

CITY OF ROCKVILLE
SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION
ROCKVILLE SENIOR CENTER
1150 CARNATION DRIVE

May 21, 2020, 10:00 a.m. (virtual)

Members Present: Anne Herbster, Chair; Norma Brailsford, Commissioner; Lynn Wagman, Commissioner; Krishna Kumar, Commissioner; Mike Laux, Commissioner; Alicia Seymour, Commissioner; Councilmember Beryl Feinberg, Liaison

Absent: Jack Sprague, Commissioner

Staff: Teri Hilton; Martha McClelland; Alexis D'Angelo; Fran Jablonski

Guests: Alyssa Roff, Senior Transportation Planner/Vision Zero Coordinator

Chair, Anne Herbster opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. with introductions and checking on how everyone is doing.

Alyssa Roff from the City of Rockville Public Works Department gave a power point presentation on Vision Zero Action Plan, the new transportation safety plan. She said this plan is a new way to approach pedestrian safety. The goal is to reduce and eliminate transportation related severe injuries and fatalities for all modes of transportation to zero. She said she will be meeting with community committees, commissions, and the Mayor and Council to get input for plan. She gave a presentation to the Mayor and Council on May 4 and will be updating the action plan document and present it to the Mayor and Council on June 8 to be able to implement July 1. Some suggestions after discussion among the Commission and staff are longer crossing times at crosswalks, trolley cars for seniors to get around safely and enjoy the city, identify the areas where there are seniors living and focus on specific needs of those areas, no right turn on red, more red light cameras, signage on buses to remind pedestrians to look before you cross, transit stops moved to intersections, multi-lingual awareness, and median fencing to name a few ideas. **Chair Anne Herbster** recommended that a senior be added to the task force to bring awareness of the needs of seniors. **Alyssa Roff** thanked everyone for their input and will revise the document to show the needs of the more vulnerable communities such as this one and include cultural and religious representation. She told the Commission she would send updates.

Terri Hilton gave highlights of all the center is doing. She said she was proud the staff and how they have completely changed how they do things and stay socially connected and are there for the seniors. She said the mailing of the summer guide that was created before the shutdown was stopped. It was recreated with 135 virtual events. The charge for these classes will be offered at a charge of 20% less than the normal cost. It will allow up to 80 members to attend. The Spring classes are offered for free and everyone has received refunds as either user credit, refund to original form of payment or donation to the program assistance fund. Summer class registration was different and went well. She said she anticipates fall classes to be part virtual and no more than 10 in a class at the center. Not sure about that yet, due to the Senior Center is under Governor Hogan's State of Emergency. The center is currently working on reopening plans. Will be starting on the lunch program. People will have to spaced out. We are currently reaching out to homebound seniors by well check phone calls, birthday cards and providing meals and shelf stable food that is provided by Meals on Wheels, the food drive and sometimes Manna and Nourish Now. The food drive has provided a lot of support either by gift card donations or food donation drop off. On Tuesday and Wednesday staff is available to take donations out of people's cars when they drive up as well as separating donations that have sat for a week. If there are donations from other food sources such as Manna and Nourish Now staff will pick up. One week the center received 980 pounds of fruit and veggies. Our staff employee from Project Search makes cards from home to put in bags to seniors. Some weeks the bags contain food donations, or activities and personal hygiene products. So far \$10,000 has been donated to the Program Assistance Fund (PAF). We will be starting personal shopping soon. Montgomery County Senior Connection has been providing this service. We will start with private homes on Tuesdays and Thursdays at either 9:00-12:00 or from 2:00-4:00. A new project, Project HOPE, Help Our People Exercise, will be starting soon. It consists of a 20-minute phone or zoom time with a trainer. The trainer will work with the counselor to address the client's personal and emotional needs through exercise. **Chair Anne Herbster** said she is impressed with all the Senior Center and staff ae doing and recreating ways we are serving the seniors. **Terri Hilton** said there are a lot of virtual fitness classes to offer. **Chair Anne Herbster** asked what the biggest need was for the seniors. **Terri Hilton** said it is food, soap, hygiene products, hand sanitizer, masks, and improving ways to reach seniors that are isolated. We received donations of homemade masks and **Andrea Rogers** has been making them too. We have had enough to put in seniors' bags. **Terri Hilton** said we are ordering the supplies that we will need for reopening such as masks and hand sanitizer. The center is currently being used as the distribution site for the rest of Recreation. **Chair Anne Herbster** said the Mayor and Council has \$250.00 allocated for the Commission to be spent by the end of the fiscal year. She is looking for ideas for how to use it. **Alexis D'Angelo** said that we could use some of the money for fabric to make masks. She said **Andrea Rogers** has made over 100 of them. **Commissioner, Lynn Wagman** made motion to spend the \$250.00 on material and supplies needed to make masks or any other emergency supplies. **Commissioner, Mike Laux** seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Martha McClelland has been working from home and reaching out to seniors and making well check calls. **Alexis D'Angelo** said both **Martha McClelland** and **Andrea Rogers** have both been making calls to seniors and doing outreach and have been helping seniors find solutions and will be great assistance with Project Hope.

Alexis D'Angelo gave update on Villages for **Trish Evans**. Rockville villagers are creating new ways to virtually connect during this time of physical distancing. The King Farm Neighbors Village is hosing weekly coffee chats as well as starting a new virtual book club.

The Town Center Area Village had a second virtual gathering. A good time was had by all. While that group determined that gathering in person was too risky, even at a safe distance, they are connecting more by phone. Perhaps this is a very positive way to combat isolation. They are planning a virtual TRIVIA NIGHT in the next two weeks. There is much excitement about that!

Twinbrook Village is nearing completion of their website. This is one of the last steps before they will be ready to launch as a fully functional village. Their next monthly meeting will be June 14 at 3:00 PM.

Pump House Village is collaborating with East Rockville Citizens Association (ERCA) on a group shout out to the local EMS. They are encouraging the East Rockville community of all ages, to participate by sending a photo or drawing that shows the ER cares and appreciates all they do. The photos will be printed and used in an oversized collage for display at the firehouse. Their next monthly meeting will be virtually held June 7 at 3:00 PM.

New groups are emerging throughout the City. Stay tuned!

Rockville Area Villages Exchange will hold a forum for villages, established and new, to discuss details of becoming affiliates of the RAVE parent organization. The forum will be held virtually on Saturday, May 30 at 10:00 AM.

Liaison Reports:Rockville Seniors, Inc., (RSI): Nothing reported

Pete Sante Fund: Nothing reported.

United Seniors of Maryland (USM) Forum: Nothing reported

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM

Next meeting: June 18, 2020 **VIRTUAL – BUILDING CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**