

Commission on Family Services
Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2022

Present: Commissioners Harold Primack (Chair), Marjorie Goran, Jo Hammerman, Shajan Jose (Vice-Chair), Wendy Katznelson, Daniel Mann, Brian McHugh (Human Services Liaison), Heather O'Donnell, Arnold Oskin, Nancy Schwartz, Annie Shear, Phillip Shefren, Mike Stiehl, Melissa Versch.

Absent: Commissioners Yolanda Bender, Bonnie Eckstein, Jaime Garcia, Joshua Orlan, Laila Iqbal, Nichole Perry, Valerie Riley, Edie Sue Sutker

- I. Call to order at 7:00pm
- II. Approval of agenda: Agenda was approved. Harold requested adding the Fourth of July Parade under New Business.
- III. Approval of Minutes: The February 2, 2022 minutes were approved.
- IV. Welcome and Opening Remarks: Harold welcomed new Commissioner, Nancy Schwartz.
- V. Speaker: Debi Morganfield, Executive Director, Meals on Wheels, Northeastern Illinois, presented, with discussion and questions following. MOW, Northeastern Illinois is the premier provider of home delivered meal programs. One in six seniors struggle to access food. 25,000 people are in their existing delivery area. 750 people were served this past year. 1,468 are in need in Skokie, with 64 served last year. Meals are provided Monday through Saturday. They are an emergency meal provider for the Red Cross in crisis situations. The program currently has one van to service a huge area, and are in need of an additional vehicle.
Questions:
 1. What's the cost and who can receive meals? Cost is on a sliding scale basis; and is not only for low-income seniors. Anyone can receive meals either long term, or on a temporary basis, and the program can start the meals within 2 days.
 2. Are special diets offered? Diabetic, renal, low salt, and cardiac friendly meals are offered, but they refer to CJE SeniorLife for kosher meals. Daily choices for meals are offered - two hot and two cold. Now are delivering cold and the client reheats (during covid).
 3. What is the major source of funding? Individual donations and a small amount of government funding primarily supports the program. The operating budget is \$1.6 million.
 4. Are social workers on staff? No, but they collaborate with and refer to NSSC.
 5. How can we, as commissioners, help? Debi asked commissioners to be "cheerleaders" for the program, i.e., with Boomers and Beyond, or other initiatives, and urged commissioners to sign up online for the program's newsletter. She also distributed pamphlets. Volunteering is an option for those over 18 years of age, if younger must be accompanied by a parent.
 6. What is the relationship with hospitals? There was a pilot with St. Francis Hospital, but issues with coordination of services have presented challenges. Coordination

with hospitals is critical as it has been found that there is a 20% decrease in hospital re-admissions if the individual has adequate nutrition.

- VI. Health and Human Service Report: Brian McHugh:
1. Covid cases are down in Skokie and Cook County.
 2. The Co-Responder Program continues to grow, developing new relationships with community agencies. Next Wednesday Channel 5 will come out to promote the program.
 3. The Social Worker position has been narrowed down to a couple candidates and the hope is to have it filled by April.
- VII. Old Business:
- A. Creation of Subcommittees - Two subcommittees were formed: Seniors, and At Risk Youth and Families. It was decided to utilize break-out sessions during regular commission meetings. Discussion around forming a subcommittee on People with Disabilities continued with acknowledgement of intersectionality of aging and disability, and with the suggestion to communicate to the Mayor the need to have the disability community represented on this commission. Melissa suggested the possibility of splitting the seniors subcommittee into two committees to work on different initiatives. Reports from subcommittee break-outs:
1. At-Risk Youth and Families: Wendy reported the need to assess needs locally in the schools. There is an already existing group and information will be gathered from this group.
 2. Seniors: Melissa reported the Boomers and Beyond Fair is a potential initiative, as there is an increase of the senior population and individuals living alone and in isolation; will review information from AARP Livable Communities; and possibly work with the Human Relations Commission on neighbors helping neighbors.
- B. Produce Initiative - Heather will take leadership and will organize volunteers with Sign Up Genius. St. Paul's is still on board to store produce.
- C. Farmer's Market Monthly Food Drive - Heather will coordinate with Sign Up Genius for volunteers. May also ask for donations of diapers and toiletries, and new or lightly used children's clothing. Brian reports that St. Paul's needs toddler jackets and they can be dropped off at the church.
- VIII. New Business:
- A. April Commission Meeting - This meeting will be a dinner meeting with costs split by commissioners.
- B. Fourth of July Parade - Beautification Commission has a float and has offered to share with this commission and display our banner. Harold will reach out to the commission. Arnie reported that the Skokie Festival of Cultures is on for May 21-22 and suggests our commission have a presence there. He will follow up.
- IX. Citizen Comments: None.
- X. Adjournment at 8:35pm.
Next meeting: April 6, 2022
7:00pm