

**Oakland County Senior Advisory Council Meeting**  
**October 17, 2022**  
**Waterford Oaks Activity Center**  
**10:00 am -12:00 am**

**WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Cameron McClure (District #5) welcomed all to this first in-person SAC meeting since the summer of 2021, and called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Before proceeding with the agenda, SAC Coordinator Pat Zawadzki shared with attendees the sad news that the son of SAC member Norene Yuskowatz (District #8) passed away last night. A message of condolence will be sent to Norene and her family on behalf of the Senior Advisory Council.

<b>Dist</b>	<b><u>RC</u></b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Dist</b>	<b><u>RC</u></b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Dist</b>	<b><u>RC</u></b>	<b>Name</b>
1	E	George Hanley	2	E	Linda Hyaduck	3	P	Jerry Sowik
4	E	Carolyn Morrison	5	P	Cameron McClure	6	E	Renata Erickson
7	E	Barbara Garbutt	8	E	Norene Yuskowatz	9	V	VACANT
10	E	Carolyn Price	11	P	Howard Adams	12	V	VACANT
13	P	Sylvia Whitmer	14	V	VACANT	15	P	Dianne Bubnar
16	P	Mark Kelly	17	P	Barbara Seldon	18	V	VACANT
19	E	Royetta Ealba	20	P	Martha Schlesinger	21	A	Cheryl Cushingberry
AL	P	Rock Abboud	AL	P	Marcus Jackson			

Key: **Dist** = District # (AL -Member-at-Large, SR – Staff Rep); **RC** = Attendance P – Present; E – Excused; A -Absent; V – Vacant); **Name** = District Council Member

Others Present:

Commissioner Marcia Gershenson (District #13)

Commissioner Kristen Nelson (District #5)

Dr. Russell Faust – Oakland County Medical Director

Sandy Dorey – Recreation Supervisor Park Administration

Pat Zawadzki, SAC Coordinator

Genessa Doolittle, Public Health Educator

## **APPROVAL of MINUTES**

Senior Advisory Council minutes for the meeting June 13, 2022 were unanimously approved.

## **COUNTY UPDATE**

Dr. Russell Faust, Oakland County Medical Director, reported to SAC members on a number of health-related topics.

- The CDC has redefined how it calculates covid transmission levels from a percentage of positive cases to a percentage of hospital beds occupied by covid patients. He felt this was a good change. There are currently 200-300 new cases reported per day (at the peak of the surge it was 3,000+ every day). There may be many reasons for the reporting decline, but one of the main ones could be that most testing is now being done at home and those results are not necessarily reported to the CDC. Regardless of reasons, hospitals are not currently being overwhelmed by covid cases.
- In answer to the question “is/are the vaccine boosters any good?” given that the covid virus is going through a natural evolution and new variants seem to be rapidly displacing the former ones, Dr. Faust said that every vaccine booster has some percentage of effectiveness, so he urged SAC members to get – and have their families get – every new booster because each one will provide some additional measure of protection. He also reported that people should not be concerned if they mix their covid vaccines/boosters (Pfizer and Moderna) – it might even be beneficial.
- In answer to the questions “how long will vaccine antibodies last? And how often should we be getting vaccinated?” he said that natural antibodies last 3-9 months so if you have gotten covid, you can wait 2-3 months before getting a booster to maximize antibody levels.
- Discussing the importance of not forgetting about the flu (in all the covid conversations) he told SAC members that the morbidity level was 6 1/2 times greater for those getting the flu and covid – so he urged everyone to get both vaccines.
- Asked about continuing to keep a 6ft. distance between people, he said it is beneficial but covid is an endemic virus – that is, it’s among us and is here to stay.

- There is no mandated or suggested specific HVAC or air filter system for public or private use. Most new air filtration systems are very sophisticated and effective.

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICE UPDATE**

An update from the County Executive Office was not able to be given because Ashley McBride, Community Engagement Manager, was unable to attend due to illness.

