

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

September 16, 2021, 10:00 a.m. (virtual)

**Members Present:** Anne Herbster, Chair; Lynn Wagman, Commissioner; Krishna Kumar, Commissioner; Katie Ostrowski, Commissioner; Mike Laux, Commissioner; Alicia Seymour, Commissioner; Jack Sprague, Commissioner; Alicia Seymour

**Staff:** Sheryl Roff; Fran Jablonski; Andrea Rogers; Trish Evans; Mariella Correal; Terri Hilton; Alexis D'Angelo Swope

**Guest:** Harvey Mazer

**Absent:** Elaine Koubek, Commissioner; Norma Brailsford, Commissioner; Beryl Feinberg, Mayor and Council Liaison

**Chair, Anne Herbster** started the meeting at 10:00 a.m. She started with well wishes to everyone.

**Chair, Anne Herbster** asked the Commission to review the minutes from the June 17, 2021 when they are sent out to be ready to vote on them at the October 21, 2021 along with these minutes.

**Chair, Anne Herbster** introduced the guest, **Harvey Mazer** who would like to see the age to become a member of the Senior Center lowered to 55+. **Chair, Anne Herbster** gave a brief background of the Commission and said it is an advocacy group that works on behalf of the Seniors in the City of Rockville and they meet on the third Thursday of each month. She said the last time the request for lowering the age for the Senior Center was visited was three years ago. It was pushed down by Rockville Seniors Inc. due to funding and lack of space and hasn't been visited since. **Harvey Mazer** went over the information he submitted that was sent to the group. He said there are 17 senior recreation centers in Montgomery County and wants to know why Rockville is the only one that isn't 55+.

**Terri Hilton** reported that originally all senior recreation centers were 60+ in Maryland. Now 35% in Maryland are 55+. She also said as to funding, our center is heavily subsidized by the City and to lower the age will affect the Senior Center budget and will affect other facilities as a budget shift. After some discussion and sharing of ideas and suggestions, **Commissioner, Katie Ostrowski** made the motion to table this for another meeting to prepare and gather information on population growth and trends and other data.

**Commissioner, Lynn Wagman** seconded it. All were in favor. The motion carried. **Chair, Anne Herbster** said that the Board needs to capture more information and it did not pass the last time it was presented to the Mayor and Council because of lack of information. She told **Harvey Mazer** the Board would welcome his help and would like to go in fully informed, knowledgeable, and prepared.

**Harvey Mazer** thanked everyone and was welcomed to stay for the rest of the meeting.

**Alexis D'Angelo Swope** introduced **Mariella Correal** as the Senior Center's new Senior Services Program Coordinator and will be providing Outreach to the seniors. She has been working for ten years with youth and families in case management. Her bilingual skills give her great opportunities to work with some of our seniors. **Alexis D'Angelo Swope** reported the Senior Center opened on June 14, 2021 on Monday through Friday from 9:00 to 4:00. The gym will be opened additionally at 7:00 AM on Monday and Wednesday. She said it was slow at first and is starting to pick up. The in-person lunch program started this week, and the numbers went from 80 pre-covid down to 10. We have had a huge registration for hybrid or online classes. We are having staff stager themselves in the building and mask wearing is mandatory in the building and on our buses.

**Trish Evans** reported on the Villages. She said there is an East Side Community event on September 26, 2021 from 3:00 – 4:30 PM at The Pump House, 401 S. Horners Lane. There will be a classic rock band. It is an outdoor event open to all ages. It will be featured in the monthly Senior Center newsletter. The newest village, Gardens Village, will have a hybrid kick-off gathering on October 17, 2021 at College Gardens Park at 3:00 PM. Twinbrook Village never stopped. They are doing a Bird/Nature Walk event on October 10, 2021 at RedGate Park. There will be plant experts as well as sketch pads and colored pencils for kids. King Farm Village has embraced virtual events. They have a very active book club and movie showings each month. The Pumphouse Village will have an outdoor meeting on October 3, 2021. The Cookie Brigade is still cooking to welcome new neighbors.

**Terri Hilton** reported on the status of the ADA. She said the building is almost completed. The contractors are finishing the side entrance with a new ramp and awning. The sinks have been replaced throughout the building. The water fountains have water bottle fillers. The kitchen floor has been replaced. The green house renovation can not be accomplished right now.

**Andrea Rogers** reported she is continuing to provide service to clients. 90 Monroe Street will be moving residents to the Upton 2 or somewhere else soon. The first phase will begin in late October and hope to be completed by December. She is working with volunteers to assist in packing. She is also working on helping clients with recertifications that were postponed and ones that are coming up. There will be a hybrid presentation on Medicare Open enrollment on October 5.

**Terri Hilton** said RSI paid for all the zoom accounts and the new flooring in the Gift Shop.

**Chair, Anne Herbster** shared the Commission's Annual Report for the Board to see. It will be presented to the Mayor and Council at the meeting on October 18, 2021. The meeting will be virtual. What you are viewing now is a draft. She requested that the Board review and send their thoughts, comments, and suggestions. She said there hasn't been a report done in 2 years. She said she highlighted items affecting the seniors in Rockville. **Commissioner, Krishna Kumar** would like the report to recognize the staff and all their hard work especially during this time. **Chair, Anne Herbster** continued going through the report. She said it shows that the aging population in the City is very significant. 25% of the City's population is over age 60. The wants, needs and power of seniors need to be factored in. Diversity is far greater in Rockville than the national average. Diversity growth is important because their needs will be different. Virtual programs and services helped to alleviate isolation. **Commissioner, Krishna Kumar** mentioned that the Commission organized and held an election forum for the Mayor and Council election at the Senior Center and look to do them for future elections.

**Chair, Anne Herbster** said 92% of residents have computers and 93% have internet. **Alexis D'Angelo Swope** said the Senior Center has been providing free technical services through Andre Hickman, Computer Room, and have provided donated computers and laptops. All the Commission members thanked **Chair, Anne Herbster** for preparing this report and presenting it to the Mayor and Council.

**Chair, Anne Herbster** thanked Harvey Mazer and welcomed him to continue to contribute. She said the report will be presented to the Mayor and Council on October 18, 2021.

**Liaison/groups:**

**RSI:** Nothing reported.

**Pete Sante Fund:** Nothing reported.

**United Seniors of Maryland (USM) Forum:** Nothing reported.

**Chair, Anne Herbster** thanked everyone for attending.

Meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM. **Next meeting:** October 21, 2021 – **Virtual**