

**Skokie Commission on Family Services
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 4, 2022
7:00pm**

MINUTES

Present: Commissioners Harold Primack (Chair), Bonnie Eckstein, Marjorie Goran, Jo Hammerman, Daniel Mann, Heather O'Donnell, Nancy Schwartz, Phillip Shefren, Michael Stiehl, Melissa Versch.

Absent: Commissioners Yolanda Bender, Jaime Garcia, Laila Iqbal, Shajan Jose, Wendy Katznelson, Joshua Orlan, Arlnie Oskin, Nichole Perry, Valerie Riley, Annie Shear, San Stalilonis, Edie Sue Sutker

- I. Call to order** at 7:05pm
- II. Approval of Agenda:** Approved by consent
- III. Approval of Minutes:** April 6, 2022 minutes were approved by consent.

- IV. Chair's Report:** Harold Primack, Chair
Thank you to Jo Hammerman for taking minutes for Commission meetings. Melissa Versch will take over responsibility for taking minutes. Thank you to Shajan Jose for selecting the restaurant for last month's meeting and thank you to the Village for covering the cost of the dinner.

Emails were sent to the Commission about the Annual Fun Run which raises money for the food pantry and is looking for volunteers. An email was sent from the Illinois ACES Response Collaborative about trauma events for anyone who is interested. If anyone gets emails from organizations that would be of interest, please forward to the Chair to forward to the Commission.

- V. Health and Human Services Report:** Melissa Versch, Staff Liaison
In April, Health and Human Services partnered with Niles Township and North Shore Senior Center at Skokie Library to help 24 families apply for utility and transportation assistance. HHS continues to provide COVID vaccines and 2nd boosters to those who are eligible. Appointments can be made through the Village website. One program provided through HHS is called Emergency Financial Assistance, which provides assistance to residents who are past-due on rent or utilities due to a hardship. We work with them to be self-sufficient moving forward by connecting with resources or recovering, for example from health issues. Mr. Primack asked if funds come from COVID relief. Ms. Versch responded that funds have been provided through donations. Mike Stiehl asked how much Skokie received from COVID relief funds and what was done with it. Ms. Versch will report back with an answer.

VI. Old Business

- A. Produce Initiative
- B. Farmer's Market Food and Clothing Drive - Heather O'Donnell set up volunteer signup through Signup Genius for the produce initiative and clothing drive. Discussion was held about others to distribute the link to, such as St. Paul's church, District 219 and Human Relations Commission. Ms. O'Donnell will send out the link after the June Commission meeting.
- C. Festival of Cultures – The Commission will share a space with the Village for the Festival of Cultures. Three people have volunteered to participate. Volunteers will cover 11am – 3pm on Sunday, May 22 in 2-hour shifts.
- D. Subcommittee Discussion - The Commission broke into two subcommittees for discussion: Children and Families At Risk and Seniors. Subcommittees met separately for discussion for about 15 minutes and then reported back to the Commission.

Children and Families At Risk Subcommittee: Nancy reported that Wendy had some contact with the school district. The group talked about kids re-entering post-Covid and difficulties and violence. Would like to figure out how to do a needs-assessment to figure out what the kids and families need, from day care centers to high schools. 8% of daycare centers in Illinois are open past 5 or 6:00pm, which is a struggle for families who work 2nd or 3rd shift. Will get a list of social workers, go to Chamber of Commerce to start. May develop information for families on a website.

Seniors Subcommittee: Melissa reported on discussion about Boomers and Beyond. The last event was in 2019. The one-day event would have a speaker, resource fair, health screenings. Invitations would go to organizations that serve seniors, tech resources, vendors like emergency home response providers, maybe city services like the police department. Would provide refreshments. Discussion about whether event should be in-person, virtual or hybrid, and if transportation would need to be offered. Would need volunteers to work the fair. Secondly, discussion was held about census data showing that older adult population and people living alone is growing. Dan noticed that police beat meetings are largely attended by older adults, so what needs are there's for older adults and their safety. For example, scams and concerns called into the police. Dan noted that there is information online about the previous Boomers and Beyond event.

VII. New Business

- A. Commission Brochure – A tri-fold Commission brochure was distributed. Harold and Melissa worked on the brochure and it was reviewed by Ann Tennes. The brochure was distributed to Trustees at the budget meeting. Brochures will be distributed at the Festival of Cultures, Fourth of July parade and at the Farmers Market. For the Fourth of July parade, candy could be attached to brochures and handed out. Brochures will need to be printed. The brochure was also published in the latest Skokie News.

B. Village budget hearing – The Village Board had a budget meeting last week. Chairs of commissions do a presentation. For Family Services, funds are used for publicity and supplies needed for farmers market initiatives. Board members did not ask questions but did complement the success of food donations from the farmers market.

C. Environmental Sustainability Plan Team – Ms. Versch reported on a request for representatives of each commission to take part in an Environmental Sustainability Plan Team. Four Commissioners expressed interest, though whether meetings are in-person or virtual may impact ability to participate. Ms. Versch will check if there is a virtual option and re-send to those who are interested.

VIII. Citizen Comments: None

IX. Adjournment at 8:00pm

Next meeting: June 1, 2022
7:00pm