

**City of Chicopee  
Council of Aging  
March 12, 2019**

**Members Present:** C. Gemme, S. Michalik, S. Tawrel, K. Rousseau, M. Rider, S. Gelinias, K. LaBreck, J. Lukasik, E. LaFlamme,

**Staff:** S. Manyak

**Guests:** S. Curtin, J. Fisher and R. Dachowski

**Excused:** H. Lenart

**I. Call to order**

- The meeting was called to order at 4:45pm. There was no request to record the meeting.

**II. Public input**

- Joyce and Rosemary were present to discuss the Friends of RiverMills activities. They will be kicking off a major fundraiser for the capital campaign. This includes a concert by Sarah the Fiddler on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are \$20 for the show and dinner will be off the menu. This will be at the Collegian Court and a portion of the dinner revenue will be donated.

**III. Announcements**

- The Budget committee met 2/9/18 to discuss the 2018/19 budget proposal. K. LaBreck, C. Gemme, H. Lenart, S. Tawrel H. and S. Manyak participated in the meeting.

**IV. Review of minutes**

- Minutes were reviewed from Jan 8, 2019 and accepted as written.

**V. Business Reports**

**A. January and February Fiscal Report**

- The fiscal report for January was distributed to all members. The report was accepted as submitted. The center is right on target financially. The Formula Grant funds have been in and are in place

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## **B. Executive Director's Report**

- The Executive director's report for February was distributed to the group.
- HVAC continues to be an issue in the building. A meeting was held 3/8 and it included the Mayor, Don, Sherry, Carl Dietz, and the School Dept. representatives. The Fontaine Brothers will be placed on notice in preparation for legal action related to the HVAC problems. The statute of limitations expires in 5 years post opening the building, which will be September 2019. We are asking the statute to be extended a year because the heating season is ending. Thermostats that record the temperatures have been installed in several rooms to track the information.
- A pipe broke in the maintenance room of the kitchen. It was determined the pipe had frozen because it was in the 30's in the kitchen that day. An electric heater will be installed to automatically respond to avoid this in the future.
- A new program tech has been hired Jona Ruiz. He worked previously at a non-profit helping people start business. He started February 8<sup>th</sup>. He has started meeting with seniors around their technology problems. He is having a lunch for Tech Connect and he will be distributing surveys. He is restarting the photo club as well. He is working to develop the next newsletter and updating the bulletin boards.
  - He is available on Tues and Thurs 9:30 for technology consults.
  - The first photo club meeting is April 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - He is also working on the Volunteer Dinner
  - He is also assisting with the Friends in planning a BINGO activity.
- The Community Block Grant was submitted for 2020. They had a visit for the current grant and the group was impressed with the program

- THE WMEC transportation grant had its first year audit and everything is on track.
  - The budget is right on target and they are also using funds from the Formula Grant to supplement transportation. The requests for shopping trips continues to rise.
- The Volunteer Dinner
  - The event is planned for May 10<sup>th</sup> at the Elks. Dinner will be at 4:30.
- Graffiti was noted on the HVAC boxes on the roof. Unfortunately, there are no cameras to be able to record these incidents. Sherry is working with IT and the Mayor's office to purchase cameras for security. The cameras will come from the IT budget.
  - A special cleaner was purchased to remove the graffiti.
  - It was noted that the footprints led to the area outside of the Garden room. Sherry is working on pricing for barriers on that end of the building. J. Croteau is getting bids for this project. One of the bids was around \$4000. Another bid was \$1700 but involved attaching to the roof and that means inserting screws. Sherry is concerned this will result in future roof leaks.
- There have been several instances of roof leaks this year. They seem to occur around a seam. There will regular maintenance checks on the roof because of the problem but this incurs a \$400 charge for each inspection. Three is a \$25000 deductible so the internal damage will have to come from the RiverMills budget.
- Maintenance of the lawns was an issue last year. Sherry is able to purchase a lawnmower with Formula Grant. The parks department would not be able to help with mowing. J. Croteau is looking having this done by a vendor. Storage would be an issue if RiverMills purchased its lawnmower.

