

Portage Senior Citizens Advisory Board

MINUTES: July 20, 2023

ATTENDANCE: Linda Zoeller, Jean Balazs, Joan Stommen, Larry Smith, Kim Phillips, John Lobo, Art Roberts, Karl Hokenmaier, Trudy Riker

Absent Excused: Sharon White, Linda Ciampi

Absent Un-excused: None

Guests:

- The Alzheimer Support Group: Sharon Richie
- City Manager's Office: Patrick McGinnis, City Manager and Adam Herringa, Chief Operating Officer.

Staff: Kim Phillips

Call to order time: Chairperson Linda Zoeller called the meeting to order at 2:32PM.

Corrections to previous minutes: Larry requested that previous meeting minutes identify Doug Gilchrist as a Friends of PSC Board member in the Friends of PSC Board Update.

Art motioned to approve the minutes from 6/21/2023 meeting with mentioned corrections; Joan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New Business:

- Sharon Ritchie, the Alzheimer's Support Group Facilitator for the PZSC presented a vision on designating the City of Portage as a Dementia Friendly Community (DFC) and why it is important to Portage.
 - Sharon described dementia as a general condition that affects memory or other mental functions that impair daily life. It is a long-term condition for which there is no cure and its progression can't be predicted. There are many causes for dementia with Alzheimer being the most common.
 - A DFC provides a safe, accessible and dignified quality of life to people who suffer from dementia. It also provides for some relief to caregivers.
 - Education is key for Portage to become a DFC.
 - Saline MI is a DFC. The City Council approved a resolution to make Saline a DFC and to provide approximately 45 minutes of training to municipal staff to recognize and assist persons with cognitive disabilities.
 - There are economic benefits in providing opportunities to people suffering from dementia and their caregivers.
 - Businesses could consider making minor accommodations to make dementia patients more comfortable.
 - Memory cafes are dementia friendly places where persons living with dementia and their loved ones can enjoy an outing. Several have been established throughout Michigan. These establishments sometimes offer entertainment, physical activities or joint projects. The goal is to make a positive difference for caregivers and people with dementia.

- The nearest city with a memory café is Paw Paw but it is a significant distance for Portage residents to travel.
- PZSC has recognized the need for a memory café and has approved the creation of one. Current local establishments that provide adult care are at capacity.
- Chelsea Senior Center offers an adult care program called Ease The Day that provides activities, socialization, physical exercise and lunch. It is beneficial to those who attend it as well for the caregivers who get an opportunity for relaxation.
- DFC is aligned with the Portage 2025 Visioning Project.
- Sharon requested that DFC be added to the next City Council meeting agenda and that Council pass a resolution to make Portage a DFC and provide training to all city departments staff. Steps:
 - PZSC to start development of a memory café and train its staff.
 - Contact the Chamber of Commerce to add DFC to a future meeting agenda to implement education and training.
 - Train City staff.
 - Train faith-based communities.
- Patrick McGinnis would like a recommendation from the Portage Senior Citizens Advisory Board to bring the topic up for debate during a City Council meeting; asked if a copy of the Saline, MI resolution can be shared? The program's rollout will likely require collaboration between the municipality and the PZSC.
- Pat invited the Board members to the next public hearing on August 8 to comment on the need to make Portage a DFC.
- Karl motioned to recommend that City Council pass a resolution establishing a DFC in Portage, starting with planning for a memory café at the PZSC and training for PZSC and City staff. Joan seconded; Motion passed.
- Topic to be included in PSC Advisory Board meeting agendas going forward.
- There is training planned for City staff in September, which could include dementia awareness.

Travel Program Trudy Riker:

- Tabled for next meeting.

Legislative Update, Art Roberts:

- Christine Morse's Coffee Hour is Friday July 22 from 9:30AM to 10:30AM at the Oshtemo Township Hall.

Friends of PSC Board Update, Trudy Riker:

- The Friends of PSC Board decided to maintain the organization's current name.

Youth Advisory Board:

- None

Manager's Report, Kim Phillips:

- PZSC will receive a \$10k grant to encourage Covid and flu vaccinations for older residents.

- The minibuses were delivered and were sent to a shop for installing body wrap.

Building/Program Updates:

- Tabled for next meeting.

Activities Reminders:

- Tabled for next meeting.

Advisory Board Comments:

- Larry recommended that future announcements regarding a memory café involve family members who are likely to be the patients' caregivers. Sharon informed the meeting participants that caregivers are beginning to be referred to as care partners.
- Jean expressed concerns of potential negative interactions from PZSC members towards memory café attendees and would like to know how the PZSC would handle such situations. Kim suggested that it will require some education, which the PZSC staff will prepare.

Time Adjourned: 3:31PM

Next meeting: August 23, 2023