



DATE: 6 April 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 9

TO: Senior Commission
FROM: Candace Avina, Staff Liaison
SUBJECT: City of Los Altos Senior Program History

RECOMMENDATION:

Receive City of Los Altos Senior Program History

Background

The grand opening of a Senior Drop-In Center at the Hillview Park and Community Center was held in February 1977. At that time, the Center was staffed by volunteers and run by the Los Altos Community Senior Coordinating Council. In 1983, due to the rapid growth of the program, it separated from the parent organization (Los Altos Senior Coordinating Council) and became an independent entity known as Los Altos Senior Center, Inc. In 2002, operational responsibility was given to the City of Los Altos.

Programing Overview

Today, the City of Los Altos Senior Program offers a welcoming environment to meet the needs of adults age 50 and older. From a cup of coffee to meeting new friends, the Senior Program offers a variety of activities. The Senior Program at the Hillview Community Center and Park resides in three designated classrooms, with additional class use as needed. A one day per week drop-in program opened at Grant Park and Community Center in October 2014. This new site offers a variety of programming as an extension of the Hillview program. Approximately 50 people attend the Grant site each week.

The City's Senior Program has approximately 300 paid members. Senior Program membership is \$26.00 for Los Altos residents and \$40.00 for all others. Membership dues support senior programming and gives members access to members-only programming such as an equipment loan closet, computer tutoring, See's Candies certificates at a discounted rate, DVD loan library, 10 free black and white copies, DMV study packets and discounts on senior classes. Participants may attend either senior program location without being a member, but do not receive the benefits of membership nor can attend certain scheduled classes or activities.

Senior program participants can keep their bodies active by playing Pickle Ball, Bocce Ball, Ping Pong, Line Dancing, Shuffle Board, Tai Chi or the Wii entertainment system. The mind is kept active with various card games, Mah-Jongg, monthly speakers and an Artventures class. Social outings for participants include day and extended trips, themed Friday and Wednesday lunches and a



DATE: 6 April 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 9

AGENDA REPORT

Men's and Women's groups. Special interest classes include but are not limited to Yogalates, creative writing, needle arts, Genealogy, Hiking and foreign language instruction and are provided on site by the Mountain View-Los Altos Adult Education. Approximately 70 volunteers provide assistance with all aspects of the Senior Program. Information and referral resources are also available for housing, health insurance, case management, tax preparation and recycling of medications, eye glasses and batteries.

The Senior Commission and City staff has worked to foster relationships with local organizations and educational institutions that focus on the betterment of seniors. Some of these organizations include Center for Age Friendly Excellence, Garden House Seniors, Los Altos Legacies, Los Altos Library, Los Altos Rotary Partners in Elder Generation, Aging Services Collaborative, Santa Clara County Department of Aging, El Camino Hospital and Palo Alto Medical Foundation. San Francisco and San Jose State University, University of San Francisco and Foothill Junior College support our work by providing interns and resources. Several programs, special events, marketing of events and speakers have been co-sponsored with the above organizations.

Marketing and Outreach

The City markets its programming and services using a variety of media outlets. Senior Program staff author a bi-monthly newsletter called, *The Spotlight*. The bi-monthly newsletter includes details of the programming, services and resources that are available for the upcoming two-month period. Members of the public can pay \$5 to have six editions of *The Spotlight* mailed to their homes. The newsletter may also be found online at the City of Los Altos Senior Program web page or by picking up hard copies at the City of Los Altos City Hall and Recreation Department. Programs and special events are included in the calendar section of the Town Crier and special events and programming have articles written about them. Flyers are created and disseminated through email, mail, community bulletin board posting and Senior Program bulletin boards. The Senior Program may be found on Facebook as well as Twitter and the Constant Contact mass email system also sends out notices highlighting upcoming programming.

Senior Commission

On March 23, 2010, the Los Altos City Council approved a charter for a one-year pilot Senior Committee consisting of six members appointed by the Los Altos City Council and three members appointed by the