

# Minutes

## Mayor's Senior Advisory Committee

Monday, January 9, 2017 10:45 am

Community Room, Woodlawn Commons, A part of the Wesley Community, Saratoga Springs

### **Attending :**

Barbara Thomas, Mayor JoAnn Yepsen, Lou Schneider, Phil Diamond, Tara Hutchins, Lorrie Shilling, Cliff Ammon, Jay Portnoy, Denise Yannaci, Lois Celeste, Dee Sarno and Peter Martin

The meeting started at 10:50.

Minutes of the meeting of November 21, 2016 had been previously distributed and were approved.

**Drive Up Mailbox:** The committee discussed a drive up mailbox – Peter will ask DPW and DPS for recommendations of a spot for one accessible drive up box in the downtown area. DPW – must be willing to clear any snow berms from around the box. We want their recommendation by time of our next meeting. We will then reach out to the postmaster.

**Mission Statement:** Mayor Yepsen arrived and led a discussion of the committee's mission statement.

There are communication liaison opportunities and an opportunity to work on issues that seniors want us to work on. We want to be an age friendly community – we need an action plan. This is where surveys and forums are important. Specific action plans – Accessibility and mobility around the city. Other departments in city are also working on this e.g. Department of Public Safety. Also, we may address remaining major issues around housing and transportation.

Complete streets advisory board is looking into policy re sidewalks. The City Council just approved the plan. CDTC is funding many communities for transportation plans. Consultants for complete streets is ALTA Design, Jeff Olson. We could sponsor a forum and gather information and then work with the complete streets advisory committee. Joann suggested info could also be transmitted via more robust website. We discussed putting a link on the website where people can easily ask questions, make comments, etc. Joann looked at website of Burlington, VT – they have a page on website for the senior advisory committee – they include a request to take their survey. We have some info on our city website – we should look and make suggestions about how to make in more interactive. Mayor Yepsen distributed printouts from Burlington VT website.

We want to continue to focus on program for aging in place including Community Connections. First goal is to acquire info from seniors – action steps to accomplish this. Senior center has 1300 members and 75% of these are from Saratoga Springs. Senior center Mayor’s office can help with the website.

Jay points out two categories of seniors. Those who are involved, mobile, engaged in activities and those who are home alone, not as able or engaged.

Joanne would like us to put together an age friendly action plan. She would like us to work with existing groups including the affordable housing taskforce. We could advise about special needs of seniors. Focus of affordable housing taskforce is 60% to 110% AMI. This includes people working in hospitality industry, health care, seniors, etc. We cannot have economically segregated neighborhoods – we need integrated neighborhoods – mixed age groups and mixed economic groups. Bring back info to mayor about senior housing needs. Mayor believes that first federal incentives to be challenged in the new Administration will be housing and community development block grants.

As a city, we can put together a legislative agenda and communicate this to our state legislators – Kathy Marchione, Carrie Woerner and Jim Tedesco. We could sponsor a legislative forum. Senior center is working on a survey. Lois delivered a “State of the Senior Center” address and about \_\_ people attended. She was surprised at relatively low income level of her more active seniors/ members. Skidmore social work department is another resource.

Joann suggests that we set up a column for senior issues. First article could just let people know that we exist – awareness piece – and direct them to a survey on the city website. She suggested Saratoga Today. Other areas of advertising: Look TV. Senior center uses Look TV currently. We discussed need to vet any opinion articles, etc. with the Mayor’s office before attributing to Mayor’s Seniors Advisory Committee.

The committee concluded that there are three action plans that it can work on this year:

1. Increase mobility for an age friendly community. Meet with Complete Streets once for quarter. CHIPS funding is allocated to every city based on mileage of roads. This is to be used for complete streets as well as filling potholes, etc. Complete streets meets every first Thursday of the month at 5:00 in city hall. Lou Schneider is on the committee. We could provide the Taskforce with more info and more interactivity with senior population in Saratoga Springs.
2. Advocate for our City Seniors through county, state and fed gov’t officials. Legislative forum is an action step.
3. Increase communication with seniors – particularly the home bound.

Clergy commission meets fourth Tuesday of every month at noon. Housing is a big subject for them. Lois will participate in some of these Clergy meetings.

Denise and Cliff have pamphlets for Yellow Dot program. Denise reports: the handouts are free and through the NYS Sherriff’s Association. Yellow dot goes on front door or on car

window. Complete pamphlets and put it in the freezer or in glove compartment. Office of the Aging has a significant number of these.

Follow up issues: Barb, Dee and Jay will meet to refine the mission statement and distribute to the Committee. Peter will contact DPW and DPS re drive up mailbox. All committee members should review the Senior Advisory page on the city's website and be prepared to discuss at the next Committee meeting.

Next meeting: Monday, February 13, 2017 at 10:45 at Woodlawn Commons

The meeting adjourned at noon.

Peter Martin, Recording Secretary