

**Senior Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 7, 2021 | 9:30 AM**

**Normal Township Activity and Recreation Center
600 E Willow
Normal, IL 61761**

(Meeting was held virtually via Zoom due to restrictions on public gatherings.)

Members Present: Uday Deoskar, Rich Farr, Margaret Ann Hayden, Carol Plotkin, Deborah Shaw, Barbara Singer, Robert Stefl, Steven Kossman

Township Officials: Supervisor Sarah Grammer, Trustee Sally Pyne

ARC Staff: Director of Operations Rick Lewis, Director of Programming Molly Camper, Member Services Manager Elicsha Sanders and Communications Coordinator Samantha Scott

Public Present: Doretta Herr, Donna Nelson, and Mary Wuhrmann

Meeting called to order by Chair Kossman at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve meeting minutes for December meeting made by Uday Deoskar and seconded by Deborah Shaw. Motion passed.

Report from Chair

Chair requests point of personal privilege that reports focus only on information not shared already in written report in order to expedite the meeting.

Member Updates & Committee Reports

Uday Deoskar, Health & Wellness

Working to learn when high-risk seniors can receive the COVID vaccine

Rich Farr, Fundraising

Nothing in addition to Samantha Scott's report.

Margaret Ann Hayden, Welcoming Committee

No report

Carol Plotkin, Nominations Committee and Blood Drive Updates

Two drives were held at ARC on December 8th and 10th.

Deb Shaw

No report

Barbara Singer

Reported others have asked when ARC might reopen for some services. Would like information as soon as plans are in place in response to the improvement in restrictions. Also, would like to know if ARC will be considered as a vaccine site. Rick Lewis responded that he has been communicating Normal Township's interest in hosting vaccine clinics at ARC to better accommodate seniors.

Robert Stefl, Art at ARC

A new virtual quilt exhibition is currently up on Facebook and will last through January. Robert will have an exhibition in February called "Where the Wild Things Are."

Report from Township Supervisor Sarah Grammer

Thank you to Steven Kossman for his letter in the January ARC newsletter encouraging members to support ARC by renewing their memberships which has had a significant impact. Thank you to Molly and staff who worked to put all of the necessary membership renewal forms in the January newsletter, as well.

Monitoring changing COVID restrictions to see when onsite programming may resume. Some ice storm damage occurred which is being cleaned up.

Straight Up solar began the installation of ARC's solar panels the first week in January, and the project should be completed by the second week in February, which will bring significant savings to the ARC budget.

ARC Staff Reports

Rick Lewis, Director of Operations Report

Report submitted in advance. Attended the ECIAAA Advisory Board Meeting to keep updated on what is happening with vaccinations for seniors throughout the state. Continues to advocate for ARC as a vaccination site.

Molly Camper, Program Highlights

Report emailed to the committee in advance. Participation numbers for ARC virtual programming are up significantly this month. Worked hard to get the January newsletter to every ARC member by mailing it to everyone. Proud to have all of the forms included and see a positive response from the effort. Blood Drives in December brought 32 donations on Dec 8th and 23 on Dec 10th. January 29th will be the next drive, which is sponsored by La Gondola.

Elicsha Sanders, Member Services

Report sent in advance. Processing renewals as rapidly as they come in and covering additional ARC bookkeeping. Looking forward to reporting new renewal numbers next month.

Samantha Scott, Communications and Fundraising Update

Report emailed to the committee in advance. Donations have been coming in strong this month: \$455 just between January 4th and 7th. Grateful for Steven's letter of support in the January newsletter.

New Business

A. Discussion of ARC's operations during the pandemic

No changes at this time.

Suggested Topics for Next Meeting

No new topics suggested.

Public Comment

Mary Wuhrmann expressed gratitude for Samantha Scott's efforts to display the ARC quilters show on Facebook. Reminded everyone that the ARC Quilter's have the pandemic quilt ready to raffle for an ARC fundraiser. Requested if written reports are not discussed at the Advisory Meetings that they be otherwise available to the public. Reminded others that she is running for Normal Township Trustee.

Sally Pyne requested that ARC consider classes for how to set up new SmartTVs.

Doretta Hoer thanked ARC for continuing to support Faith in Action because FIA is the only transport for some frail seniors who need door-to-door service. They have 94 volunteers who are actively driving, and there are 447 care receivers and volunteers.

Steven Kossman thanked the committee for understanding his distress over the recent attack on the Capital. Sally Pyne suggested contacting a retired political science professor, like Bob Bradley, to lead a discussion for ARC members on the recent attack in order to help with processing the events.

Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:05 AM.

Next Meeting: Thursday, February 4, 2020 at 9:30 AM.

