



Senior Citizens Advisory Board Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Minutes:

CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

PRESENT: CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON and MEMBERS WEINSTEIN HALL (via teleconference and excused until 1:02 p.m.), PATTARETTU, GALATI, DRUMM (via teleconference), LEE, and GRAHAM (via teleconference)

EXCUSED: MEMBER MOZDEAN

ALSO PRESENT: GREGORY GRAY, Management Analyst I; OLGA FLOWERS, Community Program Technician; PAUL MATA, Deputy City Attorney III; BRIAN CARROLL, Senior Deputy City Clerk; and NICK CRAWFORD, Deputy City Clerk

2. Announcement Regarding: Compliance with Open Meeting Law

Minutes:

ANNOUNCEMENT MADE: This meeting has been properly noticed and posted at the following locations in accordance with the noticing standards as outlined in NRS 241.020: City Hall, 495 South Main Street, 1st Floor; the City of Las Vegas website – www.lasvegasnevada.gov; and the Nevada Public Notice website – notice.nv.gov.

3. Public Comment: Comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters on the agenda for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:

None.

4. For possible action to approve the Final Minutes by reference of the Regular Meeting of October 3, 2024

Motion made by Nicole Graham to Approve

Passed For: 7; Against: 0; Abstain: 0; Did Not Vote: 0; Excused: 1

For-Yvette Weinstein Hall, Elizabeth Pattarettu, Deanne O'Rear-Cameron, Vito Galati, Jennifer Drumm, Charles Lee, Nicole Graham; Excused-Caroline Mozdean;

5. Presentation by Khadyja Carter, Operations Chief, Office for Consumer Health Assistance (OCHA), and Marie Coe, Nevada State Ombudsman, regarding the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) - All Wards

Minutes:

KHADYJA CARTER, Operations Chief, provided information about the Office for Consumer Health Assistance (OCHA).

She said OCHA is a program within the State of Nevada Aging and Disability Services Divisions (ADSD) that assist consumers with healthcare related concerns, including processing workers' compensation claims, facilitating external review processes, and ensuring bills are accurately processed through insurance carriers. They attempt to locate charity programs for their consumers, and they provide financial assistance by setting up payment arrangements for the patients if none are available. MS. CARTER reported that ombudsmen are also trained in the No Surprises Act arbitration process and said to contact their office by telephone or e-mail to complete the intake form. She added that their office houses the Bureau for Hospital Patients (BHP) that provides assistance with billing disputes, complaints, prescription resource advocacy, and coordination of benefits and enrollment guidelines. Additionally, BHP helps patients with quality of care, submitting grievances on their behalf, and education of their rights and responsibilities of their health plans.

CAMILLE MOORE, Nevada State Ombudsman, said ombudsmen with the the Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program advocate for residents in various facilities and represent their perspective in monitoring laws, regulations, and policies. Ombudsmen may only advocate with consent from residents or their legal representatives and are not mandated reporters of abuse. Additionally, they educate residents of their rights, monitor environments, and attend resident and family council meetings. She said it is imperative that they respect resident experiences and viewpoints, proceeding at the pace and direction the resident is comfortable with. Further, she reported that they identify systemic opportunities and advocate for legislative change.

MS. MOORE confirmed compliance with NRS (Nevada Revised Statutes) 427a.125 and the Nevada Administrative Codes (NAC) 427a.010 through 427a.048. She reported that the National Association of State Long-Term Ombudsman Programs (NASOP) developed a Code of Ethics that provides services with respect for human dignity and individuality, unrestricted by considerations of age, social or economic status, personal characteristics, or lifestyle choices. The Code of Ethics also promotes the client's right to self-determination, while acting in accordance with their wishes. Further, ombudsmen are obligated to protect vulnerable individuals from abuse and neglect, safeguard the client's right to privacy, and support a strict conflict of interest standard. She stated the ombudsman program ensures confidentiality of complaints with laws protecting resident and complainant information. MS. MOORE concluded that advocacy relies on consent, strict record release criteria, and protection against retaliation.

MEMBER LEE wanted to know what MS. MOORE meant by unlicensed homes providing care, to which she reminded that people pick them up from various places and bring them to an unlicensed house to provide care for money.

CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON wanted to recognize that they visited over 300 adult day care centers and only 15 percent were not visited.

