



THE CITY OF MIRAMAR ELDERLY AFFAIRS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 5, 2024

6:30 P.M.

A meeting of the City of Miramar Elderly Affairs Advisory Board (EAAB) took place at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, February 5, 2024, in the conference room at the Multi-Service Complex, 6700 Miramar Parkway, Miramar, FL 33023.

1 & 2. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

The following Board members were present:

Cecelia Cuff, Chairperson
Paulette Watson, Vice Chairperson
Roland Abel
Juan Chiquito
Kohath March
Cleopatra Mills
Doreen Stephens
Annette Wellington

The following Board member were absent:

Mary Hudson
Roxana Toro

Also Present:

David Haggerty, Senior Services/Transportation, SSD
Sabrina Deveaux, Office Specialist

A quorum was declared.

3. RECORDING OF MEETING (ACKNOWLEDGEMENT)

4. MEMBERSHIP STATUS: NONE

5. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

- Regular meeting minutes of November 6, 2023

Ms. Doreen Stephens directed the board's attention to highlighted areas of omissions in the minutes that needed to be filled by the board; specifically: page six, seven, eight, and the time of adjournment shown on page nine, which should likely be 7:50 p.m., not 6:50 p.m. She asked Mr. Abel if he recalled what he said for page six.

Mr. Abel stated it should say: ... beside the Senior Adult Daycare Center.

Ms. Doreen Stephens confirmed it was Mr. March who stated he was in real estate. The same identifier applied on page seven. She remarked where the timer said 35:41 on page seven, the speaker was identified by the board as Mary Hudson. On page eight, the person speaking about the technology assistance was identified as Ms. Cuff.

Chairperson Cuff made a motion to approve the minutes of November 6, 2023, as presented; the motion was seconded by Mr. Abel. The motion passed unanimously.

6. PRESENTATIONS (IF ANY)

Mr. Haggerty mentioned the City Attorney would give a presentation on the Sunshine Laws at the board's next meeting, as she was out of the country.

7. EAAB PURPOSE STATEMENT

Chairperson Cuff read the board's purpose statement contained in the bylaws that governed the EAAB, as provided in the backup; the bylaws detailed the board's purpose, its makeup, and the rules by which the board was governed.

Ms. Stephens sought clarification on to the composition of the board in the bylaws, specifically item number four, where it stated any board member was absent from two consecutive regular meetings, or three meetings within a six-month period. She asked how this applied to the rule on board members being able to either attend meetings in person, giving them the right to vote on action items, or attend virtually, allowing them to participate in board discussion, but they could not vote. That is, was the determination of a board member's

absence based on them being physically present at a meeting only, or did their attendance virtually count as being present at a meeting.

Mr. Haggerty explained a board member attending a meeting virtually was not counted as an absence; they were attending the meeting; they just could not vote.

Ms. Stephens wished to know more about how a member's absence would be deemed as excuse by a majority vote of the board members. That is, what was considered an excusable absence.

Mr. Haggerty stated if a member knew ahead of time, they miss one or more meetings due to medical reasons, they could inform the board of their expected absence ahead of time. The board could then vote at that time on whether to extend that member a leave of absence, so they could remain on the board, as opposed to a member not showing up for a meeting without notifying City staff.

Ms. Stephens questioned how a member's absence due to a conflict of some sort, such as work, would be viewed.

Mr. Haggerty believed the tenor of the attendance language in the bylaws was to address if a member was repeatedly absent from meetings, even with a variety of excuses, the board members could decide as to whether to terminate that member from the board. He said the rule was to address the issue of a member of the board being continually absent from meetings, allowing the board, by a majority vote, to remove that member, so they could fill that space on the board with someone willing to show up, and work with other members to conduct the board's business.

Ms. Stephens thought point number six needed to be corrected, as it said meetings would be held on the second Tuesday, but the board met on the first Monday of the month.

Mr. Haggerty explained the reason for that language was it was the exact language from the academic advisory board, so he would make a note to correct that language.

Mr. Chiquito asked to be given a hard a copy of the board's bylaws.

Mr. Haggerty asked Ms. Deveau to make a copy of the bylaws for all the board members present.

Ms. Mills stated she was absent from the November 2023 meeting, as she was

not notified of the meeting; when she contacted staff, they told her they did not have her email.

