

Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC)
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes (Draft 2)

Hybrid In-Person and Zoom Session: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 (3:30 – 5:00 pm)

Advisory Council (AC) members attending were Mary Carlson, Barbara Dall, Mariah Lane, Dianne Maccario, Laura Morse, Jean Olson, Suzi Swanson and Rick Winston. Not attending were Renea Bordeau and Robert Youngberg. The quorum requirement (6) was met.

Also attending were MSAC Director Janna Clar and Assistant City Manager Cameron Neidermayer.

Acronyms Used: CVCOA (Central VT Council on Aging), CSD (Montpelier Community Services Department, unit comprising the MSAC, Parks & Trees, and Recreation divisions)

Action on AC Meeting Minutes

The AC voted to accept as presented the Draft 1 minutes of the two separate June 22, 2021 meetings held before and after the Annual Membership meeting. Draft minutes of the June 22 Annual Meeting were provided but not for AC action since MSAC members will vote on those at the next Annual Meeting.

Announcements & Discussions

- **MSAC Committees:** Each AC member is expected to serve on at least one of MSAC's four standing committees (Program, Finance, Fundraising, Membership & Hospitality), each of which may include members at-large. The Fundraising committee role differs from Finance in that it plans strategies like fundraising events and member appeal letters that may occur over the year, whereas Finance is most active in late summer and fall, when the MSAC budget is evaluated and developed as part of the City budgeting process. AC members planning to take part in the Program Committee are Dianne, Mary, Barbara, Mariah, Laura and Rick. Renea had said she would take part in the Fundraising committee. Laura, Suzi, Renea and Jean were interested in the Finance committee. Dianne, Suzi, Rick and Mariah were interested in the Membership & Hospitality committee, which was relatively inactive over the last year. Janna has the most recent list of committee participants and will contact the several at-large committee members to determine if they want to continue that service. She noted that the Program Committee needs to meet the following week to discuss planning for the fall class season. Mariah agreed to help chair that committee.
- **Reopening & Summer Programming:** Janna reported that some small groups/classes have been in-person (social games, crafters, Italian). The Trash Tramps are active again; Anne Ferguson wrote a grant to purchase equipment for their work. Inside meals have attracted few customers so far. Concerns were raised about a decline in the quality of meals served, that published menus do not match the food received, and that prices seem high compared to other meal providers. Janna noted that each meal costs MSAC about \$12 (including meal production, labor, food, MSAC staff time and facility overhead), of which CVCOA reimburses \$3.76 for every age-eligible diner who has completed the meal program survey required for the federal subsidies. The current FEAST contract with Good Taste Catering ends September 30. Suzi, Laura and Barbara agreed to work with FEAST director Sarah Lipton as an ad hoc committee exploring ways to improve meal program delivery. MSAC so far has gotten only one applicant for Andrew Gribbin's Americorps position whose term ends August 13.

MSAC Role in City Government and Budget Planning: The directors of the Recreation and the Parks & Trees divisions were unable to attend this meeting, but Cameron described the City budgeting process and outlook. Federal COVID relief funding was significantly less than expected and earmarked for county governments, which have minimal functions in Vermont, with no mechanism to channel the funds to municipalities. Montpelier will get two chunks of money (about \$385,000 each) over the next two years, rather than the over \$2 million expected. The City is wrestling with a large deficit, exacerbated by a \$300,000 drop in parking fund revenue, largely due to state employees working from home during the pandemic. The City recognizes that CSD urgently needs a new van and is still awaiting word on funding requests for that. The Recreation division is severely understaffed due to retirements and City hiring freezes. Late summer and fall is when CSD and other government components develop their budgets for the fiscal year to start the following July. The three CSD divisions share staff (Harry, Norma and Becca, who took another job and is being replaced by Janna). A new program coordinator eventually will serve all three (impacted by hiring freeze), as will the new van. The City Finance Director is Kelly Murphy, and City Council advises the City Manager regarding the budget. Janna reported that about 20% of the MSAC budgeted revenue comes from the City general fund, and dues revenue is growing for FY22 after dues collection was suspended for FY21.

New Director Search: Cameron reported that there are two clear finalists for the MSAC director position being vacated since Janna is moving into the CSD Communications & Development Coordinator position. She wants to schedule two meetings next week when AC members may meet with those finalists and will poll AC members to determine the day/time for this. She will also email the candidate resumes to the AC.

Fall Programming: MSAC is surveying instructors regarding their desire to lead in-person or remote classes, and planned to bring people back into the facility gradually. The fall class season definitely will not be all in-person activities. One challenge is to plan for "what if" scenarios where an in-person class must be cancelled midstream because pivoting to a remote zoom class is not an option. The COVID situation is variable, so there is some potential for a mask mandate at the facility, but masking may not be feasible for some movement classes. Fall classes start the week of September 27, so registration will occur the day after Labor Day, requiring MSAC to finalize class options by mid-August and the Program Committee to meet right away.

AC Vacancy: The election ballot omitted candidates Barbara Ladabouche (content to remain active on the Program Committee without pursuing an AC seat) and Amy Handy, who had written to MSAC this spring. Members delayed this agenda item until the next AC meeting.

Next Advisory Council Meeting

The AC will meet Wednesday, August 25, at 3:30 pm. Dianne reported that she will be away that day but would work with Janna on the agenda, which tentatively will include:

- action on minutes of the July 28 meeting
- updates on reopening and fall programming
- update on MSAC director search
- MSAC committee assignments and/or reports
- setting a regular schedule for AC meetings
- update on supporting town funding situation
- potential nomination to fill the vacancy on the AC

Respectfully submitted: *Mary Carlson, scribe du jour*