

Hampton Senior Citizens Advisory Committee

Hampton Senior Center, 3501 Kecoughtan Road

April 4, 2022 ~ 10:00am

Present: Linda H. Kindred-Chair; Jeanette Augustine-Vice Chair, Cassandra Alston-Townsley, Martha Clark, Lewis Dawley III, Tonya Grant, George Gwynn, C’Faison Harris, Martha C. Johnson, Graylyn Owens

Absent: Yvonne Gaynor

City/Lead Agency Reps: Dave McCauley (HPRLS), Yolanda Clark (Social Services), Susan Elswick (HPRLS)

Guests: Mayor Donnie Tuck, Vice Mayor Jimmy Gray, Joyce Alexander, Doris Farmer, Audrey Johnson, Chris & Mike Schetting, Mary Joyner, Desiree Darden, Nicole Singleton

I. Welcome

Chair Linda Kindred opened the meeting by welcoming all in attendance and provided information on how meetings are conducted. Opening prayer was offered.

Immediately following, Linda recognized the three newly appointed board members, asking each to give a brief description of why they chose to serve on the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee. She also noted that some board members’ terms have expired; however, while they are no longer appointed members, they are still welcome to participate in Committee activities and events.

Ms. Tonya Grant was born in Suffolk but has lived in Hampton for many years and works at NASA Langley Research Center. During the pandemic, she came in contact with many seniors for whom she provided assistance, so being able to serve on SCAC would allow her to extend her knowledge and expertise to the Committee.

Mr. Graylyn Owens has been a resident of Hampton for six years and became interested in SCAC through his association with the Hampton Senior Center. He wants to be an active part of SCAC.

Mr. Lewis Dawley III first came to Hampton back in 2007 working for a management company. He’s lived in many areas of the U.S., but eventually decided to retire to Hampton with his wife. He added that even some of his children have moved to the area. He wants to share whatever knowledge and

expertise he can with the Committee and will do all he can to enrich the lives of area seniors, adding that we also must also not forget the youth and how we must support them.

II. Roll Call & Approval of February Minutes

Vice Chair Jeanette Augustine conducted the roll call; a quorum was present. Linda reminded everyone to sign in at the front desk upon entering the center and on the SCAC sign-in sheet. She then asked the Committee to review the March minutes, asking if there were any questions/corrections. A motion to accept the March minutes as written was made by Jeanette, and seconded by Martha Johnson. The motion was unanimously accepted.

Ms. Kindred asked HPRLS Director Dave McCauley if he wanted to share any information. Dave thanked the new members for choosing to serve on SCAC, noting that the Committee truly had individuals with diverse and rich backgrounds.

He went on to say that community input will soon be needed for the upcoming Hampton Community Plan for which he will provide dates for the kick-off and community meetings. The Parks Master Plan, a part of the Community Plan, initially started two years ago, but was set aside during COVID. The Master Plan, however, is underway again and he will notify the Committee of the kick-off date once approved by Council.

Dave introduced PRLS staff Susan Elswick, Senior Center Manager, and Shaeron King (absent), Therapeutic Center Manager.

PRLS has over 400 assets that includes parks, beaches, four community and four neighborhood centers (including the brand new Mary Jackson Center that will be on Lincoln Street) and two specialty centers.

Now that COVID restrictions are easing, Dave announced that several PRLS programs will be underway again at the beach for the summer and fall:

- The Buckroe Beach Farmers Market, Saturdays beginning May 7 – October 30, 9am-1pm
- The James T. Wilson Fishing Pier, now open 24hrs/7 days a week until December 31 – it has a snack bar and bait shop
- Groovin' by the Bay Music Series, Sundays, Memorial Day – Labor Day, 5pm-8pm

Lewis congratulated Dave and PRLS for the great improvements made to Buckroe Beach, like the boardwalk and swings. Dave added that water sport equipment such as jet skis, kayaks, and paddleboats are soon to come.

III. **Old Business**

None

IV. **New Business**

City Council Appointments

New members previously introduced.

Establishment of Subcommittees

Linda explained that since the approval of the amended by-laws, it was necessary to re-establish membership of the subcommittees. She then read descriptions for each subcommittee, asking those who had previously signed up if they still wished to remain on their chosen subcommittees. Others were then asked to state which committee(s) they'd like to join, adding that Committee members could be on no more than two subcommittees.

Listed below are subcommittee memberships to date:

Annual Awards Event: Doris Farmer, Jeanette Augustine, George Gwynn, Yolanda Clark

Mayor's Town Hall: Martha Clark, Cassandra Townsley, Tonya Grant

Senior Residential Living: George Gwynn, Martha Johnson

Speakers Bureau: Lewis Dawley III, Martha Johnson, Martha Clark

SCAC Annual Report: Dave McCauley, C'Faison Harris, Susan Elswick

Hospitality: Doris Farmer, Graylyn Owens, Cassandra Townsley

Tonya wanted to know more about each committee. C'Faison (Cynthia) Harris will send subcommittee descriptions to the Committee. Linda will allow sign-ups to take place again at the May 2 Committee meeting.

Cynthia then asked if it was all right for the guest speaker to make her presentation next due to the lateness of the hour and Linda agreed.

V. **Presentation**

Commissioner of the Revenue

Dave introduced Ms. Mary Joyner, CPA and Tax Manager with the Office of Ross Mugler, Commissioner of the Revenue. Ms. Joyner has more than 25 years of experience in state and local government, and joined the Commissioner of the Revenue's Office in 2009. She manages real estate tax relief programs, state income tax services, and personal property tax exemptions for seniors, the disabled and disabled veterans.

Ms. Joyner stated that these services are offered free of charge. If an individual needs assistance in filing state and federal income taxes, help can be provided as long as the individual has not yet filed federally. All filings are done electronically.

