

MSAC Advisory Council Meeting Minutes (DRAFT3)

March 9, 2020

MSAC Resource Room, 58 Barre Street, Montpelier, VT

NOTE: This meeting occurred just as issues and changes related to the coronavirus outbreak were starting to unfold, so these minutes may reflect information that changed later.

Meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm. Advisory Council (AC) members present: Chair Bob Barrett, Mary Alice Bisbee, Mary Carlson, Barbara Dall, Bill Doelger, Liz Dodd, Fran Krushenick, Dianne Maccario, Laura Morse and Suzi Swanson. No absentees.

The quorum requirement (6) was met, and then some.

Others present: MSAC Director Janna Clar, Assistant City Manager Cameron Niedermayer, and guests Wendy Hale, Linda Lane and Tooti McDermott.

Action on AC Meeting Minutes:

- Janna corrected one number in the draft January 13, 2020 meeting minutes: In the budget update segment on page one, the increase in total amount being requested from six towns was \$6,800 (not \$11,000). The AC accepted the minutes with that amendment.

Director's Notes (written notes provided) and Other Discussions:

- Annual MSAC Survey: The 2020 survey will go out the week of May 4 as part of the annual membership renewal mailing. It will use the process tested in 2019, i.e., the survey also will be available online (preferred), and members who return completed surveys by a certain date and attend the June 16 Annual Meeting will qualify for a raffle prize drawing held at that June 16 meeting. Mary C provided a handout outlining a few draft revisions resulting from an ad hoc survey committee (Mary, Mary Alice, Bob, Laura, and Barbara Smith) meeting the previous week and followup input from Janna. The entire survey form update must be completed by mid April to allow time to prepare the paper and Survey Monkey editions; therefore, by the end of March AC members should get a draft with a deadline to provide feedback on that draft.
- AC Vacancy Planning: The AC has one vacancy now, and terms for Mary, Liz and Fran end in June. Mary plans to run for another term, Fran does not, and Liz cannot because she has served on the AC for the maximum of 6 consecutive years. Janna mentioned three individuals who may be interested and noted that Laura is the only AC member from a supporting town.
- Fundraising Issues: Some local residents were displeased to get an MSAC funding request in their water bills. While Town Meeting Day supporting town funding requests were successful, they were not without controversy. Some Worcester residents were concerned about funding equity and clarity about how and why class fees vary with town of residence. Janna suggested putting more information on the MSAC website about the formula used to determine the amounts requested from towns. A proposal was moved and passed by the AC to hold its May meeting in Worcester, perhaps scheduling it to be compatible with the Worcester community meal. Janna noted that the time and location for AC meetings has already been publicized.
- City News and Coronavirus Preparation: Cameron Niedermayer (cniedermayer@montpelier-vt.org) happily announced that City voters passed the budget, including the MSAC budget. She focused the rest of her time on the City's response to the COVID-19 outbreak, stressing that they are taking their cues from the state's Health Department and Emergency Management offices.

[Three handouts relating to the virus were provided: (1) VT Dept. of Aging & Independent Living COVID-19 screening guidelines; (2) City recommendations for routine cleaning and disinfection; and (3) and an MSAC outline of questions for the AC to consider.] Cameron reported that their priority is to keep all City buildings open and healthy, routinely wiping down all surfaces and using a spray approved by the CDC to kill the virus. Questions raised included: in judging whether to cancel a large gathering, how many is "large" (A: to be determined); at what age is an elder considered vulnerable (A: 65+); and can the City have a hotline for residents to call (A: the City website now has a page dedicated to the virus, and 211 is the best phone resource). MSAC needs to decide which programs are most essential to elders, such as the home-delivered meal services. FEAST already enforces strict cleaning requirements for the kitchen and home-delivered meal containers and doing contingency planning independently (e.g., backup cook, meals and drivers to ensure continued access to meals in case program staff get sick) and in collaboration with other agencies and meal sites. Concerns were voiced that tenants upstairs from MSAC and other low income elders may not be able to afford special cleaning products designed to prevent the spread of the virus. Janna reported that MSAC already plans to postpone the March 27 FEAST fundraising event as well as the big rummage sale planned for early April.

- Other Matters Discussed: Janna and Cameron examined the grant application criteria and deadline for a recent federal opportunity for Village Project funding and determined the application could not be submitted this year. Bob and Suzi tentatively plan to join Janna and Dianne at an April 14 Village Project planning meeting. Liz pointed out that the Director's Notes and AC meeting minutes are important for documenting MSAC's history, suggesting we hire someone to record the minutes so all AC members may participate fully in the meeting. There was further discussion about the virus' potential impact on MSAC programs (e.g., yoga participants are being asked to bring their own mats, concern that some participants may feel gyped if their class is cancelled due to the instructor being sick while the same class with a different instructor continues, concern for the safety of drop-in group participants with no "instructor" responsible for sanitizing the furniture/equipment used).
- June 16 Annual Meeting: The AC in January agreed to plan and conduct the meeting, with staff only providing support as needed. The agenda and time of day are yet to be determined. All AC members were urged to attend a planning meeting scheduled for this purpose 1-2 pm on Monday, March 23.

Next Advisory Council Meeting

- Time/Place: Tentatively Monday May 11 in Worcester. Time/place/agenda yet to be determined. The May meeting would start at 4 pm according to the pattern decided earlier, but this may change based on Worcester communications and AC member availability.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.