



West University Senior Service Board Minutes

March 10, 2016

Present: Michelle Moore (Chair), Becky Arnold, Sarah Ballanfant, Ruth Becker, Candyce Beneke (Secretary), Selby Clark, Rebecca Dozier, Carlos De La Torre, Judy Faulkner, Virginia Lootens, Stan McCandless, John Palmer **Absent:** George Baker & Susan Davis, Burt Ballanfant, City Council Liaison **Staff:** Toby Brooks **Guest:** Alida Drewes, Dick Yehle

Minutes: The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m. A quorum was present. Michelle Moore moved to approve the Minutes of February 11, 2016 as presented. John Palmer seconded. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.

New Business (presented first): Presentation by Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (Metro) regarding new programs for seniors. Lauren Cochren - Director of Contracted Services; Arturo Jackson - Senior Director Contracted Paratransit and Vanpool Services Operations, and two Mobility Coordinators and Travel Trainers who will teach people how to get to and from the doctor, back home, etc. using local buses or rail. The trainers will even accompany seniors to do a trial run! Metro directors offered to present a program in the fall to West U seniors and those with disabilities on how Metro services can help them be more independent and mobile. Toby Brooks will coordinate.

Activities and Previews (Toby Brooks): Ms Brooks reported on recent activities, including: Washington on the Brazos trip - 20 people to Barrington Farm and the Star of Texas museum, February Theme Meal - approximately 50 people - Ed Heathcott cooked for all! Ice Cream Social and Musical Bingo - approximately 50 people, and an Allergy Presentation

Toby congratulated Tim O'Connor and the West U Parks and Recreation department, which got a Gold Medal Award from the Texas Recreation and Parks Society Institute!

Stan McCandless asked if the scheduled senior tour to the Waste Water Treatment Plant was going to take place. When Ms. Brooks noted that no residents had signed up (although several non-residents had), Judy Faulkner volunteered to go - so the trip is on!

APAC Report (Virginia Lootens): Ms Lootens handed out minutes from the APAC March meeting and reported that APAC has a new Chair, Lynne Foley. The minutes noted that Debra Moore, a representative from the Area Agency on Aging, previewed the projected Area Plans goal. She noted that a Virtual Senior Center module is being developed as part of the internet connection with the Area Agency on Aging. She also noted that approximately 60,000 seniors (of about 300,000) are reached through this agency.

Council Meeting Report (Burt Ballanfant): Councilman Ballanfant reported that there were few significant votes considered since the last City Council meeting and he submitted a brief report to our Board. Two actions were taken: (1) Council instructed the Police Chief to enforce the ordinance and state law prohibiting parking over West U sidewalks; and (2) the Council reaffirmed the tree planting ordinance program which provides trees to citizens upon request. Citizens should contact Craig Koehl, the West U forester, with requests. A citizen can "buy up" to a bigger size tree if desired. A question was asked about parking enforcement on "short" driveways, and Councilman Ballanfant responded that they would be handled on an individual basis. Carlos De La Torre asked Councilman Ballanfant about the City putting trees on the West U side of Bellaire Blvd/Holcomb, which is in the city of Houston. Mr. Ballanfant suggested that Mr. De La Torre send a letter to the forester, Mr. Koehl.

Good Neighbor Team (Becky Arnold): Ms. Arnold reported that the spring deliveries can be picked up by Good Neighbor Team members on March 17. In addition to the gift, Good Neighbor Team members are being asked to deliver the Senior Services Survey to their seniors and to help them fill them out. (A handout with the survey questions and instructions was distributed by Mr. De La Torre.) He will make minor revisions to the survey, including a rating scale of 1-5, before delivery.

Parks and Recreation Report (Tim O'Connor): Mr. O'Connor was not present. See the most recent Parks and Rec report emailed to the Senior Board by Mr. O'Connor.

Previous Business: TED talk on how to measure happiness was mentioned by Carlos De La Torre. The TED talk focused on the importance of social interaction and the role it plays in happiness. The link will sent to the board.

Action Items: Carlos De La Torre, Michelle Moore, Rebecca Dozier, George Baker and Ruth Becker have met and are collecting data to support a proposal by the senior board recommending an increase of the senior property tax exemption. The goal is for the senior board to review the proposal at the April meeting and to then approach City Council for approval.

New Business:

Citizen Comments: Ms. Drewes expressed disagreement with some of the information with regard to the rates for sewer and water in the summary of benefits for WU seniors as being incorrect.

Adjournment: Michelle Moore moved to adjourn. Rebecca Dozier seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15p.m.

Awaiting approval from the board to approve at May meeting.