion carried 8-0.

FINANCE REPORT:

Mr. Stoll presented the current financial report. A year end projection as well as the 2021 proposed budget will be presented at the October meeting.

A motion was made with support to approve the finance report. Motion carried 8-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

COVID-19 Reopening Plan – Exercise programs are being held outside, In-Home Services are running smoothly, and the lunch program has been going well with a small but steady increase in participation. Activities will continue to be held outside as long as weather permits. Mr. Stoll recommended a plan for inside activity programs in the near future. Gyms are able to open back up at 25% capacity, so the plan is to use the same guidelines when moving back indoors. Normal attendance of congregate meals before the shutdown were discussed and whether fits within the restaurant guidelines. Ms. Davis suggested having 2 separate lunch times at the 25% capacity to accommodate allowing members to come back and enjoy their meals again. Mr. Withers agreed with this philosophy with concern of overburdening the staff. Serving lunch outside when weather permits is also an option. Another suggestion was made to serve lunches in separate rooms as an option to multiple mealtimes. Mr. Withers suggested staff come up with barriers related to opening at 25% capacity along with a game plan of how to approach these challenges. Mr. Stoll agreed to come up with a written plan related to each service.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

PROGRAM REPORT:

Clark Fries from Community Mental Health discussed the Kinship Care Program's response to the COVID shutdown. The last group meeting was held March 19. The monthly meetings have been replaced with weekly contact calls to members of the program. Mr. Fries referred to this as a revelation as this has increased the relationship with the members and being able to connect with one another. August 20 was the first virtual meeting. There were five households participating and even the children were very responsive to this reunion. Members have shared their concerns about the pandemic and transitioning their children back to school. There has been discussion of having future group meetings in the COA building once in person meetings are reestablished. Concerns of social distancing and serving meals were discussed. Since the usual outreach opportunities for the program have not been available members have been discussing how to reach out and make more seniors aware of this program.

Ms. Mancina gave an update on Life Enrichment Activities. The activities have been slowly ramping up again at both our centers by offering exercise classes and some crafts outdoors. We purchased some shade sails for the back patio in Sturgis to help combat the sun. In Three Rivers we worked with Grand Rental Station to put up a large tent in our parking lot. They gave us a nice discount to help offset that cost. The tent will be up through early October and we can hold exercise classes there and some other activities, such as Bingo and Crafts. The nice thing about being outside is that we can have more participants since there is room to spread out and they can exercise without wearing masks since they are outdoors. In addition, we have been doing more and more crafts as "take-home" kits and Amanda has been putting videos on Facebook demonstrating how to make the craft and those have proven to be a big hit. We also provide written instructions for those that are not on Facebook or the Internet.

MEMBER TIME:

Mr. Boland asked about occupancy in the apartments. Occupancy remains at 100%.

Ms. Apwisch has spoken with Ruth Hubbard at Corey Lake Orchards and requested us to reach out regarding donating produce. Mr. Stoll agreed to be in contact.

Mr. Letts commended the reopening plan and emphasized the importance of posting the maximum occupancy at each location.

Mr. Thompson expressed his appreciation of the walking trail behind REC.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made with support to adjourn the meeting. This motion carried 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Thompson, Secretary