

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE COMMISSION ON AGING**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order on September 11, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hobby Shop at the Bartlett Senior Citizen Center.

ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners Craft, G. Davis, Kimmel-Dagostino, Kraemer, Virobik, and Chairperson K. Davis

Absent: Commissioner Robelotto

Staff: Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand

MOTION: Commissioner Kraemer moved to approve the excused absence of Commissioner Robelotto; motion was seconded by Commissioner Virobik. The motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote. (Absent Commissioner Robelotto)

FLAG SALUTE

Chairperson K. Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance.

INSPIRATIONAL

Chairperson K. Davis asked for a moment of silence to commemorate September 11, 2001.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino stated that this meeting was dedicated to those that lost their lives on September 11, 2001 at the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

ACCEPT AND FILE AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Craft moved and Commissioner Virobik seconded, to accept and file the Affidavit of Agenda Posting for its meeting of September 11, 2012. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote. (Absent Commissioner Robelotto)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino moved and Commissioner G. Davis seconded, to approve the minutes of the Commission on Aging meeting of August 14, 2012, as submitted. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote. (Absent Commissioner Robelotto)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Community Services Director Jones
Recreation Services Manager Brunette
Senior Analyst Orpe
Senior Business Manager Minter
Recreation Supervisor Snodgrass
Daniel Drehobl
Henk Steenman, Torrance resident
Britt Huff, Executive Director, H.E.L.P.
Allen Glander, Main Street Tours
Helen Moore, Torrance resident
Farrah Benedict, Home Instead

SENIOR CITIZENS CONCERNS

A. City Council Activities

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the next Commissioner training was Tuesday, October 30.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that there had been an explanation of the Metro express lane project at the Council meeting.

She announced that the September 18 meeting of the Council would be held at North Torrance High School.

B. Housing

None

C. Health

Commissioner K. Davis reported on an article by Helen Dennis on the early stages of dementia.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that Helen Dennis's article had detailed information on website with ratings on nursing homes. She added that the Focal Point Directory had a link with descriptions of the nursing homes, but that the link in Helen Dennis's article contained the actual deficiency reports on the homes.

Commissioner Virobik reported on articles on the redesign of the medicare website and savings on prescription drugs as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

D. Transportation

None

E. Community Programs

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino noted that the Centennial parade would be on Sunday, September 16.

Commissioner Kraemer reported that the new Centennial plaza was completed.

Community Services Director Jones reported on an improvement project for the North Torrance area. He stated that one of the goals for the project was service improvement for the Tillum Senior Center and that the department would be asking for recommendations on improvements from the Commission.

F. Focal Point Program

Commissioner Virobik reported the following Focal Point statistics for the month of:

August 2012

Total number of documented calls: 70	Total number of callbacks: 30
Miscellaneous calls: 84	Total number of walk-ins: 35
Total number of calls received: 134	

Of the documented calls:

17.1% were for transportation	44.3% were for housing
15.8% were for legal	

Commissioner Virobik reported that Focal Point had 4 calls in reference to financial abuse. She stated that Focal Point attended the "Seniors, Don't be Scammed" lecture, sponsored by the Torrance Police Department.

G. Elder Abuse/Fraud

None

REVIEW OF ENTERPRISE FUND SUBSIDY LEVELS WITHIN THE COST RECOVERY/SUBSIDY PLAN FOR THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Community Services Director Jones presented information on the plan and requested that the Commission review the plan in preparation for discussion at the October Commission meeting.

He stated that the Commission could forward any questions that they had about the plan to staff and noted that City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee had requested that all Commissions share their thoughts on the plan.

9. REVIEW OF THE SENIOR CITIZEN EXCURSION PROGRAM

Community Services Director Jones reviewed the recent history of the senior excursion program. He stated that the excursion program had not been included in the subsidy plan in May and had been sent to the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee for further review. He noted that staff had met with the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee on August 13, at which time the Committee had directed that staff return to the Commission on Aging to develop a resolution for the excursion program, to take back first to the Committee and then on to the City Council.

Community Services Director Jones presented the material of record for the item and detailed the fee increase that resulted from including the indirect costs as well as the direct costs. He stated that, after the fee increase, all but one of the 2012 tours had to be cancelled, due to insufficient signups.

He noted that the flat rate non-resident fee had been changed to a sliding scale based on the value of the excursion, which might help to increase signups for the tours.

Community Services Director Jones stated that first an acceptable amount for the tour fee needed to be determined, and then it would be necessary to determine where the additional funds could be found to add to the subsidy plan to cover the difference.

He explained that the department had conducted a survey with Torrance Travelers participants to gather information and noted that the department had received 205 responses out of 405 surveys sent. He detailed the results of the survey and added that the survey results had an accuracy rate of 95% due to the number of responses.

Community Services Director Jones stated that based on the survey results, 76% of the participants would qualify for the scholarship program for the tours, based on their income levels.

He noted that the Commission could choose one of three possible options, as outlined in the review, as a potential solution or direct staff to research additional options. The options were:

1. Restructure the Community Services Department's Scholarship Program to allow seniors with financial need to use the funds towards excursions. The current scholarship program was \$35,000, with the funds now being used for classes for both youth and seniors.

