

MINUTES OF THE JULY 26, 2021 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Little Egg Harbor (“LEH”) Community Center.

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, Nancy Cotter, Diane Coyle, Richard Dutton and Maryann O’Neill. Barbara Jo Crea, Liaison to the Township Committee, was also in attendance.

Chief Richard J. Buzby, Jr., of the LEH Police Department having retired since the last meeting of the Board, Captain James Hawkins of the Department then gave the customary update on police-related matters affecting the community and in particular reported in detail on a recent incident in Sea Oaks in which six vehicles were entered and a seventh was stolen and later recovered in a location in Atlantic City known for drug trafficking. All of the first six vehicles had been left unlocked and although there were indications someone had rummaged through their contents, nothing was taken from them. The vehicle that was stolen had also been left unlocked with its key, some cash and a laptop inside and although the cash was stolen the laptop was still in the vehicle when it was recovered. When the police made rounds in Sea Oaks the night after the incident they noticed that a number of garage doors had been left open, and Captain Hawkins accordingly urged residents to keep their garage doors closed and cars locked, to leave lights on at night and not to leave car keys or garage door openers in places in cars where they are visible from the outside. Then, in response to a question from the audience, Captain Hawkins said that Atlantic City Electric, rather than tax revenue from LEH residents, pays for the services of extra duty police officers at the company’s work sites in LEH, just as St. Theresa’s Church subsidized the police officers who formerly directed traffic entering and leaving the church’s parking lot on Sundays.

The second speaker was James Sigurdson, the Executive Director of Meals on Wheels of Ocean County (609-978-6869), a non-profit charitable entity that delivers hot, nutritious meals to homebound seniors all over the County, currently using eighteen delivery vehicles. To qualify to receive such meals, one must be 60 years of age or older and homebound, be unable to prepare one’s own meals and have no one available to assist with meal preparation. The organization also formerly served meals to non-homebound seniors and provided social activities in connection with this at “congregate meal sites”, but these have been suspended during the coronavirus epidemic. To provide encouragement and maintain contact, the entity also mails to participants upbeat postcards and publications containing recreational activities such as puzzles along with a menu listing the meals for the month. Delivery persons are required to have eye-to-eye contact with each individual to whom they deliver a meal and they report anything unusual they encounter to their director and sometimes even call 911. Funding comes from Ocean County, federal grants, the State of New Jersey and private contributors; the entity is a Sec. 501(c)(3) organization, contributions to which are deductible as charitable donations.

The third speaker was Maria La Face, Director of the Ocean County Office of Senior Services, which she described as “the area agency on aging” for those over 60 and which currently includes among its priorities socialization, transportation, home repairs (There is a home repair program through Catholic Charities), health care costs and food (It funds Meals on Wheels and meals amount to about half of its budget). It also assists with caregivers and with legal services,

including preparation of wills and help with eviction problems, and provides information to callers about anything age-related. It has begun a food shopping program, has coordinated vaccine appointments, and is starting a mobile office (“M.A.S.H.”, which stands for “Mobile Assistance for Seniors at Home”) that will come to seniors’ own locations. It also publishes each year a very comprehensive Resource Directory that includes information of interest to seniors and listings, descriptions and telephone numbers of all sorts of agencies and entities, both governmental and private, that assist seniors; she distributed copies of the 2021 Directory, which is over sixty pages long. The telephone numbers of her office in Toms River, at 1027 Hooper Avenue, Building 2, 1st Floor, are 732-929-2091, 1-800-668-4899 and 1-877-222-3737.

Township Committee member and Board liaison Barbara Jo Crea then reported that she thought that the current operations of Ocean Ride are the best they have ever been and said it is possible for seniors to call their Reserve-a-Ride Service (732-736-8989, option 1) to arrange for pickups and dropoffs.

There will be no meeting of the Senior Advisory Board during the month of August. The next meeting of the Board will be on Monday, September 27, 2021 at 10:00 AM at the LEH Community Center. 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*