Mr. Haggerty commented the board attendance would be considered moving forward; there was no issue with attendance for previous meetings. Ms. Mills' recorded absence would be changed to a note that she was not notified of the meeting.

Chairperson Cuff referred to number nine, where it stated each meeting should begin a 6:30 p.m., and adjourn no later than 8:00 p.m., though meetings could be extended by approval of the board. She asked what would warrant a meeting being extended.

Mr. Haggerty replied, typically, meetings were kept to an hour and a half to be respectful of everybody's time, and to keep it turning into a major filibuster. However, if the board was engaged in a deep discussion on a matter, and everyone wished to continue, he would suggest at that time that a board member make a motion to extend the meeting for a time certain, such as 15 more minutes. In this way, parameters were set on how long the meeting would continue.

Chairperson Cuff mentioned section four covered about conflicts, and the repealing of ordinances, or some of the language contained thereof due to conflicts.

Ms. Wellington thought the City Attorney could provide clarification at the next meeting.

Ms. Doreen Stephens thought the meaning of section four, in relation to conflicts, that if there were conflicts with the City's bylaws, as the latter supersede those of the board.

Chairperson Cuff asked the board for a motion to adopt the EAAB's bylaws, as presented.

Vice Chairperson Watson made a motion to approve the adoption of the EAAB bylaws, as written; the motion was seconded by Ms. Wellington. The motion passed unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Stephens believed at the board's last meeting there was some very good discussion around ideas, and suggestions for actions, and goals of the board,

asking if the present meeting was the appropriate time for the board to begin to list them out, and, over time, develop a plan toward accomplishing them. The discussion included: marketing, lighting issues, dogs roaming neighborhoods without being on a leash, etc.

Vice Chairperson Watson thought the board might need to begin with the purpose of the board.

Chairperson Cuff remarked that the one light on her street at the bottom was now flickering, so her street was very dark, and she mentioned it repeatedly to the city staff, yet no one came out to fix it. Specifically, she contacted Vice Mayor Davis, and she visited the site, and observed the streetlight flickering; she said someone from the Engineering Department, working with the Florida Power & Light (FPL).

Mr. Abel affirmed fixing the light fell under the Utilities Department, so anyone having problems with streetlights should contact the City's Utilities Department, and they would liaise with FPL, rather than contacting FPL directly. He had experience in the matter.

Chairperson Cuff reiterated it was a safety concern. She recalled alluding to the fact that there were persons going around the community, checking on shut ins; she had a neighbor who rarely left her house, other than when she had a medical appointment, and the van came to pick her up. If the City did not already have a program, she thought one should be instituted, whereby, a program was created to maintain contact with shut ins.

Ms. Wellington felt sure 211-BROWARD had a program where they did phone calls to seniors to check on them daily. Staff could always confirm if this was the County still provided this service.

Ms. Mills sought clarification if the board was going to go out and identify problems or was the board could focus on a topic or situation to address, looking for solutions, or was the board just going to identify the existence of problems in the community.

Vice Chairperson Watson thought at the board's last meeting there was discussion about issues in the Miramar community, suggesting the board, to begin with, select three of the identified issues, and begin working on them. Hence her suggestion that the board devise a specific purpose, identify three matters to be addressed, and navigate their solution.

Mr. Chiquito thought the board's purpose was to be of service to seniors in the Miramar community, wondering if a list of the board's ideas could be created,

then do a mini survey, as the board was discussing the concerns in a bubble. It would be useful to get input from the elderly in Miramar, asking them what their priorities were, etc., and based on their feedback, the board could further focus their work into more tangible activities.

Ms. Mills concurred, as board members might not be cognizant of what the needs were for the elderly living in one area of the city, versus those living in another. Board members might not be aware of some elderly issues, so they might not be mentioned as part of the work the board sought to do.

Ms. Wellington believed at the board's last meeting, there were discussion on some ideas and issues members observed; board members were supposed to home in on those issues and determine which ones they wished to focus on.

Ms. Stephens suggested the board place the ideas and issues in general categories, then work on prioritizing what to work on; for example, a public safety; marketing and information, whereby, communication in the form of a pamphlet, for example, could be created to get information out to the elderly residents, including its distribution as senior centers. She agreed with Mr. Chiquito's suggestion to do some type of research, which could be another category, surveying various areas in Miramar, to determine the needs of elderly residents, and see if those needs differed based on where they lived in Miramar. Gathering this information could help the board direct its efforts accordingly.

