

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 25, 2018 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Sea Oaks Clubhouse, 99 Golf View Drive.

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

Roll call was taken. Board members in attendance were: Ken Miller, Ann Mikos, Fran Zimmer, Nancy Cotter, Rocco Compitello, Richard Dutton and Maryann O'Neill (alternate). Liaison, Deputy Mayor Barbara Jo Crea, was also in attendance.

Minutes from the May 21, 2018 meeting, having been read, were approved by the Board.

Deputy Mayor Crea began the meeting by announcing that Chief Richard J. Buzby, Jr. of the Little Egg Harbor ("LEH") Police Department was recently elected by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police to be its President for the 2018-2019 year and would be sworn in at a special event at the Resorts Casino in Atlantic City on June 27. This is a significant honor and only three other Chiefs from Ocean County (none of them from LEH) have ever been elected to this office. The Chief first spoke briefly about the dignitaries scheduled to speak at the event. He then talked in a general way about the current environment for policing and said that there have seemingly been more incidents recently than in the past involving attacks upon and injuries to police officers. He added that the concept of community policing has become important and that he has been pleased that it has been possible in LEH to discuss issues openly. The closing of mental institutions has resulted in the release without notice of large numbers of mentally ill people into the community and often his Department's first contact with them is when they get into some trouble, often while armed. The Chief plans to advocate for the use of deterrents less lethal than tasers (electronic stun guns), such as projectile guns. He is also concerned that new police officers be given state-of-the-art technological assistance such as sophisticated computer access when they first begin on the job to enable them to respond optimally when involved in an incident. The new concept in policing, he said, is "resiliency", and when he speaks at a police academy graduation ceremony on August 13 he intends to say that new officers need to steel themselves in advance for suddenly being confronted with a horrific tragedy and at the same time, despite the sometimes deadening pressures of the job, maintain perspective on themselves and keep in mind that they need to continue to be good human beings. Audience member Art Mooney from Sunrise Bay then said that, over his lifetime, he had noticed greater proactivity and transparency in police work and that Chief Buzby exemplified these two important characteristics. Another audience member then said that he had heard of a recent arrest of a LEH resident on child pornography charges and the Chief said that his Department constantly monitors certain Internet sites, as those interested in child pornography tend to follow the same pattern and frequent the same sites. The Chief then said that he felt that the Civil Service system is not the best source of new police officers and he feels that LEH residents are the best choices because they have a personal stake in the outcome of law enforcement here. Another audience member raised the question of consolidation of police departments for money-saving reasons and the Chief responded here again that he feels that "home rule" is best, because response times can be kept short when officers are dispatched locally; in considering whether to consolidate departments, quality of service must be balanced against strictly financial considerations.

The next speaker was Barry Steinmetz of the Ocean County Mentoring Service, which offers seniors the opportunity to mentor local elementary school students who have been identified as needing extra attention. Mentors generally spend about an hour per week with each such student and the George J. Mitchell, Tuckerton and Eagleswood elementary schools all participate in the program. Anyone interested in mentoring should contact Rev. Steinmetz at 732-288-7723 to obtain an application.

The final speaker was Kathleen Capron of the St. Theresa Roman Catholic Church Food Pantry, who reported that the Pantry, staffed by about 45 volunteers, had obtained tens of thousands of pounds of food given to the Pantry by the government, supermarkets and individuals or purchased with donated funds and provided food to more than 3,600 families. Recipients are carefully screened, must demonstrate that they are below 185% of the poverty threshold and can receive food twice a month.

Deputy Mayor Crea then said that a Senior Fraud Program would be presented at the LEH Town Hall on July 11 at 10 AM. She gave an example of a telephone scam directed at seniors that was almost successful in victimizing her husband and Maryann O'Neill described an Internet scam that had been perpetrated upon her.

The next meeting of the Senior Advisory Board will be on Monday, July 30 at 10 AM at the Tall Timbers clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30 AM.

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