

The City of Lake Forest
Dickinson Hall
Senior Resources Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2021
Regular Meeting

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Strenger-Wayne opened the meeting at 1:00pm.

Commission Members

Gale Strenger Wayne-Chair **P**

Mark Dillon **P**

Phil Hartung **P**

Jill Rosa **P**

Barbara Sheppard **P**

Ed Richardson **A**

Fred Montgomery **P**

City Council Liaison

Jed Morris **A**

Staff

Sally Swarthout, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Forestry **A**

Janet Fryer, Senior Advocate **P**

Tricia Schwall, Senior Resources Manager **P**

Tara Purtell, Administrative Assistant **P**

Katie Dolan, Program Supervisor **A**

Note: **P**=Present **A**=Absent

Guests

Marilyn Kercher, Dickinson Hall Member

Joan Barott, Dickinson Hall Member

2. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Sheppard made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 8, 2021 SRC Meeting. Commissioner Montgomery seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Opportunity for citizens to address the Senior Resources Commission on Non-Agenda Items.

Dickinson Hall member, Joan Barott asked about both the existing senior cottages and the proposed ones regarding eligibility and qualifications.

Chair Strenger Wayne responded that there are income qualifications for the five existing cottages that were built in 2001 but they basically have little to no turnover.

There will also be income qualifications that will be used for the 12-14 proposed senior

cottages. She explained that priority will be given first to seniors in Lake Forest/Lake Bluff then parents of residents followed by residents.

4. Senior Advocate Bi-Annual Report

Senior Advocate Fryer distributed the Bi-Annual Report to the Commission and explained that issues for individuals served have started to shift from pandemic issues to more common issues that were pre-pandemic including legal and home improvement needs.

She explained that some of the unmet needs are coming from organizations such as the Secretary of State and the Social Security Administration. These organizations have changed procedures due to the pandemic and have lost staff making the access for older adults very difficult due to technology or visiting constraints. Senior Advocate Fryer also mentioned that older adults are using food pantries more for food pick-up due to inflation costs.

The On Our Own program, which is held at Dickinson Hall once a month, has started back with in-person attendance. Senior Advocate Fryer reported that 12 people attended the last program; and how excited they were for person to person connections.

Commissioner Dillon asked about eviction notice and if any of Senior Advocate Fryer's clients had mentioned it.

Senior Advocate Fryer explained that older adults will most likely have this problem but she was unaware of any specific clients.

Chair Strenger Wayne asked if it was mostly social chatter or specific topics that the Commission should know about that are discussed at On Our Own program.

Senior Advocate Fryer explained that it is a very informal and a free range group discussion with nothing specific.

Commissioner Montgomery suggested that if it became too many people in attendance then maybe On Our Own could be offered twice a month.

Senior Advocate Fryer said that if it was consistent than she would bring to the group that question. She explained that they are a very vocal group and even changed the name of the group recently from Home Alone to On Our Own.

Chair Strenger Wayne asked if technology is still an issue.

Senior Advocate Fryer replied that she believes that older adults that want technology have it and that they are reaching out for help to learn to use it. Dickinson Hall remains a site where seniors can get free 30 minute help sessions with their iPads/iPhones from staff members. It was also mentioned that a technology survey was previously sent out in order to gauge senior technology usage.

5. Dickinson Hall Membership Fee Discussion

Chair Strenger Wayne explained that the Senior Resources Commission is tasked with deciding if the Dickinson Hall membership fees should be raised for the next fiscal year. Based on staff recommendations, the fee should remain unchanged.

Commissioner Dillon motioned that the staff requests that there be no change in membership fees for FY23. Commissioner Montgomery seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Montgomery commented that if program fees need to be increased for revenue then that could make up the difference. Membership fees at a lower rate encourage individuals to join.

6. Items of Consideration

Chair Strenger Wayne gave an update that Commissioner Richardson is moving to Gurnee so he will no longer be allowed to serve on the Senior Resources Commission. Chair Strenger Wayne is optimistic to have another Lake Bluff resident for the Commission by November.

There is adequate money for salaries and benefits for Dickinson Hall full-time staff. The combined amount received from Lake Forest and Lake Bluff is \$343,085. The split is 70/30(Lake Forest 70%, Lake Bluff 30%).

7. Dickinson Hall Manager's Report

Manager Schwall reported that a new part-time Program Assistant, Susan Davis had been hired. Davis has a library background and was born and raised in Lake Forest. Her salary is paid out of Manager Schwall's budget.

Two boilers have been installed recently at Dickinson Hall under the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Bid openings for the exterior tuck pointing are scheduled to begin this fall. Schwall reported that due to the failed tuck pointing interior walls in the Great Room are bubbling.

The kitchen renovation is still in the waiting process along with the furniture for the library/lobby. The furniture may have a scheduled delivery of November at this point.

The Vaccine Buddies thank you party was a success. Around 25 people attended and the Mayor read a proclamation and presented plaques to the two individuals who were instrumental in starting Vaccine Buddies.

Manager Schwall mentioned that 91 new members have joined Dickinson Hall in a pandemic and Transportation Service are back to four days a week.

8. Comments by Commission Members

Chair Strenger Wayne noted that the Senior Housing Project is still working its way through the City of Lake Forest (CLF) approval process and last she heard the Plan Commission meeting has been postponed.

Commissioner Montgomery asked if the State of Illinois is putting any pressure on CLF for the affordable housing project.

Chair Strenger Wayne answered that she was unaware of that.

Commissioner Dillon mentioned that the Foundation received an anonymous donation of \$53,000 for the Dickinson Hall kitchen renovation.

9. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 1:00pm.

10. Adjournment

Commissioner Montgomery motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Sheppard seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 1:56pm.

Submitted by: Tara J. Purtell, Administrative Assistant