

**Minutes**  
**Minnetonka Community Commission**  
**Meeting of September 28, 2009**

**1. Roll Call**

Commission members present: David Hakensen, Betty Johnson, Michael Kelly, Barb Westmoreland, Melissa Williamson-Herren

Commission members absent: Paul Ansolabehere, Eduardo Jimenez, Paul Kobs, Paul Thyren

Staff: Jacque Larson

Guests: Steve Pieh, Ron Timm, Lois King

Chair Hakensen called the meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

**2. Discussion Items**

**A. Senior Advisory Board Presentation**

Community Commission members introduced themselves to Senior Center Director Steve Pieh and to Senior Center Advisory Board Chair Ron Timm and member Lois King. Hakensen gave an overview of the commission's purpose and its recent projects.

Pieh reported to the group that about 4,000 people per year use the Minnetonka Senior Center, ranging in age from 50s to 102 years old. He explained their challenge is to provide engaging programming for three generations of users. He also showed the Senior Script, the center's publication that is mailed out ten times a year to residents 55 and older.

King talked about the senior center being a work in progress, and that they are always looking into what other senior centers are doing. She mentioned a successful community dance at Eisenhower that was co-hosted by Hopkins and Minnetonka community education. She also said the board is trying to visit different resources such as Minnetonka Heights senior housing, and has discussed visiting ICA.

Timm said the board's goal is to increase awareness of the center and to get younger retirees involved. He recently started a new friends social club, because he wanted to help people make friends. The first meeting was attended by 43 people.

Pieh explained their biggest challenge and opportunity is that Minnetonka continues to age as a community. Currently, two-thirds of households have no one under 18 living in the household. He

discussed the senior center's interactions with youth, and said he doesn't believe senior centers should be islands.

Williamson-Herren asked how the senior center responds to needs and how ideas emerged as programming. Pieh said often people suggest programming. King said things evolve, for example, the quilters group disbanded as fewer people were interested. Pieh said he has been with the center for a long time and has a great interest in the outdoors, so this senior center has more outside offerings than other senior centers.

Kelly asked if the senior center does any fundraising. Pieh said they host a food wagon at Cub Foods, hold a book sale and a pancake breakfast, and the senior garden club hosted a plant sale at the 2009 farmers' market. He said there are two types of groups at the center, community education classes where student fees cover the costs, and groups that meet with no teacher like the woodcarvers group.

Hakensen asked if they knew the number of the potential pool of seniors in the city. Pieh estimated between 7500 and 8000 in the city. Nationally, he said, only 5% of seniors visit their local senior center. King said the biggest challenge is transportation. Pieh explained the recent history of Dial-a-Ride in the community. He said the center is about connections and giving people a sense of purpose.

Hakensen asked if the center benchmarks against other programs. Pieh said he feels the center needs to take programs on the road and go to people more, and also needs to better serve populations who don't speak English.

Pieh, King and Timm left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

**B. Meeting Minutes: May 18, 2009**

Williamson-Herren moved, Kelly seconded, all voted to accept the minutes of May 18, 2009.

**C. Report from Commission Members**

Johnson reported she donated tomatoes from a community garden plot to ICA, and asked if there was a mechanism to donate food to ICA from the Minnetonka Farmers' Market. Larson reported that nearly a ton of produce was donated to ICA over the twelve weeks of the farmers' market, primarily donated by vendors.

**D. Neighborhood Initiative Update**

Nothing to report.

**E. Fire Department and City Open House**

- Photo Contest  
Commission members deliberated over 183 photos and chose a first, second and third-place winner, a judges' choice selection in each of three categories, and honorable mention photos. All photos were to be displayed at the Open House in October.
- Neighborhood Program Kit  
Larson will prepare a neighborhood brochure to be distributed at open house.

**F. Upcoming**

- Recruitment of new members  
Members were asked to send any potential members to the city for more information.

**G. Next meeting**

- October 26, 2009, 6:30 p.m., Shady Oak Room

**3. Adjourn**

Westmoreland moved, Williamson seconded the motion to adjourn.  
Meeting concluded at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacque Larson  
Community Relations Manager