Sr. Advisory Board Notes
Director of Operations Report
January 7, 2021

1. Straight-Up Solar will begin the solar panel installation on the roof of ARC on January 11. The construction crew will install racks on the roof over the two-week period then mount the solar panels January 19. The project is scheduled for completion February 9. The array will provide at least 65% savings on electric costs and an anticipated savings of \$24,934 in its first year, \$521,324 cumulatively over 15 years. The Township will own the array outright at the beginning of year seven.
2. Elizabeth Kosuth with ISU Mennonite College of Nursing is seeking ARC's support research for a grant she received to develop a Center for Senior Advocacy. Our support would include providing access to seniors to participate in technology training. Seniors would complete a survey or participate in focus groups assessing their technology usage and needs, barriers to accessing technology, and training for using technology. Participation will be voluntary.
3. ECIAAA is working with various senior service organizations to participate as a "Dementia Friendly Community" providing training for various government agencies, community members, and clinical providers to make services more accessible for older adults with cognitive disabilities and their caregivers. Rick participated in training with the ECIAAA advisory board on November 4 and found the information beneficial to the work that ARC provides. I commented to the group that while the mission of ARC is to support reduced social isolation and healthy aging, ARC cannot allow membership to adults who cannot function independently.
4. VITA is planning for their 2021 tax preparation season. Their goal is to complete 600-700 returns this year due to the pandemic compared to more than 1100 in previous years in the three sites. Plans are being made to coordinate a process similar to the process used in June with a limited number of tax preparers and reviewers in the building. ARC will begin taking reservations January 19.
5. I spoke with a representative with McLean County Health Department and expressed our continued interest in hosting a COVID vaccine site at ARC. There seems to be an interest in ARC serving as a "pod" to provide vaccines to ARC members in a coordinated process. I will continue to keep the committee updated as these talks progress. In our communications with other senior centers in the Illinois network, we are urging the Director of the Illinois Department on Aging to draft a letter to the director of all county health departments urging them to utilize senior centers as places to administer vaccines.

ARC Programming Report January 2020

- **Successes of recently added digital programming:**
 - PEPS and Yoga usage has increased since we started in November 2020. PEPS started with 5 and now has a consistent 12 participants that log in and Yoga started with 7 and consistently has 16 participants that log on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We will see what the new year brings.
 - Bingo that started in August has increased each month and we closed out the year with 27 participants on December 22nd.
 - ARC has been hosting how to Zoom classes since April 2020. These classes are becoming very popular. In November and December we taught 29 members beginner Zoom classes. Seventeen members took it a step further and wanted to learn how to host Zoom meetings.
 - ARC's grief support groups have great attendance. In December we serviced over 30 participants with our grief group.

- **Our mission with the January newsletter was to show all members, expired and current, what ARC is up to while the building is closed. We wanted members to know we have and are still working hard to create opportunities to strengthen our relationships with our membership and give them opportunities to socialize with other members while the doors are closed. The January newsletter was sent via mail to all members that had a membership in 2020 whether it is current or expired. Included in the newsletter was:**
 - January's digital programming calendar
 - A letter from Steven Kossman, our Advisory Committee Chair, asking for support by renewing your ARC membership.
 - Fun photo throwbacks from ARC's events over the years, with lots of familiar faces!
 - An introduction to Rita Meland's new music enrichment series that starts in January over Zoom.
 - Shoutout to Howard Little, ARC member, for his generous support.
 - Services available through the Normal Public Library during its building closure.
 - A renewal form and a new liability waiver that can be sent to ARC via mail with payment.
 - Step by step on how to renew a membership on our member portal online.
 - Information on the volunteer income tax assistance (VITA) program ARC supports each year.

January 2021 MSM Report (as of December 30, 2020)

December 2020 numbers

- 1 New Member joined in December (Silver Sneakers)
- 26 Paid Renewals, 16 of those renewals were done through the portal

December Sunshine numbers

- 681 Wellness calls have been made by our 5 Member Service Representatives (MSR) in the month of December. Members are appreciating the calls, especially during the Holiday Season.
- 201 Birthday calls were made by the MSR's

December Zoom numbers

- A total 602 participants joined a Zoom activity in December. Of those attendees, 111 were from the Insurance Based Incentive Programs (84 were Silver Sneakers, and 27 were Renew Active).

****Remember, some members are counted multiple times within the month because they join multiple activities on Zoom*****

NOTE- December had two holidays where ARC was closed for virtual programming and Sunshine Calls.

Prepared by,
Elicsha Sanders, MSM

Communications Coordinator Report January 2021

Fundraising

- **Brick by Brick:** No update
- **Bingo sponsors:** All 2021 bingo dates filled.
- **Coffee Sponsors:** N/A until able to open and offer café services post-COVID
- **Build the ARC 2020:** \$7,192.30 raised so far this year to Build the ARC Campaign. \$2,555 to general support of Living Memorial Fund. 2021 donations have already begun – 2 donors and \$260.00 raised so far.
- **Dine & Donate:** December Portillo's raised \$191. Will be scheduling the quarterly dine and donate for March soon.
- **Giving Tree:** Received a \$500 gift in December in honor of Judith Raymond and offered a leaf to her daughter-in-law. Submitted details to Randy on 12/18. Have not heard back to date.
- Nominated for Green Top Grocery Round Up at the Register program. Submitted application and waiting to hear back.
- Nominated ARC for the Association of Illinois Senior Center's Mind, Body, & Spirit Awards. The winning center will receive a \$500 prize. Application process ends January 28th.

Constant Contact as of 1/4/2020

- 4125 member emails in list. Down 17 from last report.
- 4522 active contacts across all lists (includes non-members). Down 9 from last report. 1778 members receiving weekly email as of 1/4. Down 38 from last report.
- 826 have unsubscribed from a combination of lists. Up 15 from previous report.
- January newsletter clicks – 209– up 23 from last month, 96 bounces
- 37% email open rate in last 30 days. January newsletter had a 38.1% open rate, which is 1% lower than the December newsletter.

Facebook as of 1/4/20

- 1608 followers, up 8 from last report
- 1483 likes, up 5 from last report