

# CHELSEA COUNCIL ON ELDER AFFAIRS

March 9, 2022

## MINUTES

Jamie called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and said a prayer.

Roll Call was taken. Present: Nino Bongiovanni, Jean Chapman, Gerald DeStefano, Robert Mullaley, Tracy Nowicki, Jaime Santos, Rebecca Swope and Greg Walczak. Absent: Irene Malachowski and Antonio Ortega.

**Secretary's Report:** Everyone received notice of the meeting. Greg made a motion to accept and Nino 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

**Treasurer's Report:** Everyone received a copy of the Petty Cash Report. Gerald made a motion to accept and Becky 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

**Director's Report:** The RFP (Request for Proposal) for the shuttle service was sent out in February to solicit vendors. We are awaiting bids from vendors. Our current shuttle vendor could change, but our services should not be interrupted. Members asked if gas prices effect cost and suggested we ask to use gas that city vehicles use. Becky asked if the passengers could tip the driver. Tracy said it is up to each individual. Becky also asked if passengers need to wear a mask and the company said it is up to each individual and went on to say that the driver said he could not get a spot outside City Hall to drop off near the handicap ramp so he dropped her in the center parking lot. She feels this is not safe since seniors will have to cross City Hall Avenue to get to City Hall. Tracy will address it to the shuttle service. Nino asked if we could talk to the city about the parking situation at the center. Even though it is not "our" lot, many people that are not visiting the center use the lot. Becky said the shuttle does help for those who do not want to drive here and not find a spot. She mentioned St. Rose lot would help if members could park there.

The City's 311 service department has utilized our former classroom/computer room space. Tracy asked the City to create a plan so that we can regain some of that space since we are creating new programs. New DPW Commissioner, Lou Mamolo, is working with Tracy to come up will a plan that will support the use of the space for bot senior center programs and 311. Greg said we should mention 311 using the Police Community office on Washington Avenue since it is not used during the day. Or

Tracy wants to start a program with CCTV inviting older adults in the community to talk about life as an older adult living in the community. CCTV agreed to run a monthly talk and Tracy thought it would be wonderful if each Board member could do an interview to discuss issues, the senior center, programs, etc. She asked they interview for no more than 30 minutes and will send each of them dates and times to see when they are available. If they would like to appear more than once, that would be great. The FCOA Board will also be asked to participate. Greg mentioned there should be an episode about the history of the Center. Also, each episode will be interpreted.

Nino suggested putting in the Chelsea Record to invite seniors to come and visit the Center. Greg said we could call it the "Senior Corner.

Program Coordinator, Mike DeJesus, has been busy working on new programs for the Center. Mikey started a jewelry making class, teaching an English for fun, and is planning other cultural events/programs, along with being our DJ at the parties. Becky asked about a Walking Club and that is one of the programs Mikey is working on. Tracy wanted to thank Deb Connors for consistently taking on more work without hesitation. I/we continually "throw" work in her direction, ask her to get it done, sometimes at a moment's notice and immediate. Deb never once hesitates, or says "I can't, I don't have time, it will have to wait", etc. She dives right in, always up to the task, completes the work, organizes the day, without hesitation. Her support allows the Center to be able to offer more programs. Thank You Deb Connors for all the daily work and extra work you do and have taken on.

Another program we are thinking of offering is a prayer circle/bible talk once a week. She would like the committee's thoughts on this. Not sure about the separation of Church and State? Would like to get someone in the community to "run" the class. It would be non-denominational. Someone asked if there is a Fire

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Department Chaplain and if so maybe they could instruct the class. Gerald made a motion to accept and Greg 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

**Party Committee:** The next party is on Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. Greg asked how many people we could have at the parties. We can have up to 75 but it there has been between 50-55 people attending. Nino asked if at the parties, instead of the donation envelopes on each table, could we ask for \$5 per ticket and put the extra \$2 toward petty cash for future catering for parties or a scholarship. We are not sure if people would pay \$5, but it is open for discussion. Becky said maybe the Northeast Vocational School culinary department could cater a party. Tracy mentioned our Zumba instructor, Irene, has donated food from her restaurant for a few of our parties. Greg commented again if the City could remodel our kitchen, we could prepare the food here. Becky made a motion to accept and Nino 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

**Travel Committee:** Foxwoods is still not accepting bus tours. We are working on some trips for the nicer weather. Greg made a motion to accept and Jean 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

Before adjourning, Jamie asked if anyone else put in papers to serve as Chair. Tracy opened the floor. Greg made a motion to keep Jamie as Chair. The committee voted and they were all in favor. Tracy opened the floor to nominate Vice-Chair and Gerry nominated Bob Mullaley, and all were in favor.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 10:55.

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