

November 13, 2012

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

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order on November 13, 2012 at 9:31 a.m. in the Hobby Shop at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center.

### **ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE**

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

Absent: None

Staff: Sr. Recreation Supervisor Wand, Community Services Director Jones, Recreation Services Manager Brunette, Sr. Administrative Analyst Orpe, Sr. Business Manager Minter, Recreation Supervisor for Senior Programs Snodgrass

### **FLAG SALUTE**

Community Services Director Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **INSPIRATIONAL**

Commissioner G. Davis provided the following inspiration:

- o *Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.* Helen Keller

Former Commissioner Griffith provided the following inspirations:

- o *Before you go to bed, give your troubles to God - He'll be up all night anyway.* Dolly Louco
- o *If you're lucky enough to get old, I think you should celebrate it.* Iris Apfel, age 90
- o *Our body's the vehicle; our cargo is the soul.* Betty Jean Cage

### **ACCEPT AND FILE AFFIDAVIT OF AGENDA POSTING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino moved and Commissioner G. Davis seconded, to accept and file the Affidavit of Agenda Posting for its meeting of November 13, 2012. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner G. Davis moved and Commissioner Kraemer seconded, to approve the minutes of the Commission on Aging meeting of October 9, 2012, as submitted. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

### **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

The Commission introduced themselves to the seventeen meeting attendees:

**DISCUSSION ITEM ON THE ENTERPRISE FUND SUBSIDY LEVELS WITHIN THE COST RECOVERY/SUBSIDY PLAN FOR THE COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Community Services Director Jones thanked the attendees for their participation in the meeting, as well as their responses to the surveys that had been sent out for the Torrance Travelers/Senior Excursion Program.

Community Services Director Jones presented the material of record for the item and stated that staff had been directed by the Commission on Aging at their October meeting to return to the November meeting with alternatives that would reduce the cost of the Senior Excursion Program.

He noted that only the Senior Excursion Program had been pulled out of the subsidy plan for further review and that all other programs had already had fee increases.

He announced that the subsidy levels for the Senior Programs that the Commission recommended at this meeting would be discussed at the joint meeting of the Parks and Recreation and Cultural Arts Commission on November 14.

Community Services Director Jones explained direct and indirect costs and presented four alternatives of the subsidy levels for the Commission to consider.

In response to a question from Joyce Hughes, Torrance, Community Services Director Jones stated that the indirect costs per program were based on the percentage that a particular program was of the total budget.

Responding to a question from Britt Huff, H.E.L.P. , Community Services Director Jones stated that the City Council would have to use money from the general fund if they decided to cover the gap in the Senior Excursion Program. He added that he did not know what the possibility would be that the City Council would approve the funds.

Community Services Director Jones stated that the total participation in the Senior Excursion Program was estimated at 450 persons per year.

Community Services Director Jones stated that he recommended alternative # 3, but further recommended that the Commission make a subsequent recommendation for additional funding should it be available, so that alternative # 2 could be implemented. He noted that any change to the Subsidy Program and the Scholarship Program would require additional approval by City Council. He added that the Commission's decision would be shared at the Joint Cultural Arts and Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting on November 14 and then the joint Commissions would provide a recommendation for the subsidy levels to the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee.

In response to a question from Joyce Hughes, Torrance, Community Services Director Jones stated that the increase to the tour fees was based on an average cost for a tour.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Robelotto, Community Services Director Jones stated that money from fundraisers was difficult to depend on and not a sustainable option for the program.

There was a discussion on ways to reduce costs.

In response to a question from Marsha Whittaker, Torrance, Commissioner Virobik stated that when the tours were offered with all the costs, both direct and indirect added on, 5 out of the 6 tours had had to be cancelled.

Community Services Director Jones stated that the scholarship program might help, if people chose to participate.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Craft, Community Services Director Jones stated that tours could be cancelled within the cancellation period, without a penalty.

Derek Kendall, Torrance, suggested that the food costs could be reduced by not offering a meal with the tour.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand noted that eliminating the meal had not been successful in the past, as participants enjoyed eating together.

Joyce Hughes, Torrance, stated that removing the meals might make it too difficult for some participants who were not as mobile, to find alternative places for meals.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino suggested an alternative to:

- Offer fewer trips
- Raise the fees by \$6 to \$11
- Offer the scholarship discount program
- Use a 30% subsidy
- Ask for additional money, if there is still a gap,

Community Services Director Jones stated that even using a 30% subsidy, there would still be a gap of \$14,000 and fewer trips would mean lower revenue.

