

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)
SENIOR SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (S-SAC)
Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2019

Committee Members Present:

- Anne Bellegia
- Rob Casserly
- Mike Gardiner
- Mike Hersh
- Mary Russell-Miller
- Sandy Theis, Chair

Staff Members Present:

- Michael Black
- Isleen Glatt
- Natalie Mettler

Committee Members Absent:

- Julie Akins

CALL TO ORDER:

This called the meeting to order at 3:32pm at Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave in Ashland. S-SAC members were introduced to Laura Stott, new Senior Services Office Assistant II, who started in her position on January 2, 2019.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Hersh/Russell-Miller m/s to approve the minutes of December 10, 2018.
Voice vote – ALL AYES. Motion passed.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO AGENDA:

Bellegia requested discussion about the frequency of future S-SAC meetings, which Theis said will be covered under “Upcoming Meetings” at the end of today’s session.

PUBLIC INPUT:

None.

DISCUSSION: RVCOG SENIOR & DISABILITY SERVICES REQUEST REGARDING S-SAC NAME:

This stated that Laura O’Byron, Director of Senior & Disability Services (SDS) with Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) has requested S-SAC consider a name change to minimize confusion with RVCOG’s Senior Advisory Council (SAC). Various changes were suggested in the ensuing discussion, but none of these were deemed satisfactory. This issue will return for more discussion at the regular meeting. All agreed it was important to honor the request for a name change from O’Byron, and Theis will inform O’Byron that S-SAC is working on the issue. Superintendent Glatt will collect any ideas submitted via email.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Advocacy

Bellegia and Theis met with Connie Saldaña, SDS Planner with RVCOG and member of the RVCOG Advocacy Committee, who is familiar with AARP's Age-Friendly Communities initiative. The biggest gaps in services for seniors in Ashland are in housing and transportation, which are more City than APRC issues. Bellegia and Theis are hoping to trigger more enthusiasm for age-friendly policies with the City Council, particularly if there is an opportunity to collaborate with Talent, which has recently adopted AARP's Age-Friendly Community planning. Hersh voiced concern about the cost and long timeframe of city-level changes to support seniors. Black clarified that adoption of the Age-Friendly Communities initiative would provide guidelines and standards for new construction or infrastructure projects, not a commitment to change all existing infrastructure to the new standards immediately.

To help familiarize S-SAC with this municipal advocacy, Glatt will share AARP documents for assessing age-friendly livability and Bellegia will arrange for an expert to present to S-SAC, possibly Bandana Shrestha of AARP Oregon or Connie Saldaña who is better acquainted with our local context. Casserly recommended connecting with Sandra Slattery, Ashland Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, and Sheila Clough, Ashland Chamber of Commerce Board member and CEO of Asante Ashland Community Hospital, both of whom are involved in developing Ashland's community livability through the Blue Zones project. Glatt noted that she is already in communication with both about the project, now called the Health and Wellbeing Initiative.

B. Education Programs (Mettler, staff)

Mettler stated that the Education Programs subcommittee met on January 9, 2019, to brainstorm programming topics, opportunities, and processes for development. Glatt and Mettler have been working on optimizing use of the Senior Center facility space to maximize programming to benefit local seniors. Staff is in the process of developing a new educational speaker series and pre-pay art class to bring on later this year. Staff has also been working with Casserly on the option of hosting OLLI classes at the Senior Center starting in September 2019.

There was discussion about how to attract participants to new education programs, with suggestions of a small fee or more rigorous registration process. Bellegia also proposed reaching out to Mountain Meadows as an alternate hosting venue for Social Services Division (SSD) events; this would align with the SSD's goal of connecting with the broader Ashland senior community.

C. Public Awareness

The Public Awareness subcommittee's overall goal is to develop a public relations campaign and social marketing for the SSD. Russell-Miller outlined their progress in developing a message and task list in their January 14, 2019 meeting notes (see attached).

Russell-Miller has met with SOU students interested in working on promotional materials and social marketing for SSD. Hersh supported the idea of SSD staff and/or S-SAC members attending Chamber Greeters meetings once SSD has developed promotional materials to share. Hersh offered to post flyers in downtown Ashland, and he also suggested advertising SSD activities, programs and services in Medford, Phoenix, and Talent, to reach adult children of Ashland seniors who live in these neighboring towns.