Chairperson Cuff concurred; the board could create the categories, and then prioritize two issues, and work on them; the board should get out into the community, so the elderly residents were familiar with them, as this would facilitate getting their input as to what their needs were. She went onto mention garbage collection over the holidays, and the fact that a notice was sent out via text, email to notify residents there would be no pickup; she realized some elderly residents were not aware of the change, as many did not use their phones in this manner. Though the garbage collection was just a template of an occurrence that elderly residents needed to be aware of, the board could create a system to send out advisory notices to the elderly, though she was not aware of how cost effective providing such a service was. The notices could be in the form of flyers placed in their mailbox, etc. She said on her street, apart from a few residents, many put their garbage bins out. As one size did not fit all, there needed to be some method of communicating to elderly residents.

Mr. Haggerty noted there were a number of programs in place in the City already; an private service was called Everbridge that offered emergency management services; another system was put in place by the City that allowed target mailings based on such variables as: zip code, age, income, etc., and staff utilized this

method at senior services quite often, as it enabled the sending of mailings to a distinct group of people. However, the issue with this service was the mailings were quite expensive. He liked the communication piece, and he felt the best route might be the most affordable, and easiest to manage, which was some type of social media page, whether through Miramar websites, etc.

Ms. Wellington indicated the problem the board was having was, though information might be available online, but many seniors were not computer literate, and/or able to access digital information, so a method had to be identified by which to communicate information to those seniors who were not computer literate. Her parents were 82 and 84, and they were not going to go on social media to look for such information.

Mr. Abel reminded the board that its role was advisory, so it did not take on actual projects, rather the board worked on identifying areas in which it thought action was needed; once areas were identified, the board would communicate them to staff for further exploration, and presentation to the Commission for their directive.

Chairperson Cuff said the board did understand its being advisory, but the present discussion was an airing of concerns, and an exploration of possibilities by which the City could address them, understanding that Commission approval was required.

Mr. March mentioned a challenge being observed from the real estate vantage point was trying to help seniors facing foreclosure on their homes due to their participation in the PACE program, who had a reverse mortgage, etc. He asked if the city had any program in place to help seniors who found themselves in such situations.

Vice Chairperson Watson urged the board to narrow down the various concerns voiced earlier in the meeting to the top six areas the board needed to work on, so as to move forward.

Ms. Wellington commented that the areas she listed thus far were public safety, marketing and information, and communication.

Mr. Chiquito added health as a general concern, as he wondered what other actions the city could take to complement those already in place.

Ms. Stephens added the concerns: further research into senior housing availability; better outreach to seniors who were sick, and/or homebound, real estate consultation and assistance for senior homeowners.

Ms. Mills thought public safety should be among the top six, as there were areas the city needed to address to improve safety for Miramar's elderly.

Mr. Roland Abel said under the public safety category would fall the issue of dogs roaming neighborhoods off a leash,

Chairperson Cuff commented on the issues seniors were experiencing with the PACE program, as she said seniors who participated in the program in order to install hurricane impact programs had a lien placed against their home. In December 2024, she noticed salespeople walking around her neighborhood, and she asked him about that situation, and he claimed his company never put a lien on anyone's home for the installation of their home improvement products. She asked if the city could provide information to Miramar's seniors on the possible consequences of participating in the PACE program, if there was any way to get the lien removed, and which agency should they approach to discuss their concerns.

Ms. Mills remarked on previously checking into the PACE program, and they did explain that the funding provided to the homeowner for the windows, etc. would be added to their mortgage. It might be that the funding agency needed to do a better job of educating companies that offered PACE to fund the use of their home improvement services, as PACE financing was not a grant.

Mr. Kohath March asked if the loan was added to the homeowner's mortgage or their taxes, as she thought it was added to their taxes.

Mr. Abel stated the people seen walking around neighborhoods were prospectors, so they knew nothing about the financing mechanisms, including the PACE program, with some of them saying that homeowners had 18 months before making the first payment on the loan. Thus, the information provided to prospective customers was incomplete and vague, and they prepared a document that owners signed without fully reading them, only to later find themselves in financial trouble.

Chairperson Cuff concurred, adding that maybe they targeted senior homeowners, knowing they were less savvy, offering them various benefits if they signed up, etc. to convince them it was a good deal, when it was not.

Vice Chairperson Watson wished to know what the board's next steps should be.

