

## **SENIOR AFFAIRS COMMISSION**

### **MINUTES OF THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2009**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Chairperson Kinsella, Vice Chairperson Britschgi, Commissioners Jones, Simon, and Truscelli

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Commissioners Cooperman and Paley

**STAFF PRESENT:** Superintendent Chris Beth, Manager Bruce Utecht, Kathy Bede

**GUESTS PRESENT:** John Dempsey, Zena Vigileos and Alan Yosef

The regular meeting of the Senior Affairs Commission was called to order by Chairperson Kinsella at 1:00 p.m. in the Goldstar Room of the Veterans Memorial Senior Center, 1455 Madison Avenue, Redwood City, California.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**M/S: Britschgi/Simon: To approve the February 12, 2009 minutes as mailed.  
Motion passed.**

#### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

Kathy Bede reported that all Commissioners were sent an invitation to a 'Meet & Greet' gathering at City Hall on March 16, 2009 between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. She also confirmed that all Commissioners are on the City's main e-mail list and should have received an invitation to join the Planning Commission in discussion EIR alternatives for the New General Plan scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 17, 2009, at City Hall. Anyone can subscribe to Redwood City's e-news list by going to [www.redwoodcity.org/egov](http://www.redwoodcity.org/egov), to register and then subscribe to that or any other City periodicals. A reminder was given that Form 700 and filing obligation information from the City Clerk had been emailed to all the Commissioners and they are due by April 1, 2009.

#### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

John Dempsey reported that he is on a committee checking on various hearing systems installed in City buildings. Fair Oaks Senior Center will be putting a hearing assistance device in their multi purpose room and is investigating different types available in order to select the best one for that facility. Bruce Utecht reported that he is also inquiring about the cost of equipping the Sunset room and perhaps the theater and Redwood room with a hearing loop like the one in the Goldstar room at the Veterans Memorial Senior Center.

Vice Chairperson Britschgi questioned the use of titles in signing petitions or political endorsements. Superintendent Beth replied that an individual may use their title or role within the City, on a petition or endorsement, not involving City funds, but may not sign on behalf of the entire committee or commission to which they are affiliated.

#### **ITEM 1 – DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS-GETTING SENIORS DOWNTOWN – PRCS Superintendent Chris Beth**

Superintendent Chris Beth presented a slide show of different events that have been held in downtown Redwood City as an effort between Parks & Recreation and Redevelopment. Much was invested in downtown with the parking garage, Theater Way, landscaping, re-

doing the courthouse and putting in Courthouse Square. The result is beautiful but people were not coming downtown. Our department previously offered concerts behind City Hall, but moved them to Courthouse Square to help bring people there. Different activities were then added to appeal to more people.

For the past two years, weekly events on the Square have included Friday night concerts, Thursday evening movies, free learn-to-dance programs with bands and instructors on Tuesday evenings, and Shakespeare on Saturdays and Sundays. Other major events, some with media and business partnerships, have been held downtown including the Pet Parade, Dia de Los Muertos, the 2008 Olympic telecast, the first Salsa Festival and the Zoppe Italian Family Circus, which was four days of circus performances and 4,000 people in attendance. The Zoppe Circus will return this year for two weekends with a circus camp for kids being offered the week in between.

Target is a major partner for many events, contributing \$50,000 in sponsorships last year to host four Family Target Days by paying for the entertainment, publicity, booths and other items. This year, Target has contributed \$30,000 and will host three Family Target Days. Other partners include Redwood City International, Recuerdo Radio, Citrine Restaurant, the Downtown Business Group, KFOG Radio, NBC Bay Area and Sing Tao Chinese Newspaper. Developing and maintaining partnerships are vital for these programs to continue because funding is limited. More business and volunteer support will likely necessary in the future.

In 2008, 116 events were held downtown bringing 80,000 people to the area. Redevelopment pays for the special event coordinator of the events and for the all of the marketing done by Park and Recreation Manager Jordana Freeman. Research has shown each person in attendance spent an average of \$15-20 downtown. As a result, visitors brought in \$1.4 million in new revenue to downtown restaurants and businesses. Because of their success, 130 events are planned in 2009. The California Parks & Recreation Society recently recognized the Redwood City Parks & Recreation Department with four awards for their event programming downtown. The awards were for Marketing Campaign, Economic Impact and Team Activities and Best Overall.

