

**CITY OF VERONA**  
**SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
**January 12, 2021**  
**VERONA SENIOR CENTER**  
**MINUTES**

1. The meeting of the Senior Services Committee was called to order by Katie Kohl at 6:06 p.m.
2. Roll Call: On roll call: Charlotte Jerney, Christine Posey and Katie Kohl were present. Also present: Stephanie Ehle, Senior Center Director.
3. Approval of the minutes from the October 13, 2020 Senior Services Committee meeting. Motion by Jerney, seconded by Posey, to approve the minutes from the October 13, 2020 Senior Services Committee meeting. Motion carried 3-0.
4. Director's Report
  - The Senior Center is open by appointment only. They currently have a few in-house programs: foot care and new diabetic foot care. Members can also use the exercise room one person at time for 30 minutes. Starting in February they will be showing movies again with a 10 person max.
  - Unfortunately one of the providers (massage /reflex) needed to step down. The staff is looking for a replacement and then these services will be offered again in-house.
  - In terms of COVID-19, the Senior Center has been very lucky with no big issues. Two staff had exposure but fortunately nothing beyond that.

Alder Kohl asked about the safety protocols for in-house programs. Ehle informed the committee that all members start by checking in at the desk. They fill out two waivers. If they answer yes to any questions they will not be able to participate. After they check in they will be seated at their own individual table. Tables are roughly 8-10 feet apart from one another. All tables will be cleaned after each program. The reason movies were chosen was due to the minimal interaction between members and the fact that members don't have to move around to participate.

- Anyone who enters the building needs to sign a COVID-19 symptoms waiver and liability waiver. This will continue as we expand in-house offerings. The symptoms questionnaire has been updated to connect with the Schedule's Plus membership software.

Posey asked if the staff have had any issues with people not wearing masks. Ehle stated that they haven't had any trouble in-house. The staff has tried really hard to communicate the message that masks are mandatory (signs, emails, verbal reminders).

Ehle did state that they have had some trouble with people not wearing mask in the drive thru. They believe people forget because they don't actually get out of the car. The staff gently reminded people when issues arise.

- In addition to those few in-house programs, drive thru meals and Meals on Wheels programs will continue. At a previous meeting Alder Posey had asked about program data. As Ehle looks into it she's finding discrepancies and is currently working on fixing the issues. She was however able to pull some Meals on Wheels data. Ehle discussed the following data:

2020 MOW Meals Delivered Details:			
Total:	Type:		Dates:
1425	Traditional MOW Meals Delivered (1 meal, delivered 5 days a week)		1/1-3/27
744	MOW Emergency Meals Delivered (4 meals, delivered once a week)		3/30-6/24
2388	MOW Ongoing Pandemic Delivered (2 meals, delivered twice a week)		6/30-12/31
<b>4557</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>		
<b>Year Comparison:</b>		<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
MOW Meals delivered		4557	6268

- Ehle also mentioned they continue to partner with local businesses. In January they are working with Tuvalu and Gus's Diner, February with Driftless Chocolates and Sonrisas (an assisted living home sponsoring a program) and March is Yola's Café.
- Returning to the topic of the exercise room, the Friends Board will be purchasing a treadmill. It will come in about 4weeks. The staff have seen growth in the use of the space and hope it will bring in more members.
- The Friends Board has also started an AmazonSmile fundraising account.

Alder Kohl asked what the exact name of it was organization was. Ehle stated she believed it was "Friends of Verona Senior Center" but would double check and send to all on the call.

- The Senior Center is no longer using contracted RN services. If needs arise in the future they will find a way to provide similar services via EMS, students, CNA etc.

- The Senior Center is looking to provide tax assistance via AARP but have not figured out how to do this safely. AARP has certain rules they need to follow and they are doing a trial run at another local Senior Center. If that goes well they will hopefully expand to other centers. Ehle mentioned that if it doesn't happen many people will be disappointed.
- The staff is also hoping to partner with the Recreation department more often in 2021 and will host a babysitting class next month.

