

SHEPHERD HOME CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
OCTOBER 23, 2019

Those in attendance: Atty. Ralph Wilson, Councilman Sebastian Giuliano, Veteran Phil Cacciola, Vinnie Loffredo, Community Member Carl Rodenhizer, Chief Real Estate Officer for Columbus House, Christine Garriga, Property Manager for DeMarco Management Corporation, Mayce Torres, Case Manager from St. Vincent DePaul

Meeting called to order at 5 p.m. by Chair Atty. Ralph Wilson.

Public Session: No members of the public attended.

Minutes of September 18, 2019 Approved

New Business

Vinnie Loffredo made a motion for Carl Rodenhizer to serve as committee secretary. Motion approved unanimously.

Furniture. Design ideas for benches (modular cement) around the flagpole were discussed, along with chairs (Adirondack, Wooden rockers) on the porches. Funding should be available in January. Action: Carl will provide examples for review at future meeting.

Services. Mayce Torres gave a presentation on services at Shepherd. Saint Vincent DePaul efforts are being supplemented by staff from Gilead and VA. She has an active caseload of 25 tenants which can be overwhelming at times. Some barriers she is dealing with is scheduling enough activities to keep people busy. While the transit bus is available by calling, its use is limited. We discussed making bus passes available to increase the access to the larger community. There are transportation needs for employment, health care and retail that could improve the overall environment.

Action: Christine Garriga will distribute the facility calendar.

We also discussed strategies to link up with churches and community groups to prepare for activities targeted for the holidays. Discussion focused on increasing involvement with community groups and churches to increase resources available to tenants.

Mayce does have plans for a police community day on the 29th to show appreciation that the police have provided to the facility.

Action: Phil Cacciola will talk to veteran groups about help with the holidays and transportation.

We discussed encouraging card games and lawn games, reuse of the community room and fitness room (currently used for storage), activities with food. Can we develop a wish list for the holidays and reach out to the community through social media or a website?

Safety. With two veterans who recently died in their rooms from natural causes, there was a discussion about responding to tenants in distress. In the most recent cases, residents were found quickly through a wellness check or a unit inspection. There was discussion about technology that would increase the response time should any resident be in distress.

Supplies. Phil raised the issue of clothing and other donations and the procedure to get them to the tenants. Mayce noted that we still have supplies from the opening, but could use toiletries, gloves, socks, jackets and boots. Storage is limited, so donations will need to be distributed quickly. Should donations not be picked up by tenants, arrangements will be required to get them to other organizations that can use them.

Demographics. Christine reported that the facility is full short of one vacancy due to the recent death. She is working with the housing authority to approve a veteran for occupancy. There remains 30 males and one female.

Next Meeting: Due to the holidays, the next meeting is scheduled for November 13 and December 11.

Adjournment: 6:25 p.m.

Submitted by Carl Rodenhizer