

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE OLDER ADULT NEEDS COMMITTEE
CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2023 AT 5:30 P.M.**

Member Casey called the meeting to order at 5:37 P.M.

ROLL CALL: Council Member Casey, Council Member Smith, Council Member Thomas, Kathy Crawford, Jay Dooley, Kim Nice, Debbie Wrobel.

ALSO PRESENT: Victor Cardenas, Interim City Manager
Jeff Muck, Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Kit Kieser, OAS Manager

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

OAN 23-06-17 Moved by Crawford, seconded by Thomas; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
To approve the Agenda.

**Voice vote on OAN 23-06-17 Yeas: Casey, Smith, Thomas, Crawford, Dooley,
Nice, Wrobel**
Nays: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

OAN 23-06-18 Moved by Smith, seconded by Thomas; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
To approve the June 5, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

**Voice vote on OAN 23-06-18 Yeas: Casey, Smith, Thomas, Crawford, Dooley,
Nice, Wrobel**
Nays: None

REMARKS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON: None

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Discussion with local Senior Service Directors

Director Muck introduced Kim Konarski, Director, Hartland Senior Activity Center, Renee Cortright, Executive Director, Older Persons' Commission (OPC), and Karen Adcock, Director, Senior Services Department in Auburn Hills. These and three other centers around the state were visited by him, former City Manager Pete Auger and Member Crawford in 2022 as part of a fact finding tour.

Member Casey said they provided each Director with a list of questions ahead of time. They are looking to learn from other communities about the buildings they have, how their operations run, how many people they serve a year, what their hours of operation are, and what types of programs they offer.

Director Konarski explained their Senior Activity Center is in an old high school and they are part of the school district. There is a portion of the building that is dedicated to senior services. Their hours are Monday – Thursday from 8am-4pm and Friday from 8am-3pm; they are closed on the weekend. Their budget is \$300,000. They have two full-time staff and two part-time staff, the rest is all volunteers. She explained 25% of the budget is through grants and other sources. She shared a document with the group that listed the programs they offer in a year. They partner with people, local businesses, and city officials. They have over 100 volunteers. They served about 2,000 unique users, but those users have come about 40,000 over the course of the year. Their center serves all communities that are part of the Hartland Consolidated School District. She estimated there are around 2,500 people for are over 65 years old in Hartland Township and closer to 5,000 included the other communities they serve. They serve ages 50 and older.

Executive Director Cortright explained the OPC was established 40 years ago when three communities passed an operational millage in support of senior services. They bought land and built a 90,000 square foot facility. They also have a 20,000 square foot garage. They have an industrial kitchen that produces 100,000 meals for meals on wheels. They have an auditorium that seats 200 people. They have a woodshop. They also have an adult day services program for people with early onset dementia. They partner with the library to have library books available. They have an art studio, lapidary, gift shop, computer lab, classrooms, conference rooms, an Olympic size pool, full size gym, exercise room, locker rooms, creation station and pottery studio. They have a café and a billiard room. She explained their budget is \$6 million. The population for those 60 and older is around 27,000. They serve 50 and older, so it's more than that. They have around 13,000 registered members and around 8,000 unique members. They have 13 full time staff and 9 part time staff. They have transportation that does go outside their border, and they recently extended the hours. Their facility is open from 8am-8pm Monday through Thursday, 8am-4pm on Friday and 8am-2pm on Saturday.

Director Adcock explained their Senior Services Department in Auburn Hills is a 25,000 square foot community center that has been open for 18 years. They do charge for classes, and many are run by volunteers. They have a maker's studio, fitness room, and game room. Auburn Hills has 26,000 residents and there is no membership fee for residents. Non-residents pay a rate. They are open 8am-9pm Monday through Saturday. They have a dance studio and full-size gym. She recommended having a lot of storage space as well as a security system. She estimated they have 250 volunteers. Their budget is around \$1.5 million and the general fund covers about 85% of operations. They rent out the banquet and meetings rooms to help offset costs and their DPW helps with maintenance without added costs. they have 6 full time staff, 6 part time staff. The Senior Services and Parks and Recreation departments were recently combined in Auburn Hills with her as Director.

Member Thomas asked for their budget numbers again. Director Adcock said \$565,000 was for staffing and operations. Member Thomas asked what their staff hierarchy was. Director Adcock said about half their staff supports senior services.

