

Commission on Elder Affairs

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Monday, Apr 26, 2021 4:00 pm | 1 hour | (UTC-04:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Meeting number: 160 900 4929

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DATE: April 20, 2021
TO: Commission on Elder Affairs & Interested Parties
FROM: Robin Bahr Casey, Chair
SUBJECT: Meeting Notice and Agenda

The next meeting of the **Commission on Elder Affairs** will be held on **Monday, April 26, 2021 at 4 pm via webex**. If you cannot attend the business meeting, please contact Amy Vogel Waters at 508-799-1232 x48013 or WatersA@worcesterma.gov.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

- I. Commission on Elder Affairs Chair
 - a. Call to Order/Roll Call
 - b. Approval of Commission Minutes of March 22, 2021 meeting
 - c. Approval of Senior Center Committee Report on April 12, 2021 meeting
- II. Elder Affairs Staff Reports
 - a. Director Report - Strategic Plan Goal and Objectives
 - b. Senior Center Operations Director Report
 1. Developing and Offered Programs
 2. Facility and Grounds
 - c. Manager of Senior Services & Education Report
 1. Outreach, Information, Referral and Advocacy
 2. Multi-cultural Programs & more
- III. Commission on Elder Affairs Chair
 - comments &/or questions from Commission members
 - comments from others-up to 2 minutes each
 - confirm next meeting- May 24, 2021 at 4 pm
 - Adjourn

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Commission on Elder Affairs

3/22/21 Minutes

Present: Robin Bahr Casey-Chair, Caroline Sullivan, Paul Franco, Richard Shea, Mariana O'Brien, Fran Langille, Richard Pinkes, Tamara Cullen, Kathan Horne, Facely Henriquez, Noreen Shea, and Chizoma Nosike.

Staff & Guest: Yung Phan, Patty Hainsworth, Amy Waters and James Brooks

Robin called the meeting to order on WEBEX at 4:05 pm. The minutes of 2/22/21 were approved (m/s/a). The Senior Center Committee report of 3/9/21 were approved (m/s/a).

James Brooks, the City's Director of Housing, presented information about various efforts to develop and retain affordable elder housing, among which is the pending re-bid for development of the vacant space at the senior center. In discussion about smaller lots, Richard S. informed Jim about potential space near Burncoat High School. Robin asked and Jim confirmed that taken into consideration with all city projects is proximity to grocery stores, health care, pharmacies and other services. Jim reviewed the HUD funded elder housing rehabilitation program which assists eligible homeowners age 62 and older with up to \$25,000 of core renovations. He also reviewed and provided contact information for various housing related assistance programs. He noted that the city will soon begin a Master Plan development process for which public input will be requested. Mariana asked how the regulations of government funding impact projects and Jim replied that it usually takes much longer to accomplish public projects as compared to private projects. In response to Chizoma's point about elderly renters being priced out of staying in their homes, Jim noted that the city requires affordable units as part of new projects but that the free market is a challenge for those who live in buildings which are bought at high prices and rents are raised. He also noted that in April there will be special outreach efforts made in the Green Island neighborhood to offer assistance to people who may be affected by Polar Park. Richard S. made a motion to send a letter supporting the City's application for HUD funding to modify existing homes (m/s/a).

Amy reported on the following: the status of city and state funding for FY'21 & FY'22; 194 different programs offered this fiscal year; 35,485 senior contacts made since the start of the pandemic; Senior Center serving as vaccination site through the end of March with 9,328 immunizations given as of 3/18/21; staff are focused on helping seniors to make appointments for vaccinations; 60% of Worcester residents age 65+ have had at least one shot as of 3/18/21; tenant licenses are progressing; Facebook views have increased 500% comparing 2/20 to 2/21; support letter sent for Worcester Housing Authority's application for CDBG funds to transport their residents to and from the senior center; Commission members were encouraged to attend the CHIP annual meeting and the Dementia Friendly Forum.

Patty reported on the following: facility issues include repairs for the walk in refrigerator and freezer, alarms and roof; March remote programming was filled with festive St. Patrick's Day programs; the canasta and mahjong zoominars co-sponsored by the JCC are well attended; April's focus is on Dementia Friendly Worcester with a PSA, community forum and an expert speaker-Dr. Budson; The new Arabic style grab and go lunch is well received; high school students continue to help with projects.