2. Increase the new Cost Recovery/Subsidy Plan Level of 20% for the Seniors Citizens Excursion Program to a 40% Subsidy Level, which would require an additional subsidy amount of \$41,000 to be found within the program area or division.
3. Remove all Recreation Division indirect costs (\$57,000) from the Senior Excursion program, which would require that the remaining recreation programs assume the indirect costs for the Senior Excursion Program.

In response to a question from Commissioner Kraemer, Community Services Director Jones stated that although the Senior Excursions were currently not operating, the indirect costs were still being identified and assigned to the program.

Recreation Services Manager Brunette noted that at the end of the year the department identified those divisions that were over in revenue and under in expenditures to help offset the divisions that were under in revenue and over in expenditures.

Responding to a question from Commissioner G. Davis, Community Services Director Jones stated that an increase of funding for the Senior Excursions might not necessarily be an overall increase to the City, but could just be a shifting of funds usage within the department.

Senior Business Manager Minter detailed the scholarship program which was focused on youth and seniors and stated that the excursion program had been specifically excluded.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino stated that in her opinion, much of the senior population would be too proud to use the scholarship program as outlined in option 1. She added that option 3, removing the indirect costs from the program for at least one year would be a good option, as there might be an increase in sales tax revenues resulting from new businesses that could help the budget.

In response to a question from Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino, Community Services Director Jones stated that there would still be a cost involved if Torrance bought unused Prop A funds from other cities.

There was a discussion of the sale, purchase and use of Prop A funds.

Responding to question from Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino, Community Services Director Jones stated that there were fare structure challenges to sharing an excursion with another city.

Allen Glander, Main Street Tours, noted that although he charged the same price for the same tour to any city, there were often participant fee differences among the cities due to differences in each city's costs and applicable subsidies.

Commissioner Virobik stated that she liked option 3 and felt that adding the indirect costs to the excursions was "double dipping."

Allen Glander, Main Street Tours, stated that he had always used the Torrance Travelers Program as an example to other cities of how to run a successful program.

Helen Moore, 23903 Pennsylvania Avenue, stated that she had used the Torrance tours for 15-20 years and that the tours were always first class. She suggested that perhaps seniors could choose to go on fewer tours in order to save money and expressed her wish that the program not be cut.

Daniel Drehobl, non Torrance resident, stated that he and his wife, Catherine Newman, had always enjoyed the tours and suggested doing more one day tours to reduce the costs.

Farrah Benedict, Home Instead, Torrance resident, stated that she would choose option 3 to shift the indirect costs, as the current situation was a lose/lose proposition.

Community Services Director Jones stated that until a decision had been reached, the tours would not be scheduled and that even when a decision had been reached and approved by the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee and the City Council, it would take some time to schedule, advertise and resume the tours.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino noted that the seniors that she had spoken to had wanted to resume the excursions as soon as possible. She stated that she favored option 3, possibly for a year. She added that she did not like option 1 because seniors did not want to give information on their income level.

Commissioner Virobik stated that she was in favor of Option 3.

Commissioner G. Davis stated that if there was opposition to option 3, option 2 might allow enough people to afford the tour fee, so that the tour would then have sufficient participants to fill the bus.

MOTION: Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino moved and Commissioner G. Davis seconded, to approve Option 3; to remove all Recreation Division indirect costs from the Senior Excursion program. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Kraemer suggested that tours could be run every other month, instead of every month, to reduce the indirect costs.

Community Services Director Jones stated that the indirect costs would still remain, as they were always a percentage of direct costs.

MOTION: Commissioner Craft moved and Kimmel-Dagostino seconded, to approve a substitute motion for the previous motion: to approve Option 3 for one calendar year from the start of the removal of the indirect costs. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Community Services Director Jones stated staff would assemble an item to present the Commission's recommendation to a meeting of the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee and would notify the Commission, the community and previous Tour participants when the meeting would take place with the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee.

He noted that once the Committee had made a decision, then the item would go before the City Council.

Community Services Director Jones announced that he would be at the next month's Commission meeting to discuss the Cost Recovery/Subsidy Plan.

JOINT MEETING WITH THE CITY COUNCIL

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand announced that she had scheduled the meeting for February 26, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.

The Commission concurred with the date.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that she would leave the item on the agenda so that the Commission could discuss possible topics at upcoming meetings.

ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson K. Davis announced that there were flyers and information on classes from H.E.L.P. for anyone interested.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand announced that the Commission on Aging Annual report would be presented to City Council on September 25 and requested that the Chair and Vice Chair attend the meeting to be available to answer any questions.

Farah Benedict announced that Home Instead was conducting an essay contest for caregivers with a Caribbean cruise as a prize.

Chairperson K. Davis reported that she was currently enrolled in an Omnilore class on health and would be giving a presentation on community education with assistance from Vickie Hershberger of the Community Health Education Program at Torrance Memorial Medical Center.

Commissioner Craft encouraged everyone to go online and investigate how to become a bone marrow donor.

Commissioner G. Davis stated that it was important for everyone to be trained in CPR and noted that there were classes available at Torrance Memorial Medical Center and Little Company of Mary.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino reported that Torrance Memorial Medical Center offered free CPR classes.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m. to the regular meeting on Tuesday, October 9, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center.

Approved as Submitted October 9, 2012 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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