

STOW SENIOR CITIZENS COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, May 30, 2023

Minutes of the Stow Senior Citizens Commission Meeting held Tuesday, May 30, 2023, in the Boards and Commissions Room at Stow City Hall.

Members Present: Deborah Luchka, Robbie Robinson, Tammy Denton, Roger Bollins,
Audrey Kraynak

Members Absent: Manorma Ramcharran

Others Present: Kathy Lewis, Recreation Supervisor

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Luchka called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

SWEARING IN OF REAPPOINTED BOARD MEMBER

Mayor Pribonic swore in Ms. Cunningham as a reappointed board member through January 2, 2026.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nothing to report.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT/SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES REPORT

Ms. Lewis reported that the senior center will not be having their own concerts this year. The Parks and Recreation Department will be having five Concerts on the Green which will include several different genres of music for all age groups. These concerts will be listed in the next newsletter.

We have hired a new part time trip coordinator, Linda Ryan, for the senior center to run our community bus trips. She will be in charge of planning the bus trips and will assist at the senior center.

We will be having our ribbon cutting celebration on July 1 for the SKIP Playground. This event will tie in with our Celebrate Stow week which partners with the Stow Munroe Falls Library and we will end the week with the Fourth of July Parade.

Mr. Robinson stated December was the last meeting of the Stow Sunshiners due to low participation. Ms. Lewis stated they are welcome to participate in our programs at the senior center and our bus trips.

LIBRARY REPORT

Nothing to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Lewis read from the Mental Health Awareness program held on May 9 that Mayor Pribonic stated he is still trying to bring senior citizens and students together to address the mental health needs of senior citizens in senior living facilities. We have about 1,800 senior citizens residing in senior living facilities in Stow. Please keep sending your ideas to Mayor Pribonic.

Briarwood staff liked the social connection and wanted the students to come again soon. A couple of suggestions were to plan a game night and/or planning a day to take supplies to bake with the residents and maybe have the students paint fingernails for the residents. Mayor Pribonic stated he is planning to move forward with the program this fall and hopes to have an organized schedule in place, matching volunteer student groups with activities and a schedule for the various senior living facilities that wish to participate.

Ms. Lewis stated I am not sure who is heading this initiative, but I know it is not the responsibility of the Senior Citizens Commission. My thought was if we can share some ideas of things to do with the seniors and even work on orchestrating one of the activities. There are a lot of different organizations that he has approached about this initiative. Mr. Bollins asked who do we send these ideas to? Ms. Lewis stated you can send them to Deb Berkey or myself.

Ms. Luchka asked what were some of the ideas that have already been presented? Ms. Lewis stated making dog treats, blankets or maybe we can do something for National Nursing Homes week next year. Having outside interaction is really beneficial to our seniors in these nursing facilities.

Ms. Kraynak stated that many nursing homes and assisted living homes have an activity coordinator that plans trips and activities for the residents. Ms. Luchka stated it would be nice if we could get Girl Scouts or Boy Scouts to go in and sing at Christmas time. Ms. Lewis stated that the Mayor was definitely planning on targeting those types of groups. Ms. Kraynak stated even some of the churches that have children's choirs would be nice to contact.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Cunningham stated I think targeting the nursing homes is an excellent idea, but my concern is that we are focusing on them and there is a support system for them but what about the

seniors in their homes in our community that are isolated. Maybe we could put out a survey for the 55 and older community asking them what their needs are. Ms. Lewis stated during covid we sent out a survey in the newsletter and got a small return back however that only reached 700 seniors at that time. We are an aging community, and I am guessing we have maybe 7,000 seniors in the community. I can pull out the old survey and see if the questions are still relevant. We can also see if Summit County publishes a booklet on services that are offered for the county. We can contact our Planning Department to see if they can give us a list of the seniors in our community that are 55 and older and try and reach those seniors with a survey of what they feel their needs are. We can even narrow the results down to certain age brackets also. With those results we can then come up with some projects to focus on those seniors. Ms. Kraynak stated it would also assist the Parks and Recreation Department on what type of programs or speakers they should offer. Ms. Lewis stated we need to keep in mind that the senior center, like Parks and Recreation, is not a social service – we are recreation based.

Mr. Robinson stated the Stow Sentry had an article about an exercise program for people that have Parkinsons at the YMCA. I joined this group. The unfortunate thing is without that article in the Stow Sentry, I would not have known the program existed. Ms. Lewis stated I have tried finding instructors for different types of exercise classes and it is very hard to find someone.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Ms. Luchka stated that the Mayor had mentioned that a sign was going to be installed at the corner of Graham Road and 91 that would list events that will be going on in the city to inform our residents.

Mr. Robinson asked can we advertise the Parkinsons program at the YMCA in our newsletter. Ms. Lewis stated I would contact the YMCA first to make sure they are not a full capacity and ask them if they would like us to promote the program.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Cunningham and seconded by Ms. Kraynak at 4:38 p.m. All were in favor.

Deborah Luchka, Chairperson
Stow Senior Commission

Deanna Davis, Secretary
Parks and Recreation Department