

## Portage Senior Citizens Advisory Board

**MONTH: August 16, 2017**

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Ann Perkins, Mary Lou Petrulio, Trudy Riker, Art Roberts, Larry Smith, Albert Steffens, Sharon White, Bill Wieringa

Absent Excused:

Absent Un-excused: Jean Laker Wenz, Gloria Padilla Carlson

Guests: Don Ryan and Ann Zemlick

Staff: Kim Phillips, PSC Manager

Call to order time: 2:30 PM

Corrections to previous minutes: None

The minutes for July were approved with a motion by Al Steffens and seconded by Trudy Riker.

### **Guest Speakers:**

Don Ryan and Ann Zemlick provide a brief presentation regarding the potential for a county wide senior millage.

From Don: We believe every older adult has the right to live out their lives in a cost effective, safe way. The people of Kalamazoo County deserve the right to voice their opinion. The last few months this has become a party issue with the County Commission divided between Republicans and Democrats. Area Agency on Aging power point was received very well five years ago but the thought was to wait for an appropriate time and the issue was tabled with an extra \$300,000 allotted to the Area Agency on an annual basis until the vote on a millage had taken place and had been enacted. Nothing has happened. Don wrote letters to the commissioners urging action. At the July 5<sup>th</sup> meeting the commissioner Mike Quinn said it was time to recognize the letters and to take action on a senior millage. July 18<sup>th</sup> was a lengthy discussion and a split between parties. On the whole there was support, with 37 volunteers who spoke their support on the millage. The trend shows the overall county population of adults over 60 years of age is increasing rapidly and reveals a double in Asian and Hispanic over 60 growth rate in the county. Older adults who move to Kalamazoo County stay here.

From Ann: The stats reveal that there is a gap between income and needs to be covered by Social Security. Average incomes (statistically) show a majority of seniors barely above qualifying numbers that would bring help through agencies. In age, there is a gap between 55 and 60 during which a person is not eligible for agency benefits and the wait list for assistance is impressive. The Medicaid financial assistance threshold was developed in the 1960s and is outdated. Twenty nine percent of those 65-74 have no retirement savings. This

percentile will grow. The time during which a person will need long term care averages three years, but is growing. Semi-private room in nursing home is \$290+ for BASIC care on a daily basis. Private duty care costs \$21 an hour. The current average wait time for assistance is more than one year, nearly a year and three quarters. The list is prioritized according to need. Those in greatest need are first. Not all those who wait attain services, some die, some cannot afford assisted living.

Trudy Riker asked how this works with Title 19. Ann responded, people on Medicaid are directed to the most appropriate source for assistance. Public dollars are directed to those in greatest need. Meals on Wheels waiting list is three and a half to four years. Meals on Wheels has a wait list of approximately 150. 240 are on the AAA wait list currently. Medicaid dollars factor in only in a very small amount. People don't normally think of agency assistance until they are in crisis.

Larry Smith commented that the trouble is they were going to put a task force together to pull in what the needs are. County Commission makes their party preference well known, and it should not be political and divisive.

Manager Kim Phillip asked, if a millage was to pass, how are those dollars allocated?

Ann: Services for potential funding include In-Home personal care, respite, meals, transportation, Tuesday Tool Men handyman assistance, adult day programming, Senior Center staffing support, healthy living programs such as Matter of Balance, potentially AMP. \$2.7 million each year in support of seniors would cost the homeowner of a \$100,000 house about 30 dollars a year in taxes. Stakeholders are forming a task force to look at needs. It just makes good business sense to vote this in, help people live at home, keep them out of the nursing homes and away from those costs.

Once this whole process gets set in motion, Don and Ann are happy to come and provide informational presentations. There may come a time when board members can support this millage. Email your county commissioner. Two for the Portage area. Kim will email board members contact info.

MMAP services are in high demand and MMAP may be disappearing due to lack of Federal funding.

### **Special Events, Kim Phillips:**

WMUK did a half hour piece on speed dating which led to a call from the producer who indicated that the Today Show was interested in doing a piece on this.

### **Travel Program, Trudy Riker:**

September 18 trip preview from 2-6:00 PM, five trips went out in July.

### **Friends of PSC Board Update, Trudy Riker:**

Donor event 55 attended, very positive feedback from the recognition. The website has been updated. Special events were discussed, the purse sale is coming up on September 23 with an optional \$10 preview ticket at 9:00 AM includes a mimosa. Fall appeal kick-off event begins on October 10<sup>th</sup> at Schrier Park and volunteers are needed. Mystery dinner is coming up in November. Donor lunches are being scheduled for corporate supporters. Harding's eScrip use was encouraged, sign up on line.

Kim Phillips: Harding's eScrip has changed, you can sign up for this on line and initiate a donation by typing in your phone number at the payment kiosk when paying.

**Legislative Update, Art Roberts:**

The Senor Millage is still a hot topic. August 21 at the KCASI meeting this coming Monday Fred Upton's Aide and someone from Debbie Stabenow's office should be on hand to answer questions. Art will be there greeting people.

**Health and Wellness:**

There was no report on Health and Wellness at this meeting.

**Managers Report:**

The report to the city manager was distributed to board members.

**Old Business:**

Prohibitive behaviors and repercussions disciplinary procedure was distributed by and board members were asked to think about what other infractions or codes of conduct that should be included such as possession of a weapon and/or solicitations. At the next meeting the board will discuss these matters.

**New Business:**

There was no new business

**Advisory Board Comments:**

Sharon White asked about the purse sale volunteer work which will begin this week.

**Citizen comments:**

None.

Time Adjourned: 3:30 PM

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 18, 2:30PM