## **UPDATED LIST OF SENIOR CENTERS**

SAC members received a list of senior centers in Oakland County, updated as of October 10, 2022. The Excel document shows all the basic information for each of the 37 centers, including: the center's name, address, community it serves, name of the professional responsible and their contact information. Keeping the list updated is an ongoing process, and is important because the information has a number of different uses and audiences that want to access the information. Given the upcoming allocation of ARPA funds that will be made to interested/qualified/applying senior centers, SAC members were urged to review the information listed on their respective centers and share corrections/updates with SAC Chairman Cam McClure.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION FALL AND WINTER HAPPENINGS**

Sandy Dorey, Recreation Supervisor, reported on a wide variety of activities and programs that took place during the summer. The biggest 2022 success was Disability Dirt Day, held at the park in Holly, a program that was sponsored by LaFontaine (so it was free to the public) and provided ORV rides. The 2023 summer programs are now being developed. Winter 2022/23 programs will include Fireside Chats (by historians) at Addison Oaks, and will also have caroling.

Parks and Rec permits will be available in November, which can be picked up or applied for and mailed out. There is a big interest in expanding programs and activities for disabled residents – including adaptive golf. As soon as materials on these activities are completed they will be sent to Pat Zawadzki for distribution to SAC members.

Commissioner Gershenson (District #13) reported that the Commissioners are working to elevate parks facilities in the South of the county – in addition to the Red Oaks and Glen Oaks sites. A proposal to use some of the ARPA funds for upgrades has been approved and the department is developing ideas and plans. The commissioner who is overseeing this work is Gary McGillivray from Madison Heights (which had been in District #20, but will now be part of new District #3).

## **SAC BYLAWS REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Reporting for Bylaws subcommittee chair Barbara Garbutt, SAC and Bylaws subcommittee member Martha Schlesinger, reviewed the “tweaks” that have been recommended. The changes that are recommended will put the Bylaws in sync with the new number of county districts. They also will revise the timetable for the recommendation and appointment of SAC members by Commissioners and the County Executive, respectively, and for the election of SAC officers. Bylaws wording has also been clarified and/or tightened up throughout the document without changing the purpose or focus of any articles or sections.

The recommended changes to the Bylaws were unanimously adopted by the SAC members. A copy of the revised Bylaws will be available on the SAC website.

## **LEGISLATIVE AND BLUEPRINT WORKGROUP REPORTS**

Commissioner Kristen Nelson (District #5, and chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Healthy Aging) distributed a recent press release discussing the Commission’s recent approval of \$8.5 million that will be dedicated to senior initiatives countywide. The funds will be allocated as follows:

- \$5 million for Senior Centers for capital, technology, infrastructure, equipment improvements and/or professional development
- \$500,000 to fund a series of educational/COVID19 communications pieces for county seniors
- \$50,000 to offer funding opportunities to non-profit organizations that provide senior-centered services in Oakland County
- \$5,000 to reinstate the Oakland County Elderly Abuse Prevention Coalition

The Commission also approved an assignment of up to \$3 million for the development of a three-year Oakland County Chore Pilot Program.

The programming suggested by the Healthy Aging Ad Hoc Committee of the Commission was a result of the Blueprint for Successful Aging, developed in partnership with AAA1B, and will help guide communities in the county as they aim to address service gaps, unmet needs and opportunities.

Commissioner Nelson also discussed and distributed a brief background paper on the Senior Centers Matching Grant Program, a program which will be implemented to facilitate the distribution of the \$5 million to qualifying and applying senior centers in the county. The handout described the background, requirements, timeline, application scoring criteria, as well as the definition of the term 'qualified match' (and how to waive it) that will be used in the grant application process. The application will be accessed online. There will be 2 informational meetings – both will be virtual – and will be open to all who are interested in applying for a grant – the first on November 14, the second on November 28. The county's point person for this will be Ken Dobson, who can be reached either by email at [dobsonk@oakgove.com](mailto:dobsonk@oakgove.com) or by phone at (248) 858-0485