Mr. Haggerty offered several suggestions after listening to the board's discussion, as he thought the board members had some very good points. He

thought the most salient point was Mr. Abel's reminder that the board's function was mainly advisory, and, if all members kept this in the forefront of their mind, it would act as a constant guide as to next steps. Mr. Chiquito's suggestion that more research was needed was important for the board to better understand what it was promoting or advocating for. He suggested the board explore each topic individually in order to determine how it should be prioritized; for example, regarding public safety, a representative of the Miramar Police Department (PD) could attend a board meeting to do a presentation on public safety in Miramar, as well as respond to the board's questions. The same applied to the category of health; the City's health expert could make a presentation to the board, etc.; there might be gaps in the services the city provided that staff was not aware of, and the board could bring these to staff's attention, so they could be addressed.

Vice Chairperson Watson questioned who at PD would the board contact.

Mr. Abel suggested contacting the Public Safety Director, or the police chief.

Mr. Haggerty said he would get the board the names of the contact persons best able to speak on the various areas of concern, as he had no wish to see the board's time wasted by having the wrong person being invited to speak because they lacked the information being sought.

Ms. Stephens wondered if the board should begin with conducting a survey of Miramar's seniors to determine what the issues were prior to asking City experts to make presentations to the board.

Chairperson Cuff concurred with board members conducting an informal survey of Miramar seniors in the interim before the next board meetings, and then at the next meeting board members could present their findings, then the board could decide which City staff to invite to future meetings.

Ms. Wellington thought the board could devise a short questionnaire for board members to use when speaking with senior residents, so all the seniors who were approached were being asked the same questions, such as: what is most important you; what your concerns with living in Miramar are; etc.

Chairperson Ceceila Cuff agreed; for the research to be consistent, the questions asked by board members should be the same.

Ms. Mills asked if most senior services were offered from the current location.

Mr. David Haggerty answered yes.

Ms. Mills thought approaching seniors at this location was a good opportunity to administer the survey, where seniors regularly attended classes and programs.

Ms. Annette Wellington said she coordinated the senior's ministry at Christ Way Baptist Church, and only about two of their members attended the City's senior center, and she knew quite a few seniors in her neighborhood. The survey could be administered to seniors wherever members encountered them, or knew they were located.

Ms. Paulette Watson agreed it was important to survey seniors in a wide cross section of the community, not just located in one area of the city.

Ms. Mills thought the services rendered at the senior center were provided to all Miramar seniors, so those attending would cover a wide cross section of seniors.

Mr. Haggerty remarked the city ran the senior center at Sunset Lakes, but both centers only served seniors who came to each location for assistance, or to attend the various programs offered. He said there were many Miramar seniors' staff did not encounter. Another perspective for the board to explore was that staff found surveying, and doing a needs assessment was very difficult to accomplish; it could be intensive, expensive, and very challenging. He said it might be more useful to bring in the content experts in first to address the board, such as public safety, because they could provide the board members with information, such as Miramar neighborhoods with the highest crime rates, and the board could then target their efforts to address issues that could affect seniors living areas of the City.

Mr. Abel added the city either implemented or knew of quite a number of programs board members were unaware of, and it was always best to have people who knew this information, who were expert in their field to provide the board with the information. Another good location to find seniors to whom survey questions could be asked was churches; at the church he attended, about 70 percent of the congregants were seniors, and he felt sure it was similar other churches.

Chairperson Cuff sought a consensus from the board as to which City expert should be invited to present at the next meeting.

Mr. Abel said Adam Burden was the Assistant City Manager, and he would identify the best person from PD to address the board; his contact number was 305-216-5925.

Ms. Stephens wished to know what information the board was expecting the PD

guest speaker to provide that would be of value to board's task at hand. This was the question the board needed to keep in mind to direct their attention to the information PD could provide, so it could be helpful for City seniors.

Mr. Haggerty supported the idea of bringing in experts, but this was only the board's second meeting, and, perhaps, the members should take more time and discuss their approach, where their energies were best suited, and how, as an advisory board, could recommendations to the Commission were best made.

Mr. Chiquito wondered if the information the experts would present to the board would be available in data form; for example, if incidents in public safety were available in quarterly reports that board members could access themselves to see how many victims' elderly persons were. The same applied to the number of police calls to homes that were occupied by seniors.