MS. MOORE explained that the Las Vegas office is the largest office in Nevada with 20 ombudsmen that visit 460 Clark County locations each month.

MEMBER GALATI wanted to know if there was enough staffing for the ombudsmen to do their jobs. MS. MOORE said they are always looking for more staff, adding that they ask the State legislator every other year for more positions.

CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON reported that there was an upcoming legislative session with bill drafts that the Board would be supporting, but she expressed concern that staff shortages were due to people not filling the positions.

MS. MOORE disclosed that the Adult Rights Specialist II position was available and encouraged those interested to apply on the State's website..

MEMBER WEINSTEIN HALL wondered if they had internship programs that can draw interest from high school or college students. MS. MOORE said they did not but felt it was a great idea.

MEMBER GALATI noted that most students are not aware of the ombudsmen program and wondered if any budget or grants were given to them. MS. MOORE did not know about the budget details, but disclosed that ombudsmen with a human services background do well in their field of work. She added that they are a very busy program and reported that the position is very independent.

MEMBER WEINSTEIN HALL recommended MS. MOORE contact the principal of West Charleston Enrichment Academy to reach high school students that are interested in pursuing specific areas of study. MS. MOORE thanked the Member and encouraged her to reach out to MARIE COE, Nevada State Ombudsmen, with more ideas to help fill their positions.

MEMBER PATTARETTU wondered if they explored using government-sponsored community job fairs to achieve more public awareness. MS. MOORE clarified that ADSD has an outreach team that visits different community locations and deferred to MS. COE to connect them to the outreach team.

MS. MOORE reported that all statewide facilities have their posters with their information and office locations. She said anyone can call into their program with concerns for someone living in any of the environments listed in the presentation. She attested that they are working on social media to improve the exposure of their program.

CHAIR O'REAR CAMERON urged everyone to inform ombudsmen of any new group homes so they can offer their services.

6. Report by Gregory Gray, Management Analyst I, regarding senior issues received by the Department of Neighborhood Services – All Wards

Minutes:

GREGORY GRAY, Management Analyst I, reported they received a call from their Care Coordination Program regarding a senior who received a no-cause eviction on September 23rd and had 30 days to vacate. At the time, the senior was receiving chemotherapy for a cancer diagnosis; Medicare covered 80 percent of his treatment, but he had to pay the remainder out of pocket. The senior's income was limited to SSI (Supplemental Security Income) and the Care Coordination Program found housing solutions and resources for him. He encouraged seniors or any community members facing an eviction to contact the Self-Help Law Center at 200 Lewis Avenue or the Legal Aid Center at 725 East Charleston Boulevard.

MR. GRAY reported that the city is facing a housing crisis with limited affordable housing, especially for senior residents. He said limited or fixed income impacts seniors and active adults due to rising rent and utility costs. He disclosed that there was not any immediate emergency housing available for seniors, noting that transitional bridge housing was fully occupied and prioritized families and children in need. He stated that properties like Nevada HAND, Ovation, and the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority (SNRHA) were filled up or closed. MR. GRAY encouraged seniors and active adults to apply for energy assistance and Equal Pay programs if eligible. He also asked seniors to get on a waiting list for 55 and over housing. He advised seniors to not wait for vacancies at properties that are already filled or closed. Additionally, most properties will ask seniors to come in and fill out an application and will not provide affordable housing pricing over the phone. He instructed seniors and their families in need to contact the City of Las Vegas Care Coordination Program at 702-229-1200. While the Care Coordination Program is always willing to help, he advised that they are not a crisis response program, and it may take up to three days to coordinate solutions and options for those in need. He attested that they experienced several seniors and their families reaching out to the program with urgent or crisis situations, and the program asked that they reach out when a situation arises so they can coordinate services and ensure there is enough affordable housing for seniors in need.

MEMBER GALATI wondered if companies disclose information where seniors can go if they cannot afford their rent. MR. GRAY clarified the Care Coordination Program is the only program that helps seniors find housing if they can no longer afford their residence and provides that information if people call the program. He added that they have seen seniors move in as soon as six months and encouraged seniors to get on waiting lists. The Member suggested utility companies provide housing information as well.

CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON agreed with MR. GRAY about seniors getting on waiting lists and stressed the importance of being proactive. She said properties will go down their waiting list and if someone does not respond, they will continue down the list. She reported that Ovation is opening four new properties, with some coming in 2025.

