

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES – APPROVED 07/19/2023

The May 17, 2023, meeting of the St. Joseph County Commission on Aging Advisory Board of Directors was held at Oaks Enrichment Center. The meeting was called to order by Kathy Pangle, at 1:30 pm. Roll call was taken by George Letts.

PRESENT: Sarah Apwisch, Lorraine Bailey, Pat Dane, Phil Kline, George Letts, Kathy Pangle, Rick Shaffer

ABSENT: Deb Davis, John Gelvin, Jon Withers

AGENDA: A motion was made by Mr. Shaffer with support from Ms. Apwisch to modify the agenda allowing the Director's Report to be moved to number 8, following the Finance Report. This motion was approved 6-0.

OTHERS PRESENT: Pam Riley, Executive Director; Katie Hughes, Nutrition Manager; Ruth Mancina, Marketing & Life Enrichment Manager; Nicki Notestine, Residential Services Manager; Britt Buscher, Finance Manager; Dianne Wood, COA member, Tama Kline, COA member

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

MINUTES

Minutes from April 2023 were approved. A motion was made by Ms. Apwisch with a second from Mr. Letts. This motion passed 6-0.

FINANCE REPORT:

The Revenue and Expenditure Report for period ending 04/30/2023 was provided to the Advisory Board. As shown on the report, Ms. Riley stated a majority of the property tax revenue is in. Due to the low number of in-home aides, and the vacant chore worker position, the percentage of budget used on personnel is only 29.51 percent. Capital expenditures will be coming through soon, but that will be discussed in the Director's Report. Ms. Bolley made a motion with the support of Ms. Dane to accept the Financial Report. Motion passed 6-0.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

1. Capital Projects Update:
 - A. We received four bids for the TR parking lot replacement project. We selected Lakeland Asphalt Corporation from Battle Creek with a bid of \$294,493.00. Since we were about \$45K under budget we received approval to also replace 3 sections of sidewalk that were severally deteriorated and buckled by tree roots. The tree was removed, and all was completed for just under \$5K. We are anticipating construction to begin around mid-June.
 - B. ClearView is onsite today at the TR center and apartments replacing 7 large exterior windows. Two of the windows are on the sides of the front doors of the center.
 - C. Landscape project: In April, the Centreville Football Team spent four hours on a Saturday removing the white rock around the apartments to start the prep work for new landscaping. Melton is spearheading this project which will save us about \$30K from what we budgeted. He is steadily working on the final prep work to begin planting new, low maintenance shrubs

and plants. Phase I is around the three sides of the apartments and pickleball court (we repurposed the white rock for the court). Phase II will be the front of the center. Phase III will be removing some tall shrubs along the entry way that is causing reduced visibility and planting around the marquee sign out front. We have been fortunate to occasionally get probationers to assist in this project.

2. Restaurant ticket sales: Ticket sales are averaging over 3100 per month. We currently have sold over 14K of the 25K tickets budgeted. At this pace we are on schedule to run out by the end of August. We have never run out of tickets like this. We feel that with the excessive increase in food costs, word has gotten out around the county that this is a great program to supply a meal at a very low cost. Our concerns are twofold: 1. Restaurants are asking for us to increase the amount we are reimbursing them for the meal. 2. The \$200K budget we have for this program is not enough for the future. We have 5000 additional tickets that we can put into circulation, but this will cost us about \$25K. We will have some wiggle room after our projects are completed and I'm willing to go to the County Board of Commissioners to ask for a budget amendment, but this is just a band aid. Of the 1250 members actively purchasing these tickets, 200 (16%) are below poverty level. We suspect that many more are at or below that level, but they are not required to report their income level to us. We feel that seniors are experiencing food insecurities and this restaurant program is a way to get an affordable meal (possible 2 meals because some restaurants have very large portions) as well as being able to socialize which is important for emotional well-being. Our current options for the remainder of 2023, would be to immediately reduce the allotted amount of 5 tickets per month to 2 tickets per month per person. We would not need to incorporate the additional 5K if we did this. If I can get approval of the BOC in June to add the 5K tickets, then we could allow 3 tickets per person per month. If sales continue to increase, we still may have to limit to 2 per person per month. We will need to advertise this in our June newsletter, which the deadline to print is in two days. We will promote dining in our centers and at Kline's resort as additional low-cost meal options, as it is only \$2.50 suggested donation to dine onsite. We would love the boards input on these options. We have added 57 new members since last month's report.