In response to a question from Commissioner G. Davis, Community Services Director Jones stated that if the number of participants was increased, it wouldn't add any revenue, as each participant's tour fees were passed directly to the tour company. He added that there was already a non resident fee, which had been changed from a flat amount to a scaled amount based on the cost of each program, and that the cost of the snacks per trip was only \$30.

Community Services Director Jones stated that he was recommending Alternative # 3, as it would not require any additional subsidy, but noted that he had concerns that the higher fees could cause the program to fail due to diminishing returns.

Community Services Director Jones stated that if the program was lost, the direct costs and revenue would be lost and other programs would have to absorb the indirect costs.

Responding to a question from John Borthwick, Community Services Director Jones stated that the department did not have the staff to be able to offer the same level of service as Main Street Tours.

There was a discussion of alternate means of transportation or different tour services.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that Main Street had consistently been highly rated and was located in Torrance.

Community Services Director Jones noted that the County could provide occasional buses, but could not subsidize the entire Senior Excursion tour program.

Commissioner Kraemer noted that the Commission had the option of requesting additional funding from City Council.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino stated that she was not satisfied with Alternative # 3 because she felt that the program could be lost because the fees were too high. She added that the program was a very important and necessary program for seniors; and the additional funds should be requested from City Council to enable the use of Alternative # 2.

There was a discussion on the importance that the public, especially Torrance residents, show up at the City Council meeting to express their interest in support of the Senior Excursion Program.

Community Services Director Jones stated that he would send a letter to participants in the Excursion Program to inform them of the date of the meeting with City Council. He noted that he would request that the item be placed on the agenda at an early time rather than later on in the meeting. He added that the Commission's recommendation would go next to the Joint Parks and Recreation and Cultural Art Commissions meeting, which would send a recommendation to the Council Committee, which in turn would make a recommendation to the City Council.

Responding to a question from Joyce Hughes, Community Services Director Jones stated that the scholarship program would be implemented as part of Alternative # 2. He noted that the scholarship program was a set aside program and was not reflected in the budget figures.

Senior Business Manager Minter explained the way in which the scholarship program worked and noted that a participant would pay for 75% of the cost of the excursion and the scholarship account would pay the remaining 25%, so that the Excursion program would receive the full registration value. He added that the department would then track the number of participants who used the scholarship program and report that information to City Council on a regular basis to determine if additional money might be needed for scholarships.

Community Services Director Jones stated that \$28,293 was the amount needed to zero out the entire plan, while \$15,121 was the amount needed to close the gap for the Senior Excursion program. He recommended to the Commission that they not ask for a specific amount of money from the City Council but rather tell the Council that the Commission was recommending Alternative # 2 which raised the Senior Excursion Program subsidy level to 40%, increased fees and implemented the needs based scholarship program.

Community Services Director Jones stated that he would take the Commission's recommendation to the Joint Parks and Recreation and Cultural Art Commissions meeting on November 14, then hoped to meet with the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee in early December, and then go before the City Council in January. He noted that the three members of the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee were: Councilmen Barnett, Brewer and Furey.

Responding to a question from Henk Steenman, Torrance, Community Services Director Jones stated that if the City Council approved the recommendation in January, the Senior Excursion Program might be able to restart in the summer or fall of 2013.

Commissioner Virobik suggested that interested persons could direct emails or letters expressing their support of the Senior Excursions to the members of the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee.

Chairperson K. Davis noted that contact information for all City Council members was on the City website at [www.torranceca.gov](http://www.torranceca.gov)

Community Services Director Jones stated that he would send a letter to participants in the Excursion Program to inform them of the date and time of the meeting with the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino moved and Commissioner Robelotto seconded, to recommend Alternative # 2 with a request for additional funding from the General Fund. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Responding to a question from John Borthwick, Torrance, Community Services Director Jones stated that the Torrance Adult School trips had been funded by the Torrance Unified School District budget.

Former Commissioner Griffith reminded the Commission that all of the members of the City Council should receive letters in support of the Senior Excursion program, not just the three members of the City Council Citizen Development and Enrichment Committee.

## **SENIOR CITIZENS CONCERNS**

### **A. City Council Activities**

Commissioner Kraemer noted that the City was contacting a feasibility study for a medium size conference center to be located in Torrance.

She announced that the Senior Mobile Home Space Rent Subsidy would be phased out, with full payments through December, half payments until March 2013, and no payments after that. She added that the funding had come through state redevelopment funds, which were now dissolved.

