

SENIORS BOARD MEETING

February 14, 2019

Draft for review

Presiding: Selby Clark

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m.

Roll call: Present: Selby Clark, Candyce Beneke, John Palmer, Ann Crowley, Joan Johnson, Tom Brombacher, Stan McCandless, Virginia Lootens, Carlos de la Torre, Susan Davis, George Baker

Absent: Ruth Becker (resigning from the Board), Judy Faulkner, Rebecca Dozier

Minutes: The minutes (as submitted by George with notes from Candyce) were amended and approved.

Guests: Bob Higley (Council), Kellye Burke (Council)

Senior Services Office: Toby Brooks **Recreation Center:** Susan White

Visitors: Alida Drewes (resident), Dick Yehle (resident)

Minutes of January 10 were amended and approved (as submitted by George).

Citizen's Comments:

1. Question about the city's purchase of land to prevent the church from obtaining it (Alida).
2. Concern that \$120,000 had been allocated for a remodeling of the Rec Center but no extra exemption for seniors (Alida)
3. Concern about the absence of a city dog part in unused city property, also a personal trainer at the Rec Center (Alida)
4. Concern about the absence of a seniors' center where seniors can congregate (Alida)
5. Concern that for Election Day, the county should consider having consolidated polling stations, and to urge that West U. have a polling station for early voting as an alternative to Fiesta (Dick)

Council Meeting Report: Kellye Burke

1. Reported that the City is to seek to acquire 3 residential properties. The middle house on Rice Blvd. has been sold to the City.
2. Commented that a dog park in West U. has met with strong neighborhood opposition and is not under consideration. Susan commented that there had been two task forces that had evaluated the feasibility of a dog park. A park would create a challenge of dealing with waste water as well as traffic. Also, two new staff positions would be required for maintenance. Several persons regard the Bellaire dog park as preferable to the nearby Danny Jackson Dog Bark on Westpark Blvd.
3. ATT has withdrawn its application for a variance.

Council Comment: Bob Higley

1. Urges a cooling-off period of 2 years to prohibit the refiling of a variance application by ATT.

APAC Report

1. Virginia did not attend the January meeting for health reasons.
2. APAC meets on the 1st Thursday of the month at 9 a.m. Toby suggested having a back-up representative, but a volunteer did not step forward.

Good Neighbor Team: Toby Brooks

1. Valentine cards were mailed
2. At an event of the National Charity League (Heart of Texas Girls), 25 seniors attended.
3. At theme luncheon, Ed Heathcott served 80 guests

Senior Services report: Toby Brooks

1. A hike on January 30 at the Lone Star Trail near Huntsville had 14 people who faced muddy trails.
2. On February 5, a fishing trip with 20 people was a success by all metrics except for catching fish.
3. There was tour of the Jenny Elizabeth Hughes park.
4. On eight Wednesday's at 2:15, there is a showing of the WWII series "Band of Brothers," which has been well attended.
5. *Speed Friendship Day* will be held on Tuesday, April 16 at noon. There will be interest groups such as (Nature, Culture & Arts, Politics & Foreign Affairs & Exercise/Fitness, Travel). People will be paired up for a few minutes to learn about the other person. Afterwards, people can reconnect if there's a match of interests and chemistry. Sign up required. A suggestion was made for Toby to sign up every member of the Seniors Board (George).

The "contra" dancing series continues, meeting 1st & 3rd Saturdays from 7:30-9:30 p.m.¹

Parks & Recreation (Susan White)

1. Park Lover's Ball was a big success: \$425,000 gross with an estimated \$200,000 net.
2. Discussion of the remodeling plans at the Recreation Center, with funds provided by the Friends of the Park, not from taxpayer money. The Center will remain open during remodeling.
3. There will be a donor-sponsored resurfacing of the basketball court (\$7,500).
4. Redevelopment plans are in progress for several parks, including the resurfacing of the Colonial Park pool. A donor-sponsored bench and rides are to be funded by Friends of the Park.
5. Concept development is moving forward for other parks.

In response to Susan's use of "customer," there was discussion about the signage at the Rec Center. George suggested "patron," but Susan said that that term was being phased out.²

¹ George and Mary Baker have attended three sessions. There were about 40 participants with live music and a caller. The group used to meet in the Heights for many years. Membership is available or \$10 session. The ages of dancers on February 2 ranged from about 12 to 99. The modal age was about 60. There have been from 3-10 musicians at successive events.

Old Business:

1. Concerns about the fee structure at the Rec Center, especially in relation to residents between 65-74 for whom there is membership fee (Stan). Susan White observed that there is an opt-out option for seniors regarding the fee.
2. Concern that Martin Luther King Day was not observed in city offices (Stan).
3. Concern that the arrangement with the adjacent Baptist Church to allow use of the Community Center on Sunday Morning doesn't follow the standard fee schedule (Stan).

New business:

1. Suggestion for a website review of material regarding the senior board and services (George). Kellye observed that the City is undertaking a revamp of its website.
2. Question asked if a West U. cellphone app could be developed to remind residents of upcoming events (George).
3. Concern about getting seniors to use the Rec Center (George). Ann observed that it's packed when she is there.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Next meeting: March 14, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.

New Business suggestions (George):

1. Consider Alida's comment about the lack of a West U. venue where seniors can congregate.
2. Ask for Susan's discernment about signage at the Rec Center.

Submitted: George Baker (with help from notes by Candyce).

² In email exchanges afterwards with Susan, George suggested "Customer and Member Services," so as to give recognition to residents who have memberships, while recognizing that others (as with swim classes) are rightly classified as "customers." Selby weighed in favorably on this suggestion.