We are also in need of a new MOW truck. We've been trying to hold off, but we are wanting to use the left-over capital projects funds for a truck which is about \$75K. In order to continue the restaurant program, we will likely need to raise the price of each ticket and limit to 3 in 2024. We will be able to make a decision on this when we start budgeting for 2024 in Aug/Sept. Next year is a millage renewal year. I do not want to ask for an increase, as that was raised not long ago.

3. A huge thank you to our members and board members who volunteered at the senior resource fair. The event would not have been as successful without you. I especially want to thank Chuck Wood for securing 2 golf carts to help transport participants who may have had to park further away. Pat Dane for filling in as receptionist in TR because we were short staffed. And all the members and staff who got the Oaks center furniture moved around and tables set up. Nicki, you did a great job leading ASN in this event for our county seniors. Ruth, you did a fabulous job in marketing and coming up with sponsorship levels that helped raise enough funds to cover food and several large prizes.

Following the Director's Report – A motion was made by Ms. Pangle with a second from Mr. Letts to decrease the number of restaurant tickets to 3 tickets per month starting in June of 2023, circulate an

additional 5,000 tickets, and leave the price of restaurant tickets at \$4.00 per ticket until January of 2024. Motion passed 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

None

PROGRAM REPORT:

Residential Services – Ms. Notestine reported 32 vendors, 164 participants, and a handful of volunteers appeared at the Senior Resource Fair. She thanked everyone for their help and was pleased with the positive feedback and suggestions that were included on the surveys. The extra lunches from the senior resource fair were used for home delivered meals. Currently there are 25 people on the waitlist for a one-bedroom apartment, and 10 people on the waitlist for a two-bedroom apartment for a total of 35 people on the waitlist. The COA is down a couple of aides and a chore worker.

Life Enrichment Services – Ms. Mancina reported there is a trip scheduled for Friday for the Lantern Festival at the John Ball Zoo in Grand Rapids. 30 people are signed up to attend, and Thurston Woods is allowing the COA to use their bus for transportation. A trip to Horrocks in Battle Creek happened yesterday. Ruth thanked the members that helped at the Senior Resource Fair. Ms. Mancina reported Life Enrichment has been working on upcoming events including Dinner Night Out at the Rivers Center, Water Fest, and the summer picnic. Today, Serving up Knowledge took place at the Rivers Center. 30 people were there to learn about stroke awareness, and lunch was served. Ms. Mancina will include the information related to restaurant tickets in the newsletter.

Nutrition Services – Ms. Hughes and the nutrition team packed lunches for the Senior Resource Fair. The leftovers were used the next day for home delivered meals. The number of congregate meals is increasing, and people have reported that they love attending. Ms. Hughes reported it has been a struggle to get liquid supplements, so she has been searching for alternatives. Glucerna is nearly impossible to get. The vendor mentioned Abbott is still struggling. The nutrition team is preparing for Dinner Night Out, Water Fest, and the summer picnic.

MEMBER'S TIME:

Ms. Pangle wished Lorraine well and said it was a pleasure to serve on the Commission on Aging Advisory Board with her.

Ms. Dane loved filling in at the Rivers Center during the Senior Resource Fair. She suggested holding a picnic at the Armstrong Sports Complex in Three Rivers. It is free and there are walking paths, as well as a pavilion with bathrooms.

Mr. Letts asked about the pickleball courts. The instructor that was initially contacted is unavailable, but Ms. Riley contacted an alternative instructor and is waiting to hear back on their availability. Mr. Letts also asked for an update on the splash pad and Doyle Center parking lot.

Ms. Apwisch didn't have anything to add except that she is proud to be a part of the Advisory Board.

Mr. Kline inquired about bingo equipment. The bingo equipment at Kline's Resort malfunctioned and is now missing a number. He is interested in finding and purchasing equipment that displays the number. Mr. Kline also mentioned the summer crowd is making their way back to Kline's Resort, so it is getting busier.

Ms. Bolley had to be excused a few minutes early. She expressed her gratitude as it is her last meeting on the Advisory Board.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Ms. Apwisch with support from Mr. Letts to adjourn the meeting. This motion was passed 6-0 at 2:22 pm.