

Montgomery Township Senior Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: January 8, 2014

Location: Montgomery Township Building, Community Room A

Present: Peg Azarian, Chairman, Pat Forbes, Helen Haag, Jeff McDonald, Marian Pinkerton, Richard Roller, Ralph Schurr, Jacqueline Volk, and Ginny Bailey.

Also present: Rick Lesniak, Montgomery Township Fire Service Director

Reorganization Meeting

Chairman Helen Haag called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Nominations for Chairman

The Committee voted unanimously to have Peg Azarian serve as the Chairman of the Senior Committee.

Nominations for Vice-Chairman

The Committee voted unanimously to have Marian Pinkerton serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Senior Committee.

The Reorganization Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Regular Meeting

Chairman Peg Azarian called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

The minutes of the November 13, 2013 meeting were approved as distributed.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Presentation by Rick Lesniak

Rick was the speaker at the November 21st Baby Boomers & Beyond event and, in addition to talking about fire safety during the holidays, mentioned having the Township Building available to residents during natural and man-made disasters. Helen Haag invited Rick to speak to the Senior Committee since volunteers would be necessary if the Township Building was used as a shelter.

Rick explained that the county has 3 evacuation shelters throughout the county but they are too far for our residents to get to, particularly during a storm like Hurricane Sandy. Also, it's been found that people are more likely to seek shelter if they can be with their friends or neighbors. Volunteers would be needed to open up the building, make coffee, sign people in and be of assistance. Due to space constraints and no shower facilities, the Township Building could not be used as a long-term/overnight shelter but the police and fire services have partners in place for people with special needs or disabilities. Other possibilities for temporary shelters would include Montgomery Elementary, Bridal Path Elementary, and Mary, Mother of the Redeemer.

The next steps would be to find out how many people would be interested and set up a meeting with the Red Cross who would explain the training and commitment necessary. Rick asked the Senior Committee to let Ginny know the names, phone numbers and email addresses of anyone interested in being a volunteer and Rick will check in to see how it's going and will set up the meeting with the Red Cross. Once established, information would be placed in the Community Guide, Township website, E-News, and TV station to make residents aware of the service.

Old Business:

Community Center Update

Ralph reported that the Township is keeping the budget in mind when picking out materials for the building. There will be a nice area in the front of the building to hold ceremonies and concerts and the building is expected to pay for itself. Groundbreaking will take place this spring and Jeff mentioned they were currently interviewing for a Director who is familiar with building and opening a community center.

PA House Bill 658

Ralph reported he had no new updates since November. The bill was passed by the State Senate and is currently being held up in the PA House Finance Committee. If the bill does not come out of committee soon, it will have to be re-introduced.

Report From the Recreation Office

Ginny reported that the programs for seniors such as Zumba Gold are off to a good start and there will be an AARP Driver Safety class and Refresher class in the spring. The Baby Boomers & Beyond speakers will be Chair Yoga with Laurie Robbins in January, someone from the Montgomery County Veterans Center in February and the movie, The Bucket List in March. Ginny asked for suggestions for bands for the Summer Concert Series.

New Business:

Montgomery 300th Anniversary House Tour

The Committee members who volunteered and took the tour congratulated Rich Roller on an extremely well run and planned event. Rich said the tour in 2014 will be held on Saturday, November 29 and have 5 stops including the Knapp House and Mary, Mother of the Redeemer rectory. The starting and ending point may be either the Township Building or the MMR rectory.

Plans and Events for 2014

Ginny said that after the successful Baby Boomers & Beyond program in December with holiday hors d'oeuvres, she has Kathy Wolper from Kitchen Wizards penciled in for the April 17th program. Ginny asked for ideas for the May and June Baby Boomers programs and the Committee decided the program would take June, July and August off due to the concert series. Suggestions for May included a Penn State Master Gardener to speak on herb gardens or someone from Wegman's to talk about nutrition.

RSVP

Helen discussed a brochure she picked up from RSVP that provides tutors for children who need help with Algebra. The tutoring sessions are held online through MyFreeTutor.org and uses volunteer tutors through RSVP. Programs like this may be part of the hold-up of HB 658 since it might be difficult to keep track of the volunteer hours since the program does not involve the schools.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Next meeting – Wednesday, March 12th at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by
Ginny Bailey