

BREVARD COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES



**Building C, Space Coast Room
Thursday, March 14, 2024
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

CHAIR: Dr. John Potomski **Vice Chair:** Will Scheiner

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Noble, Sandy Stauffer, Laura Anderson, Yvonne Minus, Judy Healy, Marisol Martinez, and Kerry Fink

GUESTS PRESENT: Dorinda Hill, Joe Rowlette, Doris Varner, Traci Graf, Janis Price

SUMMARY:

BREVARD COUNTY STAFF: Cindy Short

Call to Order/Introductions: **Dr. Potomski** called the meeting to order 3:13 pm. Roll call occurred by everyone present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for February 8, 2024: Minutes were reviewed by all members. Motion to approve minutes as presented made by **Judy Healy**; seconded by **Yvonne Minus**; approved by consensus.

Guest speaker: None

Legislative update: Staff spoke about the previous informative legislative update provided by Jason Maine and told everyone there are extra copies of his presentation at the sign in table if they want one. Staff also informed the members that the current legislative session had closed, and we will know more in the coming weeks about what is approved for the final Florida budget. **Dr. Potomski** shared that he had recently attended the national meeting of the American Medical Director's Association, now called the Society of the Post Acute and Long Term Care Medicine. He said the speaker spoke about some of the Medicare HMOs and how they are now offering payments to family members to care for their loved ones at home. **Dr. Potomski** added that this has been shown to be a much more affordable cost than traditional nursing home care. **Dr. Potomski** said this is just another way to think outside the box regarding elder care.

Advocacy: Staff informed everyone present about the upcoming Affordable Housing committee meeting happening on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 4:30 pm. if anyone is interested in attending. Also, staff gave everyone the date for the next Housing Summit, happening on Friday, May 31, 2024, with more information coming about the event.

BCOA Newsletter: Staff shared the newsletter article that was published in Senior Life titled “Guardianship and the alternatives” written by Corina Savela. The members reviewed the next article for April titled “April is Parkinson’s Awareness Month” and staff reminded the members that Barbara Fradkin, the author of the article, had spoken to them in January about her journey with her loved one and Parkinson’s. **Dr. Potomski** shared additional information with the members about diagnosing Parkinson’s correctly and various treatments available today. **Yvonne Minus** made the motion to accept the article as presented, seconded by **Sandy Stauffer**, approved by consensus. **Sandy Stauffer** wanted to remind everyone about the upcoming Walk/Run event to raise funds to support those with Parkinson’s, and this will be happening on April 27th at Merritt Island. She said there are flyers on the table.

Dr. Potomski asked for suggestions regarding an article for May. **Kerry Fink** asked if we have the Boomer guide statistical page this year. Staff replied no, there were never any numbers received to be able to put together the information for the page. **Kerry Fink** asked if an article could be done regarding the numbers of seniors in Brevard County, and he said he would be happy to help put it together. **Laura Anderson** suggested maybe we do an article about the person who will be recognized for Older American’s month. **Dr. Potomski** brought up the 90-year-old crossing guard featured in Senior Life; he believes she is an inspiration and should be an example of seniors staying connected. A guest from the audience, Traci Graf, raised her hand to speak and the Chair gave her the floor. Ms. Graf said that she has written several articles and authored a book, and she would love to help write articles for the Commission on Aging. Discussion continued regarding helping seniors in need in Brevard County. Staff said they will reach out to Senior Life to inquire if an article for the resolution presentation is a possibility.

Staff Update: Staff asked everyone to review the Older American’s month national theme “Powered by Connection” and discuss who they wish to recognize. **Dr. Potomski** said he would like to consider recognizing the 90-year-old lady who is a crossing guard and was featured in an article last year in Senior Life. Staff agreed that she would be a great candidate but asked for an additional person just in case staff is not able to locate this person. **Yvonne Minus** asked **Dr. Potomski** for the floor; she said that it was an honor last year to present Joe Steckler with his 90th Birthday presentation from the City of Melbourne, and she wants to also submit his name for consideration. Kerry said that he may have some issues with mobility, but it doesn’t stop him from being an advocate for seniors. **Laura Anderson** added that he is always doing things to connect seniors in the community. **Yvonne Minus** suggested to have more than one nomination.

Will Scheiner said he liked the idea of two nominations and made the motion to recognize the two citizens that have been discussed, Elizabeth Simms and Joe Steckler. The motion was seconded by **Yvonne Minus**, approved by all members.

Staff suggested to have Traci Graf submit some articles for consideration for future articles to share. Staff also informed the members that there will be a speaker in April from the Office of the Attorney General.

Member Updates:

Sandy Stauffer said they are taking the Dementia Live Experience to the Center for Family Caregivers located on Babcock Street in Melbourne on March 26th and participants need to call to register. She added there are flyers on the table if anyone wants to share the information.

Dr. Potomski shared information from the handouts available for everyone.

Staff reminded everyone about the upcoming Boomerfest event happening on March 29th at the Cocoa Beach Country Club; the BCOA will have a table, and there will also be a car show in addition to entertainment.

Kerry Fink said that Ms. Jital Patel will be speaking at their wellness center about her talk on “No Broken Bones About It”. She will be there Thursday, March 28th at 11:00 am; and there will also be a speaker coming to address polypharmacy. On April 25th there will be a Fearless Caregiver conference 10-2 at Ascension Catholic; Dorinda Hill spoke to the group about the caregiver event with lots of resources and promises to be a worthwhile event. Kerry Fink added that the next car raffle will be October 27th.

Yvonne Minus said the State of the State will be happening on April 4th at the Space Coast Chamber of Commerce and usually begins at 7:30 am.

Public Comments: Doris Varner, resident of Merritt Island and member of East Coast Christian Church, came to speak to the group again about the homeless seniors on Merritt Island. She said her church is feeding 680 plus families every Tuesday and the numbers continue to increase. She spoke about various examples of the homeless that she talks to, and the conditions that many are living with. Traci Graf added that it is very disheartening to witness what is happening in Merritt Island and is outraged that money is being spent on an outdoor pavilion and not housing for seniors. **Dr. Potomski** thanked them for coming and speaking.

Upcoming Events: Senior Life Boomerfest/Guide Expo March 29 at Cocoa Beach Country Club 9 am until 1 pm; Health First Memory Disorder Clinic’s **Stress Busting Program for Family Caregivers**, classes at the Memory Disorder Clinic 3661 S. Babcock St. Melbourne from 10 am until 12 pm for 9 weeks; **Brevard Parkinson’s Alliance’s Walk/Run**, April 27, 2024.

Next Meeting: April 11, 2023, 3:00pm, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Building C, Space Coast Room, Second Floor Viera, FL 32940.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.