

STOW SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Minutes of the Stow Senior Citizens Commission Meeting held Tuesday, February 21, 2023, in the Boards and Commissions Room at Stow City Hall.

Members Present: Deborah Luchka, Robbie Robinson, Tammy Denton, Roger Bollins, Manorma Ramcharran, Audrey Kraynak; Sarah Filiberto, Outreach Librarian

Others Present: Jamie Syx, Law Director; Drew Reilly, Deputy Law Director

Members Absent: Mary Ellen Cunningham; Kathy Lewis, Recreation Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Luchka called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

SWEARING IN OF REAPPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS

Mayor Pribonic sworn in Ms. Denton and Ms. Kraynak as reappointed board members through January 2, 2026.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Ramcharran moved to approve the minutes of the last meeting, seconded by Mr. Robinson. All were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nothing to report.

PRESENTATION – LAW DEPARTMENT

Ms. Syx reported:

A public record is defined by Ohio law as a document, device, or item, regardless of physical form or characteristic, including an electronic record, as defined in the Ohio Revised Codes section 1306.01. Public record is not always a physical document it can also be an email, or a voicemail. It is created or received by or coming under the jurisdiction of any public office and it serves to document the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or

other activities of the office. For example, if I send an email to the Planning Department Director asking him about how the meeting went last night, that is a public record because it documents the status of what the Planning Department is doing. If I send an email asking him if wanted to go to lunch, that email is not a public record because it does not serve to document the organization.

The office must currently or formerly be in possession of a requested record in order for it to qualify. If the Mayor puts out a posting that there is a spot available on the Arts Commission, and we give it two weeks for people to apply, after the first week, we receive a records request for all of the applications that we have received but then we get some more applications after that request came in. If we do not have the documents at the time the public request is made, we do not have to respond to that request with the records that were received after the request and it is not our obligation to provide documents that we receive after a request is made. An updated request would need to be made in order to get the remaining documents.

If a government office hires an outside entity to perform a function for a public office, those records will be considered a public record because the outside entity is performing a task for a government office.

Every department in the city has a records custodian who is responsible for maintaining a log of the public records requests. A three-hour public records course must be completed by each custodian. Any time you are communicating about a board issue, make sure to copy the records custodian on that email so they can be kept in a file if needed.

Any time that the city receives a public records request, we try to acknowledge that request and let the person know that we are working on the request. If the requester just wants to view the documents that they are inquiring about, then they can come and inspect them. If they would like physical copies of the documents, it has to be provided to them in a reasonable amount of time, depending on the request.

The Open Meetings Act requires that all public bodies take official action and conduct all deliberations regarding official business only in open meetings, where the public may attend and observe. Our commissions or public bodies can only discuss the business of the Stow Senior Citizens Commission when notice has been served on the public of where your meetings are, what time and what will be discussed. A public body is a group of people who are discussing and making decisions or recommendations on official public business, which can include committees and sub-committees. Executive sessions are discussions amongst the board that can be held privately but voting cannot take place and you must only discuss the item you went into executive session to discuss.

A meeting is a prearranged gathering of a majority of the members of a public body who are discussing or deliberating public business. When committees are emailing and there is a quorum on the email about public business, that can constitute as a meeting under the Ohio Meetings Act. It is a violation to have more than a quorum exchanging information because it was not open to the public. When meeting notices are sent out to the board, make sure to reply only to the person who sent out the email to avoid getting into a discussion with other members. If you are conducting a meeting and it is strictly for training purposes, that meeting does not have to be made public. Any time the commission is meeting on a topic and it is more than a quorum the meeting must be made public.

There are regular meetings, special meetings and emergency meetings. All meetings where there is a quorum are open to the public. If the commission ever votes on something it must be verbal -- not a secret ballot. Minutes of the meetings must be promptly prepared, filed, maintained and open to the public. The minutes do not have to be verbatim, but they do have to have enough information to summarize what was discussed and why you came to certain conclusions.

Regular meetings are held on the prescheduled dates and a 72-hour notice to the public is given. Special meetings are anything other than a regular meeting and a 48-hour notice must be given to the public. During a special meeting, you may only discuss topics that are on the agenda. An emergency meeting must have a 24-hour notice given to the public.

The City of Stow is a charter city and if there are any provisions in our charter that conflict with the Open Meetings Act, we will follow our charter.