7. Report by Board members regarding senior issues and events within their Council wards and at large – All Wards

Minutes:

Ward 1 – MEMBER GRAHAM reported that Art in the Park was held at Rainbow Family Park. She said the Rainbow Company Youth Theatre has upcoming productions, and the West Charleston Library has great things to take advantage of.

Ward 2 – MEMBER GALATI said a friend of his needed a new water heater and asked him to be there for the installation. He noticed that there were issues that made installation dangerous, so the house's water system had to be shut off. He attested that the well-known company tried to charge his friend \$13,800 for the installation, so MR. GALATI contacted a small company he knew of and they quoted \$1,000 total. He wondered how many independent seniors have encountered this. CHAIR O'REAR CAMERON added that anyone who encounters this should make the Contractor's Board aware so they have the information to expose fraudulent companies. She reported that non-profit organizations will also help expose scams in 2025.

Ward 2 – MEMBER WEINSTEIN HALL went to Art in the Park and visited the Veteran's Memorial Community Center. She reported that there were problems with holes and barriers in the street from the marathon that affected small businesses. She said it was a good time to start contacting the new Mayor and City Councilmembers for assistance. She concluded that her term would end by the end of the year and thanked her colleagues.

Ward 3 – MEMBER DRUMM attended the National Night Out for Ward 3 and encouraged seniors to join the Senior Luncheon on November 22nd from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the East Las Vegas Community Center.

Ward 4 – CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON reported that most of the phone calls she receives are about housing and utility issues. She was not aware of any bill drafts that were pertinent to seniors, but she encouraged seniors to point out any unknown fees in their rent to their Councilperson or legislator. She noticed a trend in online only payments and flat rates for water usage in apartments, which could cause hardship for seniors. She said she had the privilege to attend State site visits and said it was a great environment that made seniors comfortable to express any grievances they might have. The Chair added that there is a program that allows seniors to sit on court sessions with senior issues on the docket. Regarding safety and security concerns, she encouraged everyone to learn about the homeless problem and wanted those who are in city limits to call the City Care line. She reported that the Sun City Shredding event at Mountain Shadows Clubhouse would be on November 16th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and has a limit of five boxes or bundles per car. She said no walk-ups are allowed and volunteers will help unload cars. She encouraged any seniors who would like to showcase their talents or support other seniors to visit the Las Vegas Senior Idol Showcase on January 16th from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Charleston Heights Art Center.

Ward 5 – MEMBER LEE said the Doolittle Community Center brought a new exercise bike after he reported there were issues with the bike being too tall for some members.

Ward 6 – MEMBER PATTARETTU said 90 people were registered for the Centennial Hills Active Adult Center luncheon on November 13th, and they were looking for volunteers to serve. She added that they also had a successful document shredding event on November 2nd at the Centennial Hills YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) Senior Center.

8. **Discussion regarding topics for future agenda items.** Comments made during this portion of the agenda by individual members shall refer solely to proposals for future agenda items and any discussion shall be limited to whether or not such proposed items are within the purview of the Board and/or whether such proposed items shall be placed on a future agenda. No discussion regarding the substance of any such proposed topic shall occur and no action shall be taken.

Minutes:

CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON thanked all for making quorum to learn more and obtain information. She encouraged those who have presence on social media to share information to seniors and invite them to the meetings for public comment.

9. **Citizens Participation:** Public comment during this portion of the agenda must be limited to matters within the jurisdiction of the Board. No subject may be acted upon by the Board unless that subject is on the agenda and is scheduled for action. If you wish to be heard, come forward and give your name for the record. The amount of discussion on any single subject, as well as the amount of time any single speaker is allowed, may be limited.

Minutes:
None.

10. **Adjournment**


Minutes:
CHAIR O'REAR-CAMERON advised that the next Board meeting would be held on December 5, 2024.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Nick Crawford, Deputy City Clerk



Gregory Gray, Management Analyst I

THIS MEETING WAS PROPERLY NOTICED AND POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NOTICING STANDARDS AS OUTLINED IN NRS 241.020:

The City of Las Vegas website – www.lasvegasnevada.gov
The Nevada Public Notice website – notice.nv.gov
City Hall, 495 South Main Street, 1st Floor