Alder Jerney asked if the Senior Center was affiliated with any organization that produced a journal or magazine in order to share all their great efforts. Ehle stated that although they belong to a couple organizations she was unfamiliar with any who produced such a product. Alder Jerney also mentioned it would be nice to promote the success of the Senior Center and suggested possibly partnering with a research student or school.

#### 5. Reports on Programs and Case Management:

##### Programs:

- The Senior Center will continue to move forward with roughly 90% of their programs being virtual events. Virtual programming will continue to be a part of their future program endeavors. The staff have seen an increase in older adults signing up for Zoom programs.
- The programs team is working towards offering online signups through the Schedule's Plus Program. This will be finalized sometime this year. Members can still call to sign up if they don't have a computer.
- The staff continues to think outside the box with drive thru events, virtual speakers, partnering with local businesses, virtual cooking classes, virtual geology bingo, Devils Lake virtual hike, virtual meditation, visits with the zoo, outside concerts and more. Health and wellness topics along with exercise classes continue to be most popular.
- The Senior Center is offering a new unique opportunity. They have a Plato speaker, Michael Roy, offering a presentation on the Covid-19 vaccine on February 4. This will be an informational program to share information to consider when considering the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Staff continue to work on ways to market the Senior Center. They offer weekly emails, daily Facebook posts, regular updates on the board and city websites, and a paper and online version of the Chronicle newsletter.
- The programs team in collaboration with the Case Management student intern, Lauren, put together a survey to gather information on engagement and needs of

members. The survey went out in January and will be in the February newsletter as well.

- This year has been challenging but also a great success in trying many new things and expanding programs.

#### Case Management:

- There are no Helping Hand requests at this time.
- The Case Management team is not offering formal Outreach at this time. Ehle has also asked the team to not conduct home visits. The only exception would be for a client with a serious/urgent need. If a visit was warranted, proper social distancing protocol would be in place. Currently the team is using phone and zoom meetings with clients when appropriate.
- The Senior Center partnered with Sugar River Pizza and had a drive-thru Christmas party for our vets group. Nothing else scheduled at this time due to the pandemic.
- A similar drive-thru Christmas party for our caregivers group took place in December, again partnering with Sugar River Pizza. The group is currently conducting meetings via zoom and has regular attendees.
- Case Managers continue to work with Triad to look into 2021 program options. They continue to share virtual events from Triad Madison West and Cottage Grove.

Alder Posey asked what Triad stood for. Ehle stated she is still a little unclear of the origin or background of the group, however knows that RSVP and the police department has been involved. The group offers important programs such as drug take back, care check/car fit and more. She will get a better description from the Case Management team and share with everyone.

- New referrals continue coming in often to the case management department. Case Managers are seeing an increase in seniors looking for assistance to help find and fill out forms to apply for assistance programs and food insecurity is on the rise. Depression and anxiety around the unknown of the pandemic continues. Typically the team increases check-ins with seniors this time of the year and they have started doing so.
- The Case Managers are reviving their friendly caller program. The program consists of one volunteer senior calling another vulnerable senior to chat and provide socialization. They are also looking into developing a program to loan tablets to help isolated seniors.

- Scams targeting seniors are on the rise. The team tries to help as best they can.
- Student intern Lauren is working three days a week and will continue until May. Lauren is taking the lead on the friendly caller program as her school project.

Alder Kohl asked if interns were something the Senior Center would consider again. Ehle responded yes. Lauren has been great and it has been very helpful to have a graduate student who felt confident to just jump in. Students are a great asset to any organization willing to take them on. Ehle has worked with many students in the past and believes these partnerships are a win-win.

#### 6. Other Business

All three Alders extended their thanks to the Senior Center staff for their continued efforts in supporting the community during these challenging times. Ehle will share their feedback with her team.

#### 7. Adjournment

- Motion by Alder Jerney, seconded by Posey, to adjourn at 6:39 p.m. Motion carried 3-0.