Executive Director Cortright said she has an interlocal agreement with three communities. They are quasi-governmental. They are a 501(c)3 and have an operational millage. She

emphasized that maintaining what they have is important. Each community does this different because they are serving the needs of their seniors. Member Thomas asked if they had a membership cost. Executive Director Cortright said no, as long as you live within one of the three communities they serve. If you don't, then there is an annual fee of \$175/person or \$225/couple. Member Thomas asked if their center was dedicated only to seniors. Executive Director Cortright said yes, those who are 50 and older. Member Thomas asked about the fitness equipment. Executive Director Cortright said it's pneumatic equipment that essentially remembers what you did last on each machine once you scan your key fob.

Member Thomas asked Director Adcock if there were issues with people of all ages working out together. Director Adcock said it's always been that way so the residents don't know any different. Member Thomas asked about dedicate spaces for seniors. Director Adcock said there isn't one specific space designated for seniors but they program the space so it feels like they do. Member Thomas asked if they had a membership fee. Director Adcock said no.

Director Konarski said their budget was \$300,000 annually. They are school employees so some expenses are handled by the district. They have two full time staff, two part time staff, and the rest is volunteers. She thought they had about 100 volunteers. Member Thomas asked how many people they serve. Director Konarski said they have 2,000 unique users and 40,000 check-ins a year. Member Thomas asked how they share space with the school. Director Konarski said the four main rooms were dedicated spaces for senior activities.

Member Smith said he was hearing that partnerships with the community, businesses and volunteers was key. He asked if they thought each community could sustain their own center. Executive Director Cortright said partnerships were important but each community is different. Member Smith asked what is your biggest success and what would you like to have. Director Adcock said they joined AARP's Age Friendly Communities Network and that was important because it started a dialogue with elected officials. She wants to ensure seniors are always taken care of and Auburn Hills stays a livable community for all ages and abilities.

Executive Director Cortright said they shine in socialization and it's the nucleus of what they do. They have a good, welcoming atmosphere and do a good job of getting new people in. She explained that they stayed open during COVID and it made a big difference for seniors.

Director Konarski said they started doing robocalls during COVID to check on seniors and it makes a difference to have that connection. That was her greatest thing, creating and maintaining that atmosphere. She said their biggest challenge is they are only open until 4pm and finding out how to serve those evening hours with the resources she has.

Member Crawford said she visited each of their centers. Each has a personality and it takes on what the community wants. The challenge for these directors is they are programming from 50 to 110 years old. She emphasized what Executive Director Cortright said about the nucleus of everything that goes on at the senior center builds out from socializing. That is their main goal.

Member Dooley said they all have unique centers. He asked about accessibility to the community and older adults in particular. Director Konarski said they are in an old high school, but are right near M59 and US23, so it's easy to get to. Their challenge is they don't look like a senior center and the lack of signage is a problem. Executive Director Cortright said they are not centrally located to the three communities they serve, which may be problematic for some people. Many seniors don't want to travel more than 5 miles outside their comfort zone. They do have transportation, which helps bring people in. Director Adcock said they are near Oakland University and accessible from all directions. She said to be mindful about placing it near schools and paying attention to traffic flow patterns. She also said good signage and having visible road signs.

Member Nice asked Director Adcock how many other communities they serve. Director Adcock said they have people come from all over. She estimated they serve around 2,000 people over 60 and that number will grow because they are building two senior apartment buildings.

Member Wrobel asked about membership fees. Director Konarski said they have a \$20 annual fee and then there are program fees for some events. They get grants to try to keep fees low. Executive Director Cortright said their fee is \$175 annually for a single person, but they "pay to play" and have program fees.

Director Muck shared an article about The Hawk in Farmington Hills because it was an important part of the conversation about building a center and funding it. Farmington Hills took over the old Harrison High School and left their senior center running separately. Now The Hawk is running at a \$6 million deficit. They also need to address the future of the Costick Center. It was mentioned they may move the senior center into The Hawk but some seniors don't want that.

2. Introduction of OAS Manager Kit Kieser

Director Muck introduced the new OAS Manager, Kit Kieser. Ms. Kieser shared her educational background and work history.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 P.M.