Mr. Abel commented whatever area the board went with, when contact was made with the individual, it should be communicated that the information being sought should be specifically related to those affecting Miramar's seniors, rather than just a broad report.

Mr. March noted there were challenges seniors faced of which the board might be unaware, so the various experts invited to speak might be able to help make board members aware of other issues the elderly faced, thereby, empowering the board to better understand and recommend solutions to the Commission.

Mr. Chiquito observed all board members seemed to have a good sense of some of the challenges seniors faced in their community, and the types of solutions that might help address these challenges. He was a physical therapist, so his focus was on health, and making sure Miramar's seniors were healthy, strong, and able to enjoy their life; hence his wish to know more about seniors' concerns. Additionally, he wanted to informally explore the health-related services the city provided senior, possibly speak to the staff who physically provided the services, as well as to a few of the seniors who received the services to get their feedback.

Vice Chairperson Watson asked the board to summarize their next steps.

Chairperson Cuff replied, for the next meeting, the board could focus on public safety, exploring various areas within public safety, and reaching out to the City's public safety expert to communicate the type of information the board sought.

Mr. Roland Abel remarked on board members not having each other's contact information that would allow board members to communicate before the next meeting.

Ms. Stephens wished the board to identify the top three categories; the board, by default, chose to focus on public safety as the first category, but there was a lot of energy and enthusiasm for other categories, so as she did not want to spend a disproportionate amount of time on any one area at the expense of others.

Mr. Abel commented on the possibility of board members communicating with each other outside of the public meeting forum, which he felt sure if the City Attorney were present, he/she would affirm as to what the board could and could not do. He explained that two or more board members were not permitted to communicate with each other in any manner whatsoever outside of the public meeting forum, according to the Florida Sunshine Law.

Mr. Haggerty said he knew the City Commission members could not communicate with each other outside of publicly noticed meetings. He would check into whether this, too, applied to the advisory board. At the board's next meeting, the City Attorney would attend to speak on regulations, etc. by which the board must abide; it would be more of an educational meeting, which meant there would be less time for the board to discuss topics of concerns. He stated these rules and guidelines would help the board navigate its actions.

Ms. Stephens suggested for the next meeting board members be prepared to present which categories they thought should be the boards top three issues to explore; board discussion could just be each member voicing what they thought the top three should be, and why.

Mr. Abel concurred, and each board member should do some individual research on their issues of interest, so they could include some of those findings in the discussion. He restated there should be communication among board members outside of the board meeting forum.

Ms. Stephens asked staff to include an agenda item under which each board member would voice their top three issues concerning seniors. Though board members could do individual research, possibly commenting on their findings, her main concern was the board getting an understanding of what each member felt should be the top three issues.

Mr. Haggerty suggested, regarding public safety, as it was such a broad matter, the board should work on drilling down to the as concentrated an area or areas as possible. The more specific the area of information being sought, the more successful would be the efforts to address the issues of concern.

Ms. Wellington pointed out some of the issues identified might fall within other

categories identified by the board.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Abel mentioned a program, presently run by the Broward County, possibly the State to install monitors in the houses of elderly residents at no cost to the resident. In the event of a fall, residents would be helped via the system monitored by Tranquility Lifestyle Solution, with whom the County contracted.

Ms. Annette Wellington elaborated it was a program for which the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) received funding to do such things as: install grab bars, install monitors, etc.; generally, to make the house safe for seniors. She stated many seniors she knew, however, who applied to the program to have the monitors installed were told there were no funding to do the installations.

Mr. Haggerty remarked, currently, the program had been suspended by the State, and there was discussion about additional funds, but what was interesting was the funder was the Area Agency on Aging of Broward County, which was mentioned by their old name, the ADRC. He said the agency did needs assessments, and surveys, so this would be a very interesting place to start in terms of having a contact expert making a presentation to the board, and help guide the members on what was important to seniors. They had a lot of data, as working with seniors was all they did.

Mr. Abel stated he had the monitors installed in his home; residents were advised on the need to get in their applications before the end of 2023, as they were running out of funding. He informed other seniors he knew, and they, too, had the monitors installed in their homes; every room in the house was monitored 24 hours a day.

10. OPEN DISCUSSOIN:

Ms. Stephens pointed out the September 2 meeting date on the calendar was Labor Day.

Mr. Abel felt the board had enough time to consider an alternate September date.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.



Cecelia Cuff, Chairperson
CC/cp