New programs for 2009 include Monday night jazz concerts, the Peninsula Symphony, a Blues Festival, the Peninsula Youth Orchestra, the Sing Tao Street Fair and a Mother's Day Kids Concert. Evening events start at 6:00 p.m. and there is free parking downtown after 6:00 p.m. Parking in Courthouse Parking Garage is free on Saturdays and Sundays.

## **ITEM 2 – DOWNTOWN PARKING UPDATE** **– PRCS Manager Bruce Utecht**

Upon hearing of the concerns many seniors have in regard to the new parking meters downtown, VMSC Manager Bruce Utecht created an instructional PowerPoint presentation on how to use the new pay-by-space parking system and where different types of parking is available in the downtown area. The intention is for the presentation to be shown to various groups that may be interested and on the local television station Channel 27, before and after Council meetings. Bruce showed the presentation to the Commission for their review and it was very well received. All agreed that it was very good idea and shared their ideas as well. Commissioner Simon offered some tips on technical detail instructions. Vice Chairperson Britschgi proposed the idea of free parking for seniors on Mondays or Tuesdays in conjunction with special senior shopping days. Commissioner Jones commented that perhaps transferable parking permits could be purchased that would allow parking without use of the meters. Bruce stated that he would make some refining adjustments to the presentation and forward it to Malcolm Smith for approval and release.

### **ITEM 3 – WORK PLAN REVIEW & FOCUS TOPICS**

#### **- Chairperson Joe Kinsella**

Chairperson Kinsella distributed his Work Plan Suggestions to each Commissioner with ideas to advance their work within their areas of interest and allow for achievable results. He recommended the consideration of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats while deciding What to change, How to know if change has happened, and What is being used to measure change. He also stated that the marketing plan devised for the VMSC accreditation may be useful for Commissioners to review to see what is already in place. Bruce Utecht stated that a similar approach will need to be taken in trying to establish a Senior Discount Day downtown. There may already be a comparable plan that could be incorporated with this idea, so more research and discussion is needed before proceeding.

### **ITEM 4 – FACILITY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

#### **- Chairperson Joe Kinsella**

Chairperson Kinsella reported that the final draft is being processed. The scoping statement will be out in April as well as the site analysis. Wish lists will be reviewed and plans developed that will work within the budget constraints.

### **ITEM 5 - PROGRAM UPDATES**

#### **-Veterans Memorial Senior Center – Bruce Utecht**

- St. Patrick's Day Luncheon – March 17<sup>th</sup> - \$7.00 – Corned Beef, Cabbage & Potatoes
- Staff is preparing for the Volunteer Appreciation event scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **-Fair Oaks Senior Center – Zena Vigileos**

- Blood Glucose Testing – March 18th
- Blood Pressure Testing – March 24th
- St. Patrick's Day Party – March 17th
- Health Plan of California has a new Care Advantage program that combines Medicare and Medi-Cal benefits into one plan. An informational session is planned on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 – 12:15 at FOOSC. The plan offers free dental coverage, 50 free taxi rides to medical appointments and \$0 co-pays for generic drugs up to \$2,550.
- Free evening diabetes classes will start in May
- Fall Prevention classes are offered
- Stanford will be offering a 'Strings for Life' class that teaches seated strengthening exercises

### **Announcements**

John Dempsey stated that the Housing & Human Concerns Committee has government funds to award to local non-profit organizations, and housing is a main focus. He also announced a joint meeting between the Housing & Human Concerns Committee and the Planning Commission regarding the housing element of the new general plan. That meeting was originally scheduled for March 26 but has been changed to March 31, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

**Items for Next Month's Agenda**

- Work Plan Discussion
- Facility Sub-Committee
- Transportation Update
- Downtown Senior Discount Day

**Adjournment**

The regular meeting of the Senior Affairs Commission was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. It will be reconvened at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 9, 2009 at Fair Oaks Senior Center, 2600 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, California.