

Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC)
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes (Draft 1)

Hybrid In-Person and Zoom Session: Wednesday, August 25, 2021 (3:30 – 5:00 pm)

Advisory Council (AC) members attending were Renea Bordeau, Mary Carlson, Mariah Lane, Laura Morse, Suzi Swanson and Rick Winston. AC members not attending were Barbara Dall, Dianne Maccario and Jean Olson. Robert Youngberg had resigned from the AC. The quorum requirement (5) was met.

Also attending were soon-to-be outgoing MSAC Director Janna Clar and Janna's successor, current FEAST manager, Sarah Lipton.

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

Action on AC Meeting Minutes

The AC voted to accept the Draft 1 minutes of the July 28, 2021 meeting as corrected to revise the third line up from bottom of page 1 to read "Suzi, Laura and Barbara agreed to work with FEAST...exploring ways to improve meal program delivery."

Announcements & Discussions

- **New MSAC Director:** Janna welcomed FEAST manager Sarah Lipton, who will replace her as MSAC director as of August 31, as Janna moves into the CSD Communications & Development Coordinator position recently vacated by Becca Jordan. Sarah said she looks forward to building collaborative relationships among MSAC staff and partners.
- **Reopening, Fall Programming and FEAST Updates:** Montpelier will follow CDC guidance in City-owned facilities, requiring masks when COVID transmission is "high or substantial." Several drop-in groups are active, and seven hybrid classes with only four instructors will be held upstairs. MSAC will have only 8 in-person classes (e.g., art, tai chi, off-site drawing, film series). Renea noted that a microphone is needed for hybrid classes involving participants seated at a table to improve audibility for those taking part remotely. The MSAC van has a leaky roof; the City hopes to come up with the \$60,000 it takes to buy a new wheelchair accessible van to be shared among City programs.

MSAC has eight candidates so far for the FEAST program manager position (September 3 application deadline), and recruitment is now underway for a Kitchen Manager/Chef position created to return meal production to the facility's commercial kitchen rather than contracting for that service. The City approved the new position, a 30 hour/week job that will not affect the General Fund and should lower costs and facilitate the use of local foods. Sarah envisions working with Capstone Community Kitchen Academy students and taking advantage of MSAC's freezer capacity to store prepared meals for distribution. She noted that MSAC had to stop serving indoor meals due to COVID concerns, but hopes to offer more meal choice and to join Meals On Wheels America as a potential grant revenue source. She also reported that Senator Bernie Sanders staff are producing a documentary film about summer programs that will feature Bernie's recent visit to the FEAST farm.

- Americorps Position: MSAC is seeking and interviewing candidates to replace Andrew Gribbin, who has been doing MSAC volunteering since his term ended August 13. He is a new options counselor for CVCOA, and expects to continue being involved in the MSAC At Home program.
- City Update: Janna relayed information from Assistant City Manager Cameron Neidermayer that our Congressional delegation succeeded in changing federal policy to make COVID funding available to municipal as well as county governments. Montpelier will get \$771,000 in three installments and has until the end of 2024 to obligate funds.
- Committee Update: The Program Committee met in August. Proposals included an interactive story-sharing workshop on the proposed Reproductive Liberty Amendment to the Vermont Constitution that could be potentially controversial with Planned Parenthood in the lead. Guided by its 2017 program policy resulting from a dispute that arose in connection with a different presentation topic, MSAC proposed having the League of Women Voters conduct the workshop instead and rent its space, rather than giving the appearance it is an MSAC event.
- Annual Survey: Wanting the AC to hear input from other members, Mary distributed the narrative responses to the two "essay questions" in the 2021 MSAC survey, and will email them to the members not attending the meeting. She has begun writing the survey report.
- AC Meeting Schedule: Those present agreed to meet monthly for now, at 1 pm on the second Tuesday of the month, with 2 hours reserved for the first meeting. Mary will email the three absent AC members to determine if that schedule fits their calendars. Tentative Schedule: September 14 (1-3 pm), October 12 (1-2:30), November 9 (1-2:30)
- AC Vacancy: Amy Handy had written to MSAC expressing interest in serving on the AC. Dianne had advised that she would inform Amy about the meeting schedule. Janna said the MSAC newsletter will announce an AC vacancy because Robert Youngberg's resignation leaves an empty seat even if the AC appoints Amy to fill the vacancy created when Mary Alice Bisbee decided not to complete her term.
- Town Funding Update: Janna reported that MSAC approached the same six towns, got level funding except for \$500 less from Worcester, and may seek an increase from Berlin due to higher home-delivered meal costs in that town. Supporting town funds represent about \$40,000 in budget support. For now, MSAC will only hold off-site classes on City property due to COVID concerns.

Next Advisory Council Meetings

As noted above, AC meetings are tentatively set for the following Tuesdays: September 14 (Suzi will miss that one), October 12 and November 9. The September agenda will include:

- action on August 25 minutes
- Sarah collaboration plans
- FEAST or other programming updates
- potential nomination to fill AC vacancy

Respectfully submitted: *Mary Carlson, scribe du jour*