Yung stepped in as Linda could not attend today's meeting. She reported on the following: HIP 2 Go Food delivery with the help of SEAC; helping seniors make vaccination appointments takes a great deal of time and is very necessary; REC Farmer's Markets will open in June; Coordinators are staying in close contact with their multi-cultural groups.

Amy took the opportunity to thank Yung in this public forum for all she has been doing during the pandemic. She also acknowledged the unacceptable rise in racist acts against people of Asian backgrounds. Richard S. commended the Senior Center for printing the Stand Against Racism article in the Scoop newsletter. Also discussed was the review and revision of plans created almost a year ago to re-open the senior center as part of the preparation for eventual, cautious re-opening to come.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. (m/s/a)

**Report to the Commission on Elder Affairs
Senior Center Committee Meeting 4/13/21**

Present: Robin Bahr Casey-Chair, Richard Shea, Fran Langille, Caroline Sullivan, Chizoma Nosike, Patty Hainsworth, Amy Waters

Robin called the meeting to order on WebEx at 12:05. The minutes of the 3/3/21 meeting were approved (m/s/a). The next meeting was confirmed for 5/11/21 at noon. The status and challenges of getting seniors vaccinated were discussed. The Senior Center remains a “warm” clinic site, meaning it is set up to be used as a clinic when needed.

Amy reviewed & the committee discussed the attached projected timeline which demonstrates how renovations may impact potential reopening for programs & services. It was acknowledged that a lot will depend on the course of the pandemic as well as the need for using the Senior Center lunchroom as a vaccination clinic. It was also acknowledged that having these projects completed while the center is closed is timely and will give seniors positive changes to come back to. Amy noted that the FY’22 budget process continues, having a good review meeting with the City Manager; the state formula grant will be impacted by a later than usual federal census outcome, however contingency plans are being made.

Patty provided an overview of April and May programming including collaborations with Worcester Art Museum, the Audubon Society, and more. She also discussed the special focus on dementia this month with tomorrow’s forum being videoed for the public as well as Dr. Budson’s talk already being on Channel 192. She also noted that Dr. Charles Steinberg will be involved in making seniors welcome at Polar Park.

Patty noted that it was announced that the former “Voke” school in Lincoln Square will be developed for affordable elder housing. Fran shared information about a Digital Equity organization.

The meeting adjourned at 1 pm. (m/s/a)

(see timeline next page)

2021 Worcester Senior Center	Estimated Time Line			4/9/21 rev			
Capital project's impact on space use	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
THERMAL SOLAR on roof impacts lunchroom and parking lot (front & near lunchroom) Safety & noise concerns.	[Yellow bar]						
FITNESS CENTER mainly in unoccupied space with some use of stairwells & parking lot. Noise concern.	[Yellow bar]						
SOLAR CANOPY impacts full back parking lot. May be able to phase so 30+/- spaces available. Safety & noise concerns.				[Yellow bar]			
FIT LOT outside exercise equipment ADA accessible pathway needed impacts front drive-thru.	[Yellow bar]						
CDBG KITCHEN APPLIANCE installation impacts kitchen	[Yellow bar]						
Potential Programming contingent on city,state,CDC rulings. Also contingent on use for clinics.							
ONE TO ONE APPOINTMENTS- senior service staff assistance w/basic needs, SHINE health insurance couns., health screenings, technology tutoring, use plexiglass &/or distancing.	entrances would need to change depending on capital work						
GRAB & GO lunches, activity kits, HIP 2 Go-Farmer's Market	locations would need to change depending on capital work lunches on hold during kitchen appliance install.						
COMMUNITY GARDENING	will need to stay away from solar project areas						
PARKING LOT outside activities (need tent & fans for heat & rain, room to distance,bathrooms)			feasible?	Not if neighborhood still a "hot spot."			
SMALL GROUPS rotating for education, entertainment, tai chi, meditation, gentle yoga, socialization, games, multi-cultural activities, meetings.							
eg 9-10:30, 11:30-1, 2-3:30 with cleaning in between; large rooms 6' apart; plexiglass.	Some loss of parking			Parking in front or come by bus			
FIT LOT training when walkway complete (need access to bathrooms)		[Blue bar]					
Congregate Meals & Fitness Classes when deemed safe-full public opening in November if pandemic under control.							[Blue bar]
Maintain Grab & Go Meals etc & Remote Programming	[Blue bar]						
Note: Tenants may not exceed 1-1 meetings until Senior Center moves to larger activities.							