

Commission on Family Services
Meeting Minutes – Skokie Village Hall

March 1, 2023

7:00 pm

Present: Commissioners Harold Primack (Chair), Michelle Friedman, Marjorie Goran, Jo Hammerman, Laila Iqbal, Shajan Jose, Linda Lara, Daniel Mann, Melissa Ponce (NC), Arnie Oskin, Valerie Riley, Nancy Schwartz, Naadirah Shapley-Wells, Annie Shear, Phillip Shefren, London Summerville, Melissa Versch (Staff Liaison)

Absent: Commissioners Nicole Perry, Daniel Stalilonis, Michael Stiehl, Edie Sue Sutker

- I. **Call to Order** at 7:25pm.
 - A. Approval of Agenda by consent.

- II. **Approval of February 1, 2023 Minutes**
 - A. Approval of Minutes by consent.

- III. **Chair's Report:** Harold Primack
 - A. Introduction of new commissioner, Melissa Ponce. All commissioners introduced themselves.
 - B. Review of achievements over the last year, including produce and donation collections, initiation of planning for Boomers and Beyond, and formation of subcommittees: Seniors, People with Disabilities, and At Risk Youth and Families.

- IV. **Health and Human Service Report:** Staff Liaison, Melissa Versch
 - A. In January, the Illinois Department of Health and Human Services communicated that phase two of resettlement program has begun for asylum seekers. In Skokie, there is one asylum seeker location. The Illinois Housing Development Authority is working with landlords throughout the Chicagoland area to locate permanent housing.
 - B. Skokie HHS was awarded a new COVID-19 vaccination grant.
 - C. The Human Relations Commission has set the date for the annual Stand Against Racism event, now called Until Justice Just Is. The gathering outside Village Hall will be April 25 at 10:30am.
 - D. Skokie HHS has been fielding inquiries from residents concerned about SNAP benefits being reduced as the Public Health Emergency comes to an end. Residents are provided with a list of food pantries and helped with updating contact information with DHS. Commissioners indicated they would be interested to hear information about the number of inquiries coming in over the next month.

- V. **Old Business:**
 - A. Boomers and Beyond 2023
The planning committee met in January and will be meeting again mid-March. At the last meeting, the group signed up for sub-committee tasks, including Presentations/Program, Vendor Coordination/Logistics and Publicity/Sponsorships. If anyone on the Commission would like to volunteer or knows of a good speaker, they can let Harold know.

B. Farmers Market Produce Collection and Donation Drive

Harold asked for a volunteer to organize a SignUp Genius for produce and donation collections this summer. London Summerville volunteered. Melissa explained the process of collecting produce from farmers each Sunday throughout the summer. Donation Drives are scheduled for the last Sundays, June through October.

Harold shared that the Niles Township Food Pantry is having a Fun Run on May 21.

C. Subcommittee reports

Harold and Mike Stiehl met with Gene Griffin to discuss 708 Boards, which create a tax revenue to be used for mental health services. Board members would be appointed. A maximum tax would collect a couple million dollars per year. This is in early stages of discussion. The initiative may be done at a Township level.

VI. New Business:

A. Skokie Festival of Cultures

Arnie shared that the Festival of Cultures event will be held May 20 – 21. If the Commission would like to have a table, we need to talk with Aryn Fletcher with the Park District. The opportunity would allow the Commission to communicate to residents about initiatives and activities that benefit the community. Discussion indicated the Commission would be interested in sharing a table with another group and help would be elicited from the Village marketing team. Arnie would work with Melissa to update the Commission brochure. Harold called a vote to participate: the motion passed.

B. Skokie July 4th Parade

Arnie is on the planning committee for the July 4th parade and proposed that the Commission participate this year. Harold stated he would reach out to the Chair of the Beautification Commission to ask about partnering. Arnie reported that the planning committee is working with law enforcement to ensure safety at the parade.

VII. Citizen Comments:

None.

VIII. Adjournment at 8:20pm.

Next Meeting: April 12, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
at Skokie Police Department