



## MINUTES

### North Little Rock Senior Citizens Commission

September 23, 2019 | 3:00 PM

Hays Center

The Senior Citizens Commission meeting was called to order by Dick Blankenbeker at 3:00 PM.

Present were: Dick Blankenbeker, Jim Lewis, Dorothy Romes, Dick Giddings, Robert Barnes, Belinda Snow, and Marleene Calvin. Beth White was absent. A quorum was declared.

A motion was made by Robert Barnes to excuse absences. The motion was seconded by Marleene Calvin. Motion passed unanimously.

Commission member Eddie Powell passed away on September 11, 2019. A moment of silence was held in his memory.

A motion was made by Dick Giddings to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. The motion was seconded by Robert Barnes. Motion passed unanimously.

Belinda Snow gave an update on the NLR Housing Authority. They have closed on Heritage and Bowker House. They are no longer public housing. They are considered private housing, owned by limited partnerships created by the development company BGC and managed by Standard Enterprises. Heritage is now called Hickory View and Bowker is Cedar Gardens. The residents will remain mostly the same, with housing vouchers from the NLRHA covering individuals' rents. Willow and Campus Towers are expected to close by the end of September. The Hays Center will need to sign a new contract with BGC to provide resident services. With this change NLRHA will no longer monitor rent occupancy. With lower occupancy due to renovations, the PILOT funds paid by the property owners will go down as well. A decision will need to be made about Activity Director staffing. The Hays Center is developing a proposal focused on seniors, which will include transportation and senior specific activities.

Director Bernadette Rhodes gave a financial overview, reporting that financials are in good order. She projected that at year end, the Center would have \$60,000 remaining in its budget to buy things that the center needs. We are currently at 87% of our budget for preventative maintenance. Ms. Rhodes has requested an increase this budget line for 2020. A motion was made by Jim Lewis to accept the financial report and seconded by Robert Barnes. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Rhodes gave a program update, including a review of her staff report to the Mayor. The program memo and staff report are enclosed below. There has been an increase in requests for transportation to and from the Hays Center and to grocery stores and medical appointments. A proposal was submitted to commissioners in regards to fees and distances to help accommodate transportation needs. The proposal is enclosed below. A motion was made by Robert Barnes to approve the proposal as a pilot program to begin when the Center's request to ARDOT for a handicap-accessible van is approved and fulfilled. Ms. Rhodes is to give the Commission monthly reports on pilot program successes and challenges. The motion was seconded by Marleene Calvin. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Rhodes gave a facility and equipment update. The audio-visual equipment in the ballroom is coming to a final review. Ms. Rhodes is getting specs ready to replace the DesertAire HVAC in case it is not fixable.

Ms. Rhodes discussed a safety concern of non-members entering the building. Looking at a possibility of needing more members to cover the front desk, a commissioner suggested we could reach out to AARP for additional volunteers.

The Commission discussed changes to membership fees. Commissioners suggested a \$10 increase for Core memberships with Extended memberships staying at the same rate. Additional to the \$10 increase for Core memberships, hours on the weekend will no longer have time restrictions. All members may enter and leave at the same time on the weekend. A motion was made by Jim Lewis to approve the price increase, seconded by Dick Giddings. Motion passed unanimously. The price increase will take effect January 1, 2020.

Friendly Chapel Fish Fry tickets are on sale at this time. A motion was made by Marleene Calvin to purchase two books of tickets for the event at a cost of \$240 total. The motion was seconded by Dick Giddings. Motion passed unanimously.

No open comments.

Dick Blankenbeker adjourned the meeting at 4:15 pm.

*Prepared by Chera Sbait, Hays Center Staff*

*Reviewed by Belinda Snow, Secretary*

*Approved by Senior Citizens Commission on October 28, 2019*

## **Patrick Henry Hays Senior Citizens Center and Mayor's Office of Volunteer Services Monthly Report – August 2019**

### **Member Statistics**

- Our members logged 12,547 visits to the Hays Center (92 more than last month).
- 82 new members joined the Hays Center this month for a total of 3,575 active members (34 more than last month).
- New member demographics:
  - 71 new “Core Hours” members, 11 new “Extended Hours” members.
  - 32 African American, 43 Caucasian, 3 Asian/Pacific Islander, 4 other/unknown.
  - 56 females, 26 males.
  - 29 from North Little Rock, 53 from outside NLR.
  - The youngest 4 members to join this month were 50. The oldest was 88.

