

**MINUTES OF THE
WATERTOWN COMMISSION ON AGING**
Regular Meeting Wednesday, April 3, 2019

Elizabeth Schulze
Paul Ericsson
Jim Sandquist
Cindy Raymond
Cory Allen
Rachel Bender
Mayor Steve
Washburn
Debra Favorit

1. Call to Order

Commission chair Elizabeth Schulze called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in Room A of Watertown Community Center.

Members present: Schulze, Cory Allen, Cindy Raymond, Rachel Bender, Deb Favorit, Jim Sandquist, Paul Ericsson, Dawn Plumer, Mayor Steve Washburn

Staff present: City Clerk/Treasurer Lynn Tschudi

Guests present: Katy Read, Jennie Pogreba, Mario Cortolezzis, Anna Doyle, Pastor Jeff Engholm, Ron Wilke, Steve Duske, Suzie Larkin, Holly Krantz

2. Adopt Agenda (motion needed)

BENDER MOVED, ALLEN SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE AGENDA AS PRESENTED. ALL PRESENT VOTED AYE, MOTION CARRIED.

3. Approval of Minutes (motion needed)

RAYMOND MOVED, ALLEN SECONDED A MOTION TO ADOPT THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 6TH AND MARCH 6TH, 2019. ALL PRESENT VOTED AYE, MOTION CARRIED.

A. Minutes from February 6, 2019

B. Minutes from March 6, 2019

4. Approval of Treasurers Report

BENDER MOVED, RAYMOND SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE TREASURER'S REPORT. ALL PRESENT VOTED AYE, MOTION CARRIED.

5. Introduction of Guests

All guests introduced themselves and their organization affiliation.

6. New Business

A. Request from Jennie Pogreba

Jennie Pogreba reported that the senior dance will be held at the community center on Saturday April 6th at 1pm. She is thankful for the donations and advertisement for the event. Pogreba is asking for a donation from the commission of \$65 for decorations.

ERICSSON MOVED, RAYMOND SECONDED A MOTION TO DONATE \$65 TO THE SENIOR DANCE.

MOTION WAS AMENDED.

BENDER MOVED, RAYMOND SECONDED A MOTION TO DONATE \$100 TO THE SENIOR DANCE WITH RECEIPTS SUBMITTED FOR REIMBURSEMENT. ALL PRESENT VOTED AYE, MOTION CARRIED.

B. Aging discussion - Katy Read from Star Tribune

Katy Read with the Star Tribune asked about receiving photos from the senior dance for publishing in the Star Tribune. Pogreba happily agreed.

Read explained about her article which is to include information on aging within a community. Read added that Watertown's 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically mentions seniors which sparked her interest in the community.

Schulze highlighted the Gold Fork program offered by Mario's. Bender explained the future intergenerational learning center location at the primary school.

Mario Cortolezzis told Read that the Gold Fork program was initiated due to the fact that seniors and others with medical impairments are home bound and unable to venture out to restaurants. Mario explained that the Carver County SHIP grant assisted in purchasing the containers for the food. Interested residents contact Mario directly to sign up. All funding is from the restaurant and local businesses. Volunteers who deliver the meals are from Watertown. Mario explained that there are five people signed up and they are looking for more recipients. Mario said the customers are treated with dignity and they pay \$50 per month for this service. Mario added that they are also interacting with residents and performing well checks daily.

Jim Sandquist gave background on the Watertown chapter of WeCab for Read. The City of Watertown launched the program in 2017. Sandquist said there are about two to three drivers from Watertown, a registrar, and a dispatch person. Sandquist explained that the rider needs to be mobile enough to get to the vehicle. Sandquist said he drove over 3,000 miles for WeCab last year. Rides are offered seven days a week. Corinne Allen explained that many of the rides are for medical, to attend church, but some are to perform volunteer work. Some riders request a ride to Bloomington, Edina, or Minneapolis. Read asked how well WeCab feels they are meeting the needs of Watertown. Schulze said there is a need in many smaller townships, but if there is not a volunteer base in that community, then rides cannot be offered there.

Bender added that through Community Education, there will be monthly transportation services for residents. Most of these trips are for shopping purposes which would have a fee.

Anna Doyle shared the library memory maker kit with the group. The kits are lent to caregivers to help with people who are dealing with Alzheimer's or dementia. Anna Doyle said the library is hoping to partner with the Gold Fork program by offering library books to the homes who receive food. Ericsson shared a story about intergenerational learning at the carver county libraries. He added the libraries offer large print books as well as audio books. Doyle highlighted the upcoming technology courses targeted to seniors. Read asked if they have seen people progress by utilizing these programs. Doyle said there are not many repeat customers so she is assuming the information is helpful.

The Watertown Fine Arts Council representative stated that there are many programs offered from the fine arts council. Many of them are at no cost to residents. Wilke added that the fine arts council sponsors various programs at the schools.

River City Theater Company representative, Suzie Larkin, said that they offer free admission to nursing home residents and senior centers for their performances. The actors are from ages 8 to 80.

Rachel Bender explained that there has been a transition in the community and schools over the past year. There is now a free space at what was the Primary School. Through listening sessions, they realized there is a need for programming for active older adults. They would like a specific space that they can call their own. Bender shared that the programs were partially funded for \$75,000 from the Otto Bremer grant. They plan to remodel 3 rooms at the Primary School for the active older adult. Ideas include a lounge, fitness area, craft area, etc. Bender said they are hoping to open the center by fall 2019. Superintendent Wilke said the addition of the senior area will enhance the offerings for all ages. He detailed the infant toddler care space and the hopes to connect the young to the old. Wilke said Watertown-Mayer has offered a robotics program for the first time this year. The program relies on adults to teach the students. Wilke said the relationships that are being formed are incredible.

Schulze said that Carver County public health has been a huge help in providing the commission with resources. Schulze said that Watertown is proud of how well all of the organizations work together to make events successful.

Pastor Jeff added that the congregation is woven into the big picture of the events occurring in Watertown.

Dawn Plumer said that the county depends on the City to generate the ideas and the county will help them achieve the goals.

Read asked what the largest challenge is for the seniors in Watertown. Paul Ericsson said there are many offerings for programs, but it is difficult to engage older residents to attend.

Washburn summarized that the commission on aging has done a great job at offering programming to seniors. They have also done a great job in volunteering for WeCab. The next step is to focus on housing for the future.

Read asked how many older people in the community have serious needs that are not being met. Commission discussed the baby boomer crisis. Pogreba touched on the staffing shortages for those caring for the elderly.

Steve Duske discussed the importance of family being the caregivers. He spoke about creating a faith in action program to assist seniors with daily tasks around home.

The group continued to discuss the aging population in Watertown after the official adjournment.

A. City Updates

B. Reports from Commission Members

8. Adjournment

BENDER MOVED, RAYMOND SECONDED A MOTION TO OFFICIAL ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 4:40PM. ALL PRESENT VOTED AYE, MOTION CARRIED.