

SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the April 5, 2021

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m. in the AB room of the Oak Ridge Senior Center by Chairperson Pat Gengozian.

SAB members present: Marty Adler-Jasny, Pat Gengozian, Robert Smallridge, Lindsey McElvy, Steven Barker, Jackie Nichols, and Elaine Bunick.

SAB members absent: Gene Dunaway, Lisa Plante, Brandy Sales, and David Vudragovich.

Also present: Linda McGhee, Recreation Manager, Oak Ridge Senior Center

VISITORS: City Council Member Ellen Smith.

MINUTES APPROVAL: Minutes of the March 1, 2021 meeting were approved.

APPEARANCE OF CITIZENS

None.

REPORTS

SENIOR CENTER RECREATION MANAGER REPORT

Linda McGhee reported the following:

- 1.) The Senior Center continues to help facilitate access to vaccination opportunities for our seniors. Our list, which was as high as 300, is now down to around 10 who don't answer when called and we assume that they have gotten the vaccine on their own. Many places in town now have vaccine availability. Walgreens is also taking a last-minute list so that if someone doesn't show for an appointment, then they can try to fill it with another person so as not to waste vaccine. Mac's Pharmacy has appointments for Saturday and Sunday, April 10th and 11th and Munsey's has appointments for later in the month.
- 2.) The Senior Center continues a slow controlled reopening process. We are now looking at adding some programs back that can easily social distance such as wood craving on Wednesday mornings and Guitar practice on Friday mornings. Other programs will be considered on a case by case basis. We continue to give out food boxes on Mondays. We have 54 boxes going out today. Also since reopening on November 3rd, we have had 147 participants fill out new paperwork here at the senior center.
- 3.) The Senior Center has also been in contact with William Gwinn at the Oak Ridge Public Library about working to provide computer help to seniors. He is currently working on a survey about what seniors would be interested in learning. The timing for the program is currently flexible since the library is just now beginning to reopen to the public. However, we are hoping for the end of April or Early May.

RECENT ACTIONS OF CITY COUNCIL

None

NEW BUSINESS

Board Chairperson Pat Gengozian gave a report from Board Member Brandy Sales who couldn't be at the meeting about checking with Channel 12 on the possibility of airing information from the Senior Center on a monthly basis. He found that the usual process would be a "pay to play" situation but the station manager was willing to air a 5-minute segment monthly for no cost to the senior center as long as all production work was done ahead of time and was given to him in a "ready to go" fashion. Brandy said he would be willing to do this for the senior center since that was his main area of expertise.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board member Jackie Nichols gave a report on the meeting she had with ORPD Sgt. Karen Jenkins and Senior Center Manager Linda McGhee to discuss taxi cab issues. One of the main purposes of meeting with Sgt. Jenkins was to be able to send out positive communications to our seniors about the taxi cabs. At the last meeting Sgt. Jenkins was optimistic that since there was a new owner of the company, the service would be better for our seniors. However, that doesn't seem to be the case. The new owner lives in Rocky Top and runs his business from there so he doesn't have a base of operation inside the city of Oak Ridge limits. The city does not have much recourse in the running of the taxis but can make stops for inspections for basic safety and sanitation. Sgt. Jenkins said that she would continue to work with company and will continue to update the board as she can.

There was some general discussion between board members on the general transportation needs of seniors and what options are currently available. The board also decided to add a Transportation committee to list of committees to be formed.

Board Chairperson Pat Gengozian began the discussion of which committees each member would like work with and it was brought to her attention that not everyone was completely aware of what committees were available. Pat said she would send out a complete list before the next meeting and would add the transportation committee to the list at that time.

Pat also brought up the discussion of signage for the outside of the senior center and the road signage as well. After discussion it was felt that the most important signage is that on the outside of the building. That way when someone comes into the Civic Center Complex, our building is clearly labeled as the senior center. Senior Center Manager Linda McGhee mentioned that the City's previous communications specialist had been in the early stages of looking into this when she left for another job and then shortly after, COVID-19 began. She said she would contact the current communications specialist and see if there was any information still available or if we would need to start the process over. Pat also mentioned that she would bring the topic up with the City manager later in the day during a meeting they were having.

City Council member Ellen Smith asked if the Senior center had ionizing units added to the HVAC system to help with COVID issues. Senior Center Manager Linda McGhee said she wasn't aware that anything had been added but that she would check with the City's HVAC repair person.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

Submitted by

Linda McGhee, Recreation Manager

Pat Gengozian, Board Chairperson