Executive session can take place if you are discussing personnel matters, a situation pending a court action, collective bargaining matters, matters that are to be kept confidential under federal law, security matters, trade secrets, confidential business information of an applicant for economic development assistance, a veteran service commission application, retirement benefits and health insurance benefits.

Ms. Syx reported that public servants should not be accepting expensive gifts of money in exchange for anything they do in their role as a public servant. These gifts could be donated to a specific charity but not a charity of the public servant's choice. They also should not take official action or make decisions in matters that directly affect themselves, their family members or their business associates. If whatever decision you are making will directly benefit you or your family, you should refrain from voting or discussing the matter.

Some commissions have been using the City of Stow trademarks improperly. We have trademarks on the City of Stow logo, Fun In Stow, and Celebrate Stow. If you as a commission want to use one of the city's trademarks, make sure to get approval from the Law Department before doing so.

Ms. Syx stated that council passed legislation where they want all boards and commissions to meet at City Hall in council chambers because that is where they have the technology to record and livestream meetings on YouTube. This would mean you would be confined to council chambers -- you could no longer meet out in the parks or have zoom meetings. There would also be scheduling conflicts trying to get all of the commissions to meet in council chambers during their specified times.

The board members discussed their thoughts on whether to have their meetings livestreamed in council chambers. Ms. Luchka made a motion to continue having our meetings in the Boards and Commissions room; seconded by Mr. Bollins. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Luchka asked regarding meeting times, are we all good with the 4:00 pm meeting time or do we want to change the time. The board had a discussion regarding this matter and decided to keep the meeting time at 4:00 pm.

Ms. Ramcharran stated regarding the card project, can we mention to the schools to be more general in their messages because I was distributing in the fall and many of them said to have a happy summer. Ms. Luchka stated I have contacted every school and the only ones that will do the cards are Woodland and Lakeview and the high school does something on their own. I also contacted Holy Family and they said they were too busy right now and to contact them in a year or two.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Luchka asked who would like to take the lead on coming up with ideas or activities for other nursing homes. Mr. Bollins stated I will work on this project. Ms. Denton stated I will also help. I think if we did one nursing home a month and since Briarwood has been done with the Club Interact group, we should skip them. Ms. Luchka stated we need to contact the Club Interact teacher and see what other schools she has plans to visit.

Mr. Bollins stated I think we need to have a work session meeting before our next scheduled meeting to brainstorm some ideas. Ms. Luchka stated we should forget the blankets for now and try to do other things at the nursing homes now. Ms. Kraynak stated the Activity Directors at the nursing homes may do the blankets as an activity for the residents that are able to participate. Ms. Luchka stated maybe some boy scout or girl scout troops could go to the facilities and sing carols. We need to figure out what we want to do each month and then contact the organizations with the ideas. Ms. Ramcharran stated I can help also since we are going to take a year off from the cards.

Mr. Bollins asked could we schedule a work session meeting for March 21 at 5:00 pm. Ms. Mihalus stated I will check with Ms. Lewis and look into a meeting room.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mayor Pribonic stated the Club Interact group at the High School made and distributed blankets for the nursing home residents at Briarwood and before they left the independent living residents wanted blankets also. The unique thing about this program is JoAnn Fabric donates all of the fabric for the program. Currently they have 1,600 bolts that they are either going to give away or throw away. I am asking this commission if you would like to help Club Interact with this endeavor. We have about 1,800 people in nursing facilities between Stow and Munroe Falls. Making these blankets does not take up a lot of time and the residents were ecstatic to receive them.

I would like to keep thinking of ways we can possibly reach out to these nursing facilities to come up with some ideas for organizations to interact with these residents. If we can come up with some type of activity, I think they would really enjoy it. These people are residents of Stow and

we need to try and do for them. Maybe we can come up with ideas and these organizations can go visit these facilities like once a month.

Mr. Bollins stated that they visited a nursing home in Stow that was having trouble getting food delivered to the facility. I am not sure if this is still happening but maybe that is something we could look into. Ms. Denton stated at her facility they were getting shorted on tomatoes. Mayor Pribonic stated we need to have these groups ready to go out and assist these facilities.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Bollins and seconded by Ms. Ramcharran at 5:30 p.m. All were in favor.

Deborah Luchka, Chairperson
Stow Senior Commission

Deanna Mihalus, Secretary
Parks and Recreation Department