### **Deposits**

- \$ 5,123.92 in new member fees
- \$ 12,904.92 in renewal fees
- \$ 3,225.00 in rental fees
- \$ 1,052.00 in trip fees
- \$ 985.00 in lunch/event/activity fees
- \$ 346.00 in other revenue
- **\$23,636.84 Total (↑19% over last month)**

**Activities (Susan Russell)**

- Hosted the Sister Cities banquet on August 1<sup>st</sup> and Police Promotions on August 16<sup>th</sup>.
- Held a Summer Bazaar on August 7<sup>th</sup>, which was open to City employees & featured a food truck and vendors.
- Visited UAMS Institute on Aging to tour facility and discuss partnership opportunities, including funding available for trainer certification in Tai Chi and other evidence-based physical and mental fitness programs.

**Facility (Bruce Vang)**

- Ordered more LED panel and LED bulbs for light upgrade.
- Checked on all Keiser and fitness equipment for proper operation.
- Fixed cold water problem in men's shower.
- Working with Ecolab to get a carpet cleaner machine.
- Installed water bottle refill station on water fountain.
- Worked with Wirges on ballroom A/V upgrade (estimated completion date mid-Sept.)
- Had maintenance done on golf cart (replaced battery, tires, and wheel alignment).
- Rented carpet machine to clean carpet in ballroom and in highly-trafficked areas.

**Trips (Chera Sbait)**

- We provided 30 trips, transporting a total of 260 people and collecting a total of \$1,052 in trip fees.
- Hays Center day trips went to Hot Springs, Fairfield Bay, Searcy, Hope, Lakeview, Alma, and the Hot Springs Jazz & Blues Festival.
- Public senior housing residents traveled to medical appointments (7 trips), grocery stores (4 trips), and to bowling.
- Our Bean Bag Baseball teams traveled to Little Rock, Benton, Jacksonville, Des Arc, and Sherwood for away games.
- After driver, fuel and meal costs, the transportation program netted -\$635.

**Rentals (Angela Wirt)**

- 4 paid rentals
- 2 co-sponsored events: Sister City Banquet and Police Promotions
- Total rental income: \$3,825

**Mayor's Office of Volunteer Services (Angela Wirt)**

- Hays Center volunteers reported 1,414 hours this month.
- Received 3 new volunteer applications.

**Memo To:**  
**North Little Rock Senior Citizens Commission**  
**From: Bernadette Gunn Rhodes**  
**Memo Date: September 19, 2019**

We are all so saddened by Eddie Powell's passing. He will be greatly missed. I posted the following statement on social media and on the Hays Center's memorial board on behalf of the Commission and staff:

*The Senior Citizens Commission and Hays Center staff and members will always remember Eddie Powell with love and gratitude. Eddie had a vision for a senior center in North Little Rock and was the one to present the idea to then-mayor Patrick Henry Hays. Eddie guided the Hays Center's construction in 2002/2003 and its expansion in 2007. He continued to serve faithfully on the Senior Citizens Commission until his illness pulled him away. We will miss Eddie's kindness and wisdom and are holding his family in our hearts.*

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Average attendance in the last four weeks has been up 8% compared to the same period in 2018, and down 4% compared to the previous four weeks. We have been logging an average of 2,733 visits per week so far this year. 503 members visit the Center on an average weekday. We had 3,575 active members in August. That is a net gain of 34 members over the previous month.

**Financial Update**

I updated my forecast through the end of 2019, and anticipate we will have approximately \$60,000 remaining in our budget at the end of the year, which will allow us to purchase a few needed items. We have already decided to replace the sand in our pool filters, which is overdue, and to purchase enough LED light panels to furnish the lobby and a few more to replace fluorescent fixtures as they go out. We are considering a portable commercial carpet cleaning machine, more LED light panels, and new exercise equipment such as new SciFit bicycle and/or seated elliptical. The seated elliptical are very popular and two of the SciFit machines are so old replacement parts are no longer available.

Our 2020 budget has been submitted to Finance and is included in your packet. I did not make any major changes other than a significant increase in our building maintenance budget, to \$200,000. With looming HVAC replacements and an aging building, I feel the increase is needed to keep the facility operating efficiently. It is also time to renovate our ballroom. The wallpaper is peeling and some of the sheetrock underneath will need to be replaced once the wallpaper is removed.

