

COMMISSION ON ELDER AFFAIRS

Minutes of April 23, 2018

MEMBERS PRESENT: Theresa Eckstrom, Chair; Robin Bahr Casey; Margaret Coffin; Christopher Evans; Richard Pinkes; Richard Shea; Caroline Sullivan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nancy Greenberg; Ngia Le; Elizabeth Nguyen EXCUSED: Tom Cullinane; Paul Johnson

STAFF & GUESTS PRESENT: Amy Waters; Patty Hainsworth; Linda Wincek-Moore; Ron Motta-Friends of Worcester Senior Center; Mohan Sunwar-Ascentria; Jim Burns-Elder Services of Worcester Area

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. Jim Burns was introduced as the new Director of the Nutrition Program at Elder Services.

Mohan Sunwar from Ascentria Services discussed the agency and the program the Commission funds which helps elder refugees settle in Worcester. There are currently 73 clients, mainly from Syria and Iraq, with 20-25 at each meeting at the Senior Center. Many also attend our special events, exercise and other programs along with English as a Second Language classes. There was much discussion in the question and answer period.

Amy gave the Directors Report which included: Harvard Pilgrim has donated \$5,000 to pay for the Summer Concert Series and to stock the health and wellness clinic with supplies. The Budget meeting with the City Manager will be held on Friday 4/27. The State budget process is moving along for FY 2019. A proposal is being written to the national AARP for a caregiver respite program at the senior center, an extension of the Memory Café. Tax season is over and 588 people were served in 2 months. Interns are compiling information from the annual client satisfaction survey. Per a City Councilor's request, there's a new program to direct seniors to volunteers who will clean up yards now that winter is over. RSVP is providing volunteers to help cover the front desk. A new Customer Service position has been requested for the front desk. Resumes are being accepted for the part-time Latino Elder Program Coordinator. Two prospective Commission members have been interviewed. An update was given on the Scoop distribution. The State Secretary of Elder Affairs visited the Senior Center on April 12th. Members were encouraged to fill out the Community Health Assessment and attend the forum at the center later in the month. Clark University students filmed a short film noir in the vacant wing of the senior center. Members requested an updated list of Commission members be distributed and also that full words be used instead of initials/acronyms.

Patty reported on successful programs held and upcoming programs such as an artist reception, volunteer recognition, mother's day concert, distinguished speakers, a play about the civil war and 3 new wellness programs being funded by the state Council on Aging Service Incentive Grant. Appointments are being made for the No Evil Project and the Walking Club will be starting soon. Patty also reported on building and grounds issues including the landscaper starting, the Regional Environmental Council strengthening our community gardens, fixing the hot water in the rest rooms and problems with the boilers.

Linda reported on outreach activities, including the successful health fair and caregiver panel held at the senior center. There is a new SHINE counselor starting this week.

Ron Motta reported on the activities of the Friends including volunteer recognition and a lucrative new Bingo game.

Amy reported on the details of the No Evil Project, which fights ageism and stereotypes. Members were encouraged to participate.

There being no quorum, the Commission minutes of March 26, 2018 and the Senior Center Committee Report of April 10, 2018 were not approved. The next meeting will be held Mon. May 21st at 4:00 p.m. due to the 4th Monday of May being Memorial Day. (Note: May meeting was cancelled by email after the meeting due to a projected lack of quorum) The meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm.