

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION
ROCKVILLE SENIOR CENTER
1150 CARNATION DRIVE

March 16, 2023, 10:00 a.m. (virtual)

Members Present: Anne Herbster, Chair; Stephen Smith, Commissioner; Elaine Koubek, Commissioner; Krishna Kumar, Commissioner; Judith Jolie, Commissioner; Kevin Leary, Commissioner; Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison

Staff: Alexis D'Angelo Swope; Trish Evans; Andrea Rogers; Terri Hilton; Fran Jablonski; Abe Bruckman

Guest: Diane Fuchs, College Gardens resident, Lori Newman, New Mark Commons resident

Chair, Anne Herbster started the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with welcome and check in with everyone. She asked **Lori Newman, guest** to introduce herself. She is attending today to see if she would like to continue as a commissioner. She has been a resident of Montgomery County for about 40 years. She now lives in New Mark Commons. She is a Geriatric Physical Therapist and is currently doing home health care. She is interested in doing something to advocate for seniors. She is familiar with issues facing seniors now. **Chair, Anne Herbster** introduced the Commissioners and Staff to **Lori Newman**. She explained that there are three vacancies due to illness or moving. She said the Commission is all things to seniors residing in the city, Communication Housing, Isolation and Programming (CHIP). **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** has been very helpful to the Commission. She has been the Chair since 2019 and that a new chair is supposed to be elected each year. Due to COVID and other things she decided to stay on. There will be a vote later in the meeting.

Chair Anne Herbster asked if anyone had any comments or anything to add to the minutes from February 16, 2023. There were none. **Judith Jolie, Commissioner** made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. **Krishna Kumar, Commissioner** seconded it. All were in favor.

Andrea Rogers introduced herself as a Senior Center Support Services Coordinator. She has been working with seniors for more than ten years. She has had some of the same clients for that entire time and is currently trying get their families more involved due to some clients declining. She is working on a Senior Housing Resource Expo to be held on July 12, 2023. She will be sending packets to vendors and various assisted living places in the area. She has a list of forty, but only four are in the City of Rockville corporate limits. She has had some walk ins looking for assisted devices to continue to live in their home. She graduated from MRPA Leadership Institute and is working on MRPA conference held in April. **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** would like **Andrea Rogers** to come to the Mayor and Council meeting to broadcast the Senior Housing Resource Expo and advertise in the Villages newsletter, work with **Kathy Dantzler** to do a YouTube video and a roundtable work session during the Expo. **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** would like **Andrea Rogers** to email her and keep in communication.

Trish Evans introduced herself as the Village Coordinator. She works in communication and connection with the Senior Center. Last Saturday, the Town Center Village had a walking tour of the entire Town Center, 1.5 miles. Twenty-five people participated, 65% were seniors. Several people came from Brightview. There will be a family pizza party at Lincoln Park Village this Saturday. The Villages and the Lincoln Park Civic Association will be helping to support the event. East Rockville Village is working on a community butterfly garden to beautify the neighborhood with native species later in the Spring. King Farm Village is doing well. They are holding book clubs, friendly visits, check in phone calls, health and safety events, social events, and transportation for residents. West Rockville Connects Village is making great strides in the development of the village. **Diane Fuchs** is assisting with this. There will be a coffee and doughnut event on Sunday. **Lori Newman** said she would be happy to have a village in her neighborhood, New Mark Commons. She said the neighborhood has many aging in place and would appreciate **Trish Evans** assistance with this. She said it has been her goal to have a village five years ago. **Kevin Leary, Commissioner** told **Trish Evans** he hasn't forgotten about the Twinbrook Village. **Trish Evans** said she will be in touch with **Lori Newman** and **Kevin Leary, Commissioner**.

Terri Hilton, Seniors Program Manager of the Senior Center, said **Abe Bruckman** the City's new Grant Manager will be attending the meeting. An AARP, flagship grant has just been submitted. This grant has different categories, one is to create vibrant gathering spaces. It will be located above the bocce ball court and to the right of the building. It will have a concrete pad and covered area with space for tables and chairs. It is a \$34,000 grant. The project must be completed in the year the grant is received. **Abe Bruckman** is extremely helpful. **Terri Hilton** is closing out Senior Center projects, along with the greenhouse. She is working with the ADA Coordinator on Access Team, dedicated gathering space, welcoming language, and a consistent intake form. She has been very involved with MRPA for the last three years and will be coming off the board of directors. **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** gave kudos to **Terri Hilton** and staff. She suggested that someone attend Community Forum to report on what has been accomplished at the Senior Center and what the center needs to do. **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** asked what the status of the installation of the cameras and lights were. **Terri Hilton** said there is a product delay, and everything should be completed by the end of May. **Abe Bruckman** said there are a lot more grant opportunities to explore to help the Senior Center. **Chair, Anne Herbster** said that if there is anything the seniors need bring it to the Commission and they will look for a grant for it. **Alexis D'Angelo Swope** said she has applied for a grant through National Council of Aging for funds to hold a community event to get Seniors vaccinated.