While there was enthusiastic interest in and support for this unprecedented allocation of funds for senior centers, the discussion around the implementation of Matching Grant Program elicited significant concerns from SAC members. Challenges seen as most central to ensuring the successful implementation of the program were:

- How the existing - often significant - inequality of financial and personnel resources among the 37 senior centers in Oakland County will be handled so that these inequalities will not impede any center's ability to respond to the grant application process.
  - Of particular concern was that those centers with the least resources:
    - not be unaware of, overlooked, or unable to participate in the grant allocation process and
    - not have their (most likely smaller sized) grant requests overshadowed by the (probably larger sized) grant requests from those centers that have the budget, programmatic breadth, and/or personnel to complete the application process within the tight timeframe allocated (October 31 to December 9) and take full advantage of the informational meetings scheduled only in the latter half of the timeframe.
  - Centers that do not have adequate staff may not even become aware of this funding opportunity, let alone be able to respond to it, because

emails are often not able to be read in a timely manner, and the participation timeframe window is small. Interested centers need to begin gathering their information and preparing their grant application immediately.

- How to make it clear that poorly and/or under-funded centers can waive the 'match' element outlined in the program's description, so that these centers – who probably need additional funding the most – will feel welcomed to and be included in the grant allocation process.

To overcome these and other challenges, the importance of strengthening direct communication with senior centers was also discussed, and suggestions for achieving this included augmenting the county's general emails with personal emails to center directors, followed up by phone calls. SAC members can – and should reach out to their respective senior centers to stress the key points in the background paper, urge their centers to think about how they could use additional funding and participate in the informational meetings, and direct any and all questions/concerns to Ken Dobson, as well as to Pat Zawadzki.

Direct and multi-layered communication (press releases, emails, calls) about this funding opportunity should also go to the elected and professional leadership of all cities, villages, and townships in Oakland County – pre and post the November 8 election – and to the funding sources and stakeholders of each of the county's senior centers.

Other general concerns centered around creating a clearer definition of a 'senior center' and determining what age is considered to be 'senior' in Oakland County. It was felt that both the commission and SAC should address these points and work together to clarify the issues. Commissioner Nelson said she would share the discussion outcomes with Commissioner Penny Luebs (District #16), who heads the Public Health and Safety Commission.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Pat Zawadzki, SAC Coordinator, reviewed the timetable and steps for the appointment/reappointment of individuals to the Senior Advisory Council. The elected commissioner in each district of the county is responsible for recommending one individual from their district.

Since there is an election for all county commissioners, and there may be changes stemming from the November 8 election, Pat reminded current SAC members that they will continue on the Senior Advisory Council until the end of December 2022. All county commissioners are officially installed in January 2023.

If you as a current SAC member are interested in continuing to serve, you are responsible for contacting your commissioner and asking if they would reappoint you or if they will be interviewing other candidates. There is a form that is available online, Nomination Application for Oakland County Senior Advisory Council, that needs to be filled out by anyone interested in serving on SAC, and should be given to your commissioner (either electronically or in hard copy).

Each district commissioner will submit a form for their recommended SAC member to the SAC Coordinator, Pat Zawadzki by the end of January 2023. If you are not selected by your commissioner to be your district's SAC rep, you can apply to be a SAC member At-Large.

There are 4 At Large seats on SAC. At Large members applications are reviewed by the SAC officers, who then conduct interviews of prospective At Large members, and make the final decision on who will be selected.

Regarding future SAC meetings, it was agreed that meetings from November 2022 until at least April 2023 will be held online.

Due to the extensive discussion of the Senior Centers Grants Program, Community Updates will be included in the November meeting agenda.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:06 PM.

**NEXT MEETING WILL BE VIRTUAL\*\***

**NOVEMBER 14, 2022**

**10:00am – 12:00PM**

**\*\*A LINK WILL BE EMAILED TO SAC MEMBERS SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING DAY**