PRIORITIZE PURCHASES FROM PARKS FOUNDATION FUND:

Glatt reminded the Committee that there is currently \$31,000 in the Parks Foundation Fund earmarked for Senior Services, and the Senior Center has a number of needs. She has gathered input from patrons, volunteers, staff, S-SAC, and ASPAC about how to spend these funds and outlined the recommended spending priorities in a memo included in the March meeting packet.

Cassery offered to check with OLLI about acquiring materials they no longer need after their remodel at the end of this year, but he warned that most things being donated are in poor condition. Bellegia suggested inquiring with SOU about material donations of surplus property. Gardiner recommended reserving at least \$10,000 for future needs; these funds may also be applied to scholarships towards activity fees for lower-income patrons. Hersh proposed an annual community fund drive to replenish Foundation Funds for the Senior Services Division, which Glatt appreciated as a future agenda topic.

Bellegia/Russell-Miller m/s to empower Glatt to make decisions regarding equipment purchasing and to keep at least \$10,000 of available Foundation funds back for matching grants and scholarships. Voice vote – ALL AYES. Motion passed.

STANDING REPORTS:

A. APRC update, if any pertaining to seniors

Gardiner stated that there was concern about the name of the state's Gatekeeper Program at the February 22 APRC Special Goal Setting meeting. He recommended being thoughtful about the name in the future program, either by creating a different local name and/or doing careful community education to alleviate confusion. Black and Glatt clarified that if the SSD does not appear on the APRC's final list of twenty goals for the coming biennium, APRC still values the Division and the goals recommended by S-SAC, as demonstrated by funding recommended to continue at the current level.

B. City Council update, if any pertaining to seniors

As she was not able to attend today's meeting, Akins submitted a written report for the City Council update to S-SAC (see attachment).

C. SSD Superintendent report

Glatt referred S-SAC to the SSD Superintendent February and March reports included in the March meeting packet (covering December 2018 through February 2019). She noted the

progress collecting cleaner statistics on Senior Center attendance, and reported that in any given month, SSD is serving between 1200 – 1500 clients through its programs, plus an additional 1200 through onsite lunches and meal deliveries by RVCOG Food & Friends, which is a total of 2400 individual contacts monthly. In the context of building community partnerships, she highlighted meeting with Slattery and Clough. Since the Chamber is working on the Health and Wellbeing Initiative, which seeks to improve community health, longevity and well-being, they are natural partners in local senior issues. As such, they hope to involve SSD in their next steps, and Glatt feels the timing works well for SSD and S-SAC to partner with the Chamber and Hospital for these community-level changes.

ITEMS FROM S-SAC MEMBERS:

Glatt shared that the City’s Transportation Commission requested S-SAC identify senior advocates to apply for open positions on the Transportation Commission. Glatt asked S-SAC members to recommend candidates and underlined the opportunity to place someone who cares about senior issues in an influential role. Also, she noted that the Transportation Commission contacting her demonstrates increasing awareness that the SSD represents senior issues in Ashland.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

This brought forward a request for S-SAC to change their meeting start time to 4:30, to accommodate Julie Akins, new City Council representative. However, 4:30 does not work for multiple S-SAC members, so the meeting time will stay at 3:30-5pm and S-SAC will request that Mayor Stromberg assign a Councilor representative who can attend during this time.

Bellegia requested that S-SAC continue to meet monthly, rather than reducing to meetings to every other month, to keep members engaged and maintain the current momentum. All agreed. (No motion because monthly meetings are the current norm.)

Glatt has a schedule conflict that prevents her from attending an S-SAC meeting on the second Monday in May. After discussion, members set the regular S-SAC meeting for the first Monday in May. The next regular S-SAC meetings will be on April 8, 2019, 3:30-5:00pm and May 6, 2019, 3:30-5:00pm, both at the Ashland Senior Center, 1699 Homes Ave.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Mettler, Senior & Adult Services Coordinator
Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

These minutes are not a verbatim record. The narrative has been condensed and paraphrased at times to reflect the material presented, discussions, and decisions made. APRC S-SAC Meetings are digitally recorded; the recordings are available upon request.