

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 24, 2020 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Mystic Shores clubhouse.

There was a Flag salute and a moment of silence for our military and world peace.

Roll call was taken. Board members in attendance were: Ken Miller, Ann Mikos, Linda Cicco, Diane Coyle, Fran Zimmer and Richard Dutton. Liaison, Township Mayor Barbara Jo Crea, was also in attendance.

Minutes from the January 27, 2020 meeting, having been read, were approved by the Board.

In the absence of Chief Richard J. Buzby, Jr., Captain Jim Hawkins of the Little Egg Harbor ("LEH") Police Department gave the customary update on police-related matters affecting the community. He began by reporting that there have once again been a number of drug arrests as a result of action by the Department's Street Crimes Unit and he emphasized that all leads given to the police by LEH residents regarding suspected drug dealing are taken seriously and pursued. He then reported that the Department has also been continuing to help addicts toward recovery through the Blue Hope program and that after a police officer administers the lifesaving drug NARCAN to treat an overdose a member of the Department typically pays a follow-up visit to the recipient's home to make an evaluation and offer help. He thanked the residents of Mystic Shores for their contributions which enabled the Department to purchase a canine vest for its dog "Octane". He then reported that the pack of vicious dogs involved in an attack in a neighbor's yard in Mystic Island several weeks earlier were still being held at the Ocean County Shelter and their owner was scheduled to appear in court. Finally, he noted that the Ring video doorbell camera has a "neighbors app" which can be a useful tool when a homeowner forwards to the Department for its review a video that shows a thief or prowler at the door. Chairman Miller then raised with him the need for painted center and edge lines on East Otis Bog Road, a high traffic street on which pedestrians walk.

The next speaker was Detective Lindsay Llauget of the Senior Scam Task Force of Ocean County. She distributed a booklet identifying the top ten scams that target seniors in the County and she reviewed and discussed these scams. They are: (1) A call congratulating you for winning a free vacation or large cash prize that can be collected only if you pay a prize tax, release fee or other expense; (2) A call from someone claiming to be a grandchild or other relative, sometimes with a muffled voice, who says he or she is in trouble and asks you to send money; (3) A call from someone claiming to be from the Internal Revenue Service or a utility company who says you owe money and if you do not send cash or pay by credit card (or even pay by sending gift cards!) immediately you will be hauled into court or your service will be shut off; (4) A communication from someone posing as a high-ranking political figure (sometimes a Nigerian prince) asking you for help in transferring money from his country into your account and requesting account details; (5) A call or email allegedly from a bank, Internet business or other seemingly legitimate source alerting you to fraudulent activity on your account and again requesting account details (In this situation, never give your Social Security number, and simply terminate the call and then contact the bank or business in your normal way to determine whether there really has been a problem with your account); (6) A letter that claims to be from your local tax office that includes an offer to get your property taxes reduced if you send a fee (Letters like this may include specific information about you and your property, but the sender has merely copied such information from tax records); (7) A communication from someone

offering to handle all the details of re-negotiating your mortgage, telling you not to contact your lender, lawyer or credit counselor and asking you to send your mortgage payment directly to them while they are negotiating on your behalf; (8) A call, email or visit from someone soliciting donations for a bogus or even legitimate charity (sometimes relating to the police or firefighters) or victims of a disaster who in fact will pocket the donation for himself; (9) A communication or visit from a home improvement contractor who offers a free inspection, tricks you into believing there is damage that needs to be fixed (or in some cases even causes damage himself!) and says that he will fix it on the spot for cash (Recommendation: Always obtain from a contractor his license number and proof of insurance, make any payments by check rather than cash so that they can be traced and if you have any question call the Ocean County Department of Consumer Affairs at 732-929-2105); and (10) A call or email from someone claiming to be a technical support representative from a computer or cell phone company who says there is a problem with your computer or account and asks you to download a program or give him access to your computer to fix the problem but instead installs spyware and steals personal information stored on your computer. Additional scams involve a call offering to sell you an extended warranty on your vehicle or a popup on your computer saying that your computer has been compromised and asking you to wire a payment to release it. Det. Llauget said that while some of these scams have been around for quite a while, people still fall for them and only a week earlier someone had lost something like \$400,000 in a scam in which someone intercepted payments on a time share in Cancun. She added that, generally, it is a good idea, if you have the caller ID feature on your phone, not to answer any call from someone whose name and number you do not recognize. Audience members then joined in and advised that you should never save a password on your computer or include personal information in a saved document and if someone takes control of your computer turn it off immediately and when you turn it back on again the control will be gone.

The third speaker was Kathleen Cheeseman, the Director of Interfaith Health & Support Services of Southern Ocean County (“IHSS”), a non-profit coalition of religious congregations (23 of them) and social service and healthcare organizations that provides volunteer physical, emotional and spiritual support to elderly and disabled people living at home. Among the services provided are transportation to doctor appointments, food shopping (physically or online), instruction on how to shop online at Shoprite or Acme, home visits of about an hour to provide companionship, pet therapy or arts and crafts, relief of Alzheimer’s caregivers, evaluation in the home by retired nurses, and “reassurance calls” by telephone to shut-ins. The organization also gives out donated medical equipment such as wheelchairs, canes and, in one case, even a stair lift. Mrs. Cheeseman said, however, that at the present time there are very few volunteers available in our area and there is a waiting list for services, and she accordingly urged anyone interested in IHSS’s work to become a volunteer. She added that there will be a Caregiver & Volunteer Conference sponsored by the organization on Saturday, April 18 from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at St. Mary’s Parish Center in Manahawkin which will include a continental breakfast and buffet lunch and costs \$30. Further information can be obtained by calling 609-978-3839 or visiting IHSS’s website at interfaithsoc.org.

Mayor Barbara Jo Crea then reported that the 2020 U.S. Census was coming up, urged everyone to respond when canvassed and noted that there will be well-paid positions available for those who wish to assist. She added that the annual LEH Senior Expo at the Community Center will take place again this year on the first Wednesday in May.

The next meeting of the Senior Advisory Board will be on Monday, March 30, 2020 at 10:00 AM at the Sea Oaks clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:25 A.M.

*Respectfully submitted,
Richard Dutton, Acting Secretary, LEH Senior Citizens' Advisory Board*