### **C. S.A.L.T. Report**

- The last meeting was 3/8 and S. Michalik is the current chairman of the group. He provided an overview of the group's activities since January. The Scam program was very successful last time so another program was held on 2/7. Next meeting is May 10<sup>th</sup>.
- The poster contest will be on distracted driving.
- Smoke detectors are available through the Lions Club for a nominal fee. The Fire Department continues to be available for

- installation. An additional grant has been obtained and the detectors are free for any Chicopee resident.
- There will be a presentation on 4/8 on the Real ID , which replaces driver's license. This is not needed if you already have a passport.

#### **D. Friends of the Senior Center Meeting**

- Minutes from the last Friends meeting were distributed with the meeting materials. S. Michalik identified that there is a planning meeting for the Walk-a-thon (Step out for seniors) on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. There will be a presentation about the new meeting on 3/14 about the new building next to RiverMills. There is also an organizational meeting on 3/19 for the Dan Kane concert to be held later this year. There is a new gold sponsor – Laport Borys and Shea donated \$3000 over 4 years for activities. Lea Pouliot will be at the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting to present the outdoor plans. A question was raised about whether there will be anything for Sandra Lapollo. Sherry Manyak confirmed this is part of the plans.

#### **E. City Budget**

- Sherry distributed the City budget proposal for the next fiscal year. Adjustments have been made for inflation, as well as to reflect the new charging stations that are to be installed. Funding for Western Mass Elder Care was increased due to normal inflation.
  - A “plug in” care has not been purchased yet, because they are not really the right size for using with elders.
  - Ford Escapes have been purchased and the group has really had lots of positive feedback. Four new cars will be purchased by the end of the year.
- Sherry was instructed to identify a 5-year capital project. Storage could be a good project for this however there will be a new garage involved with the bike path so there will be storage available to RiverMills.
  - It was recommended that additional storage should be part of the capital request.
  - She will also ask for handicapped doors for the restrooms.
  - An addition outside of the kitchen will be included as part of the requests.
  - Next year a request for a hybrid car will be submitted and a wheelchair van for the following year.

- A question was raised about traffic congestion when the new assisted living building opens. The parking lot appears to be in front of the building. The road into RiverMills is a dual access road and intended to be shared.
- A motion was made and approved to accept the budget proposal.
- The café is very successful and it runs out of food all the time. There is no storage for supplies. Sherry has to spend a lot of time to shop for supplies. There are very few vendors that take purchase orders and Sherry is not able to use credit cards.
  - The café needs to go out to bid for food vendors. Right now Performance is the vendor but only \$10000 can be spent there. Then someone has to go to Big Y, and Stop and Shop. The audit department will only provide \$300 in case so that further limits the shopping.
  - She is putting in for another café worker for 19 hours that will be funded through the grant.

#### F. Age Friendly Community.

- There is an effort to make communities safe for ages 8 – 80. This includes planning for the city to address sidewalks and road. All roads would need to have bike paths painted. Every road should have a sidewalk. The community needs to make the commitment to work on these initiatives. Sherry was asked to spearhead the work because of the focus on older adults. However, this effort focuses well beyond the older community. Most cities and towns are doing this work through the city planners and this work has moved to that department. One of the next steps is for the Mayor to declare Chicopee an Age Friendly Community.
  - Jona has been inputting the data from each of the surveys that have been collected.
  - It was noted that many of the things that would be needed at the COA are already being done.

#### G. New Business

- The group asked about a salary increase for the office manager. However there was a survey about salaries done in the city and any changes has been held up by this.

## VI. Meeting adjourned at 6:15

- **Next meeting April 9, 2019 4:45pm**

Submitted by

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen S. Rousseau". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Submitted by".

Karen S. Rousseau