Commissioner Kraemer announced that there would be the quarterly meeting of the finance and governmental operation committee on December 4, 2013 at 5:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers. She noted that the December 11, 2013 City Council meeting would be held at the Dee Hardison Sports Center.

Following a discussion on the loss of the mobile home rental subsidy, it was decided to add the issue to the agenda for the Commission's joint meeting with the City Council in February.

### **B. Housing**

None

### **C. Health**

Commissioner Robelotto reported on a program through the California Dental Hygienists which allowed hygienists to treat patients on site in nursing homes and senior facilities.

Commissioner Virobik presented information on senior advisories concerning: deceptive sales practices for Medicare Advantage Plans and Medicare Prescription Drug Programs and a senior protection web site for seniors, family members and caregivers to help prevent and report fraud, abuse and neglect.

Cultural Arts Commissioner Endo-Roberts, speaking as an advocate for dental insurance presented information on dental programs for the disabled and elderly in which hygienists were able to visit and treat patients in their home or facilities and report back to the dentists.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino noted that there would be a free flu shot clinic on November 19 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Ken Miller Recreational Center.

Commissioner K. Davis announced that she had met with Hope Witkowsky, who hosts Senior Scene and reviewed some of her programs on health and aging.

Commissioner Virobik noted that the Senior Scene program, "Aging in Place", would be filming her in her home.

Former Commissioner Griffith distributed information on a Temperature Education Management Plan, developed by students through a project sponsored by Lego.

#### **D. Transportation**

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino reported on the new express bus to downtown Los Angeles and the # 3 bus to Long Beach.

There was a discussion of the new transponder that was required for use on the carpool lanes of the 110 freeway.

#### **E. Community Programs**

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino noted that there would be a "Senior, Don't be Scammed" Program on Street Scams on November 20, 2013 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library.

Commissioner Kraemer announced that there would be two free admission days for seniors for the Torrance Memorial Holiday Festival from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on November 28 and 29, 2013.

Commissioner K. Davis stated that Torrance Memorial still needed volunteers for the Holiday Festival.

Commissioner K. Davis announced that the Torrance Woman's Club was sponsoring a dinner with 1920's theme for \$25 on November 17, with proceeds going to the Torrance Police Department Canine Unit.

Commissioner Kraemer announced that the Torrance Symphony might not be able to continue, due to lack of funding.

#### **F. Focal Point Program**

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

##### **October 2012**

Total number of documented calls: 48	Total number of callbacks: 15
Miscellaneous calls: 65	Total number of walk-ins: 23
Total number of calls received: 113	

Of the documented calls:

25 % were for transportation	46% were for housing
19 % were for in home services	

Commissioner Virobik reported that Focal Point attended three health fairs, sponsored by Janice Hahn, Walgreens and Redondo Beach Senior and Family Services.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Kraemer, Commissioner Virobik stated that when people requested information from Focal Point on housing, they were given information on section 8 housing, web sites, shared housing openings and lists of available apartments.

Commissioner G. Davis stated that the Focal Point Directory was a "Bible of Senior Resources" and complimented Commissioner Virobik on the directory.

#### **G. Elder Abuse/Fraud**

There was a discussion on computer virus scams.

## **JOINT MEETING WITH THE CITY COUNCIL**

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that the joint meeting would be on February 26, 2013 at 5:30 p.m.

Commissioner Kimmel-Dagostino suggested the topic of housing for the meeting, with subtopics of an update on section 8 housing, the mobile home subsidy program and the status of the downtown workforce housing project.

## **ORALS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that she had scheduled Senior Business Manager Minter to attend the March 12 meeting for a presentation on the Home Improvement Program (HIP).

Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that the Senior Arts and Craft fair had been a success.

In response to a question from Former Commissioner Griffith, Commissioner Virobik stated that there was information in the Focal Point directory on the Home Improvement Program.

Cultural Arts Commissioner Endo-Roberts stated that Medicare did not cover dental care and that she was actively involved in trying to change that.

Responding to a question from Cultural Arts Commissioner Endo-Roberts, Senior Recreation Supervisor Wand stated that the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center staff was working on the problem of the kiln at the center and anyone who had questions on the status of the kiln should consult staff.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 p.m. to the regular meeting on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. in the Hosler Conference Room at the Bartlett Senior Citizens Center. There would be no meeting in December.

Approved as Submitted January 8, 2013 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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