Alexis D'Angelo Swope, Seniors Program Supervisor/Transportation and Support Services said thanks to **Trish Evans** for assisting with sponsorship advertisements for the center's buses. A program on "Funeral Planning in Advance" was held on March 7, 2023. She just met with **Andrea Rogers** regarding the Housing Resource Expo to be held on July 12, 2023. She is working on getting a speaker for a Social Isolation/Inclusion program in the summer. She is trying to get a mental health position to share with Community Services. She thanked **Stephen Smith, Commissioner** for his suggestions for programs for the Wellness Program and will pass them on to **Betty Figlere, Seniors Program Coordinator/Wellness**. Brightview Senior Living, **Elaine Koubek**, is partnering with the Senior Center to have a dance on April 28, 2023. Cost is \$5.00. **Alexis D'Angelo Swope** is working on getting a broader communication out and met with University of Maryland student who is working on creating an app to provide seniors with a resource in their area. When the app is ready to be tested, she will ask for volunteers.

Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison said the mental health position requested by Community Services did not make it into the Budget. The other Senior request was for Rockville Cares Program for isolated seniors in the amount of \$12,000. She said she will be championing for seniors and the Mayor and Council meeting on Monday. She encouraged someone from the Commission to attend the meeting to testify and promote seniors. She said there is a \$.02 property tax increase reflected in the FY25 Budget. **Chair, Anne Herbster** asked if the Gude Drive Entrance to the Senior Center is in the budget. **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** said this project is currently unfunded and suggested that someone from the Commission attend Community Forum and request a place holder to get the funding for this. **Abe Bruckman** said the four buses transporting seniors are slated for replacement in four years and rather than wait he will spend time looking for speedier ways such as a grant or other options to replace them.

Chair, Anne Herbster said it is time to vote and re-elect a Chair. It would be appropriate to have a Chair and Co-Chair. She nominated **Elaine Koubek, Commissioner** for Chair and **Stephen Smith, Commissioner** Co-Chair. **Stephen Smith, Commissioner** declined. **Elaine Koubek, Commissioner** would only accept if she had a Co-Chair. **Kevin Leary, Commissioner** agreed to Co-Chair. There wasn't any more discussion. **Judith Jolie, Commissioner** made a motion to accept **Elaine Koubek, Commissioner** for Chair and **Kevin Leary, Commissioner** for Co-Chair going forward. **Krishna Kumar, Commissioner** seconded it. All were in favor. **Chair, Elaine Koubek** then leads the meeting.

Kevin Leary, Commissioner gave a presentation about the replacement mural on the wall in the back parking lot of the Senior Center. Different artists submitted designs. **Katie Giganti** won it. Everyone on the panel felt her design embodied the Senior Center, local area, and the State of Maryland. She did research of the Senior Center, and it represents what goes on. It will perk up that area of the building and be very visible when the entrance is completed.

Judith Jolie, Commissioner and **Krishna Kumar, Commissioner** gave an update on Social Isolation. **Krishna Kumar, Commissioner**, had two meetings with staff to get feedback and discuss how to go ahead and what their role is to promote awareness from the Commission. He wrote five papers on the subject; what it is and how we can help. He contacted some churches to go and talk to them. **Judith Jolie, Commissioner** provided update on the Caregivers Grant

and 16-19 were approved to be funded. **Kevin Leary, Commissioner** and **Chair, Anne Herbster** reviewed the 20/21 Communication Plan and have met marks in a lot of items, but still missing the mark on reaching everyone. They are putting together a 2023 Communication Plan and looking forward to other members joining them in this plan. **Lori Newman** suggested tapping into Community's HOA's newsletters, creating awareness all over. She said we already do a good job of outreach and reviewing what services Montgomery County have. **Chair, Elaine Koubek** asked if there were any other comments. **Stephen Smith, Commissioner** reminded everyone of St. Patrick's Day and wanted to share his favorite Irish blessing, "May you live as long as you want and never want as long as you live".

Alexis D'Angelo Swope asked everyone to bring ideas to the next meeting as to what to use the budget for. **Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison** said the next Budget hearing is on April 17, 2023. She said Sunflower Bakery on Lewis Avenue received a community grant for supportive employment for people with disabilities. **Elaine Koubek, Chair** suggested concentrating on one point to the Mayor and Council at a time and that the Gude Drive entrance is the priority and the property tax increase in the five-year plan can be discussed later.

Meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM. **Next meeting:** April 20, 2023 –Virtual – 10:00 AM