Programs offered are:

- *Tax relief for the elderly and disabled* – applicants must meet a minimum qualifications listing before they may apply and must be 65 years of age or older or permanently and totally disabled on or before December 31 of the year immediately before the year in which they want to apply for tax relief. Applicants must own and occupy the dwelling on or before January 1 of the year for which they are applying for tax relief. There are conditions to this if the owner is hospitalized or in a nursing home or other institution if the dwelling remains as their home and has not been rented. If the property is sold, the amount of tax relief for the remainder of that fiscal year will be due. Applicants can apply for a freeze or a deferral. A tax freeze is an exemption from a portion of the real estate tax that represents the increase in the real estate tax from the year the taxpayer initially applied and qualified for a freeze. No lien shall accrue as a result of the amount certified as exempt under this section. A tax deferral means a total or partial payment of the real estate tax is postponed for eligible property owner(s) and is paid at a later time. The applicant must indicate the percentage (not to exceed one hundred percent [100%]) of real estate tax to be deferred. If the applicant elects to defer less than 100%, the remaining balance must be paid as billed. The accumulated amount of deferred tax shall be paid, without penalty or interest, within one (1) year from the death of the qualifying owner or immediately upon sale of the property. Income guidelines apply to both.
- *Tax exemption – disabled veteran/surviving spouse* – this program exempts certain disabled vets and their surviving spouses from local real estate taxes on their principal place of residency that they own and occupy.

It was asked how more information could be found for these programs. Ms. Joyner stated that information and applications may be found via the city's website, by coming into the office located in the Rupert Sargent Building (1 Franklin Street), or by calling 757-727-6690.

She added that FY2023 applications are now being mailed for next year and asked that callers wait until after May 15 to schedule appointments for any tax relief programs. Applications, however, may be requested now, but an appointment will be required. The deadline for filing applications is August 31.

Linda thanked Ms. Joyner for the very informative presentation and invited her to stay for the remainder of the Committee meeting.

VI. **Lead Agency Updates**

Social Services

Yolanda announced that Medicaid re-certifications recently rolled out and people are now being contacted, via mail, for updated information. She added that Ms. Ethel Haywood-Howard is now the Adult Protective Services Supervisor and may be able to present to SCAC in the near future.

Hampton Senior Center

Susan stated that last month's creative painting event was a huge success, with Martha Clark adding that she had a wonderful time and displayed her artwork. Another creative painting event is scheduled for May 3.

Mayor Donnie Tuck announced that by April 15, the City Manager will have ready the city's FY2023 budget and citizens will have two weeks in which to comment. A budget decision will go before the May 1 Council session. Homeowners can expect a tax rate decrease.

Dave noted that Lewis had mentioned working with the youth in the City and how that ties in to what the Mayor talked about at the last meeting, adding this may be an opportunity for the two to collaborate.

Nicole Singleton of the Peninsula Food Bank introduced herself and talked about the agency's program for seniors 60 years of age and up. She provided information on the program's guidelines and distributed applications to attendees. Eligible applicants may receive a 26-30lb box of canned and dry goods. I.D.'s are required, but there are no income guidelines. She invited all to find out more about this program.

VII. **Public Comment**

Ms. Alexander asked to address Mayor Tuck regarding concerns she and others have about traffic issues around her residential complex of The Woodlands, located at E. Mercury Blvd. and Woodland Road. She stated that this area has become a speedway with cars and motorcycles continuously racing, especially along Mercury Blvd. Hampton Police are in the area but don't seem to be doing anything about the problems. In addition, the traffic light at the crosswalk does not allow enough time for seniors and the disabled to safely cross, and a crosswalk timer is not installed from the CVS on one corner to the 7-Eleven on the other. She noted that there seem to be traffic cameras everywhere else, but none exists at this particular intersection and this is a safety concern, not to mention the

excessive noise level the speeding traffic creates. She stated she is unable to even sit on her balcony because the noise is so overwhelming.

Mayor Tuck thanked Ms. Alexander for her comments, and then stated that two years ago, the General Assembly decided that the police can no longer stop a vehicle for noise, taillights, or anything hanging from rearview mirrors, so the police are unable to address the noise issue. In addition, speed studies show that if not more than 85% of drivers are doing seven miles or more above the posted speed limit, additional enforcement is deemed unnecessary. Fatalities and accidents in that area also are not deemed as being high enough to warrant traffic cameras, and installing speed bumps or other traffic calming devices hinder emergency vehicles' response times.

Dave suggested that Ms. Alexander register her concerns with the 311 Customer Contact Center. By doing so, a ticket is generated and forwarded to the corresponding department and a tracking system is in place for the complaint. He also thanked Ms. Alexander for stating her concerns.

Vice Mayor Gray also welcomed the new appointees, saying that each member brings added value to the Committee.

Chris Schetting, President of TRIAD, a partnership between the Sheriff's Office, Fire, Police, PRLS, senior citizens and senior service providers, welcomed everyone to its next meeting on Tuesday, April 5, 10am at the Senior Center. She added that TRIAD will begin planning fundraisers and encouraged participation in the Coffee with a Cop initiative.

Linda then announced that SALT (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) will celebrate its anniversary on May 24, 8am-1pm at Northside Church located at 1300 George Washington Memorial Highway in Yorktown. She invited members and guests to attend, adding that they must register for the event by May 5.

She then stated that the new vaccine (2nd booster) is now available. Anyone wanting more information were asked to contact her. Vaccines are available from primary care physicians and the Virginia Department of Health.

VIII. **Adjournment**

Linda brought the meeting to a close by reading a verse from a greeting card and a prayer. She wished everyone a happy Easter and to have an enjoyable and safe holiday. Meeting adjourned at 11:35a.m