**Program Update**

Angela and Susan are planning another pour paint class (with pumpkins!) and Angela will also teach a precious metal clay class in September/October.

We are partnering with the UAMS Institute on Aging to offer to volunteers free fitness certification classes in Tai Chi and a movement program called "Ageless Grace." UAMS also taught a free class on Chronic Pain Management and Opioids.

We will host a regional Bean Bag Baseball tournament on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> in partnership with CareLink. In October, we will hold a health fair and a Halloween luncheon.

A friend of the Hays Center suggested a women's home repair club, and the idea has garnered a lot of interest from our members. Our first "We Can Do It!" ladies' home repair club meeting will be on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. The goal is to help women become more confident and competent with home repairs, and to foster a community of women who help each other get projects done while having fun.

### **Transportation Update**

We are still waiting to hear from ARDOT regarding our transportation grant application.

Hays staff would like to consider offering transportation to Hays Center members. I have included a proposal and cost estimate in your packet.

### **Facility Update**

The Ballroom A/V upgrade is almost finished. It has taken longer than anticipated but overall the disruption to our activities has been manageable. Staff was trained on the new system on 9/16 and our ballroom activity schedule is back to normal. The vendor is finishing up the lighting automation and then the only thing left to do will be to fine-tune the system controls per Hays staff members' feedback.

Regarding our Aerobic Pools DesertAire HVAC unit, this past month we had \$430 in repair expenses. That puts our 2019 YTD repair cost at \$14,083. In 2018, we spent \$10,997 repairing the unit.

### **Policy Update**

Thank you for closely considering an update to the Center's membership fees. At our last meeting, we were missing some Commission members, so did not hold a vote. Several of those present expressed support for changing the Core Hours membership to \$45-48/year and leaving the Extended Hours membership fee at \$150. You also discussed opening the center earlier in the future to allow more working people to join. There was consensus that if fees were raised by only approx. \$10 that small increases would have to be made more regularly. If you have all the information you need, you could consider a vote at this meeting. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

I look forward to seeing you on Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Proposal To:  
North Little Rock Senior Citizens Commission  
From: Bernadette Gunn Rhodes  
RE: Transportation for Hays Center Members  
Date: September 19, 2019**

**Introduction**

The Senior Citizens Commission, Senior Citizens Outreach Board, and Hays Center staff have been tremendously successful in creating a vibrant, welcoming, and useful facility over the past 16 years. The seniors who use the Hays Center benefit tremendously both physically and mentally. Unfortunately, our members are mainly dependent on cars to bring them to and from the center. Too often, losing their ability to drive also deprives members of the benefits they gain from visiting the Hays Center.

The Hays Center's mission is to "meet the needs of today's active seniors." Senior Citizen Outreach Service's mission is to "promote, develop, encourage, and assist with programs designed to meet the needs of senior citizens and provide opportunities for their maximum enrichment." There is great opportunity for these two organizations to work together to allow more seniors to access the enrichment the Hays Center has to offer. I would like to propose a pilot program to offer transportation to and from the Hays Center to any member residing in North Little Rock.

**Program Overview**

The pilot program proposes transporting Hays Center members residing in NLR to and from the center only. Based on the success of the program, there may be an opportunity to expand transportation in the future to services like grocery, medical, and pharmacy.

Transportation to and from the Hays Center would run Monday-Friday, with pick-ups from NLR homes offered 8:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. and drop-offs offered 10:15 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

**Program Cost**

**Revenue**

We propose a fee based on round-trip mileage ranges:

- \$3 for 1-15 miles round trip
- \$4 for 16-20 miles round trip
- \$5 for 21-25 miles round trip
- \$6 for 26-30 miles round trip

**It is estimated that the program would collect \$5,200 in revenue.**

**Cost**

We would utilize primarily volunteer drivers, with staff filling in only when needed. We estimate providing an average of 25 trips per week for an annual total of 1,300 trips.

At 1,300 trips/year, fuel would cost approx. \$5,000. Estimated paid driver time would cost approx. \$7,000 if paid drivers were needed to cover 1/4 of shifts. **TOTAL PROGRAM COST: \$12,000.**