

Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting
2 March 2020, 10am
Hampton Senior Center

Present

Linda Kindred-Chair, C’Faison Harris-Vice Chair, Martha Clark, Christine Evans, Doris Farmer, Yvonne Gaynor, George Gwynn, Ingrid Kirschman, Sandra Waldo, Beatrice Sykes-PAA, Susan Elswick-HSC

Guests

Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Hampton School Board Chair Ann Cherry, William H. Jackson, Georgia Scott, TRIAD Chair Christine Schetting, Mike Schetting, Audrey M. Johnson, Pauline Phillips, Chris Bowman, Helen Riggins

Call to Order and Welcome

Ms. Kindred called the meeting to order at 10:00am. No roll call performed. All present were welcomed. She noted that Mr. Sean Clark was unable to attend; minutes from February meeting were not available at this time. Director Dave McCauley spoke on behalf of HPRLS, congratulating members on the great job being done and encouraging them to continue. He added that this committee carries weight within the Hampton community. He also stated that he would be present at upcoming meetings.

Mr. McCauley addressed some of the issues pertaining to the Senior Center facility, stating that the Parks Crew, under the supervision of Chris Guthomson, has what is termed a “pick list” of jobs needing to be done and the crew is diligently working toward completing those jobs in a timely manner.

Old Business

Ms. Kindred thanked Mr. McCauley for the new Senior Center benches requested in January. She noted that, initially, other options for procuring the benches were suggested, one being the collection of plastic bags for a local contest. When a required amount of bags was collected, they would be turned in and a bench would be awarded. The issue with that program was the Senior Center was not

equipped to handle or store the required number of bags, and there was no way to have the bags either picked up or delivered to participating stations.

The new benches, procured by HPRLS, are located at the outside and inside entrances of the center and will certainly be beneficial to patrons of the center.

New Business

Ms. Kindred asked if members or guests had any ideas or suggestions to improve their own living conditions and those of the city's senior demographic, including those persons with limited and/or other abilities. She asked that they be submitted to her attention and include the commenter's name, address, and telephone/email information.

Ms. Kindred also asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. McCauley. Ms. Harris asked who would be representing HPRLS in Mr. Clark's absence, and asked whether agendas and minutes would be available. He stated that he would be present at the next few meetings, then asked Ms. Harris if she would take on the task of note taking for the time being, to which she agreed.

Ms. Gaynor asked if the monthly "huddle" sessions in which HPRLS, lead agencies, and SCAC leadership participated, would still be held. Mr. McCauley stated that he would continue with the huddles and requested that information be provided concerning scheduling convenient time slots. Ms. Gaynor said she was appreciative of his support, but noted that getting the word out about SCAC meetings and events continues to be an issue. She asked if publicizing via the city's website, TV Channel 47, and the local newspaper could be utilized. Mr. McCauley stated that he would need to know exactly what should be publicized and he would discuss this with his marketing staff.

Guest Audrey Johnson later added that Channel 47 is only available through cable service, with many seniors not having have access to this and other media platforms. School Board Chair Ann Cherry added that the Daily Press previously published community events in its Town Square section, but since the Virginian Pilot purchased the Daily Press, it is almost impossible to use that platform.

Guest William Jackson asked what the cross-section of representation of SCAC was. Both Ms. Kindred and Ms. Gaynor answered that the city's senior population is well represented by board members who come from all demographics. Guest

Chris Bowman also noted that SCAC is represented by participating agencies such as the Peninsula Agency on Aging (PAA), the Department of Human Services, the Foster Grandparent Program, in addition to the City Manager's Office.

Agency Reports

Peninsula Agency on Aging (PAA): Ms. Sykes announced that the agency was currently undergoing budget planning. It will host the 2020 Community Forum on Aging on March 4, 10am-2pm, at the Hampton Roads Convention Center with keynote speaker Billie Jordan of "The Granny Whisperer" and founder of the internationally acclaimed "Hop Op-eration" Senior Dance Crew. Registration is \$10 and will be accepted online and at the door. Ms. Sykes noted that over 950 people have already registered and they look forward to that number increasing. For more information, call 757-873-0541.

Also distributed were flyers describing the 2020 Decennial Census and the importance of completing the census information. Ms. Sykes explained that a community benefits most when the census is able to count everyone. The community receives "its fair share of the more than \$675 billion per year in federal funds spent on schools, hospitals, roads, public works and other vital programs." (www.census.gov 10-28-2019). Census data also determines the number of delegates each state is granted. Everyone should be aware that for every uncounted person, \$2,000 in much needed funding is not received.

Ms. Sykes noted there were three ways to respond to the census: online, by phone, and by mail. The majority of census data will be collected online, which saves taxpayer money, conserves natural resources, and processes data more efficiently. For those without online access, census forms will be mailed. If mailed forms are not completed, a census worker will contact those residents who have not responded via online or by mail. She added that because census takers are government employees, they are sworn to confidentiality, so seniors and others should not be worried about compromised data.

Lastly, Ms. Sykes announced that the Older Americans Act is currently in the House and Senate, but has not yet been passed.

A question was asked if PAA's monthly Lunch & Learn sessions are still ongoing. Ms. Sykes will check into the scheduling and try to have that info available by the end of this meeting.

Hampton Senior Center: Ms. Elswick that HSC will have a table at PAA's 45th Community Forum on Aging and staff will be attending several of the workshops. Because it is now too late for SCAC to have a table, Ms. Gaynor said this signals a missed opportunity to get the word out to the community about SCAC. She added that she staffed a SCAC table at a previous event and will be willing to do so for other community events, adding that others would be needed as a backup on those days she has to work. Ms. Kindred stated that this would be discussed at the next meeting. Ms. Clark asked if it would be feasible to combine SCAC and HSC tables; Ms. Gaynor, however, noted that while the two groups could certainly collaborate, it would be more advantageous to have them remain as separate entities at events.

Guest Georgia Scott added that the Senior Center would host its 2020 Senior Forum on Wednesday, May 20, 11am-2pm that would be a great opportunity for SCAC representation. Ms. Elswick said there are no vendor table fees, and setup begins around 8:30am the day of the event. Ms. Gaynor also noted that SCAC promotional (give-away) items are running low and more need to be ordered as soon as possible.

Ms. Elswick announced several more events, such as an

- "Eat From My Plate" program on March 19, 12-1pm
- Virtual Dementia Tour (workshop) on April 9, 12-2p
- Easter Play and trip to Rocky Hock House, Edenton, NC on April 21
- "Just for You" Spa Treatment, May 8, 11am-12:30pm

Contact the Senior Center for more information at 757-727-1601.

Mayor's Office: Vice Mayor Gray stated that it was good to know what issues can be supported and promoted by the Mayor's Office and City Council and that he appreciates the work of the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee and its participating lead agencies.

Ms. Gaynor asked Vice Mayor Gray how the proposed state budget would affect the city's senior population. He stated that although he did not know all of the

particulars, he would certainly find out more and bring that information back to the committee.

Guest Comments

The Community Development Department hosted workshops in February where the public voiced their opinions and concerns on affordable housing, assistance for special needs, and the like. Guest Pauline Phillips stated that the city's Housing Authority's Five-Year Consolidated Housing Plan leaves much to be desired when it comes to assistance and that for the four years she's been on the waiting list for home repairs; she's just now reached the number 9 slot on the list. She then asked if the city is able to hire people to act as senior advocates, particularly those needing help in writing letters and/or going through required processes to request and receive funding.

Vice Mayor Gray stated that the workshops were advertised on Hampton E-News. He added that the Hampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority (HRHA) has a list of repair/maintenance items, but there are already 300 people on the waiting list and HRHA only addresses 3 to 4 of those 300 annually, so one can see how it took Ms. Phillips so long to get to her #9 slot. Ms. Phillips stated that she understands more seniors need to be visible at meetings in order to have their voices heard and concerns addressed, but it's difficult for many to get to these meetings. Both Vice Mayor Gray and Ms. Kindred asked Ms. Phillips to meet with them briefly after adjournment.

Ms. Scott added that people could only receive assistance if they show up at meetings affecting their lives and lifestyles. She reiterated that ways must be developed to keep the city's senior population informed and involved.

Ms. Gaynor feels that an advocate should be at each of the recreation centers to assist with and guide seniors through obtaining information that is advantageous to them. Vice Mayor Gray stated that SCAC is that vehicle to getting city leadership to address senior issues. Mr. Jackson asked if this was a community-wide issue, noting that not every senior citizen has or wants to use a computer, and that some don't even feel comfortable discussing issues via the phone. Ms. Gaynor answered that there is a need for an ombudsman or someone who can advise on who makes decisions regarding senior services and how services are selected and managed.

Adjournment

Before adjourning, Ms. Kindred asked members and guests to consider all that had been presented and to come to the April 6 meeting with ideas and/or viable solutions.

Meeting adjourned at 11:07am.

*Minutes submitted 3 March 2020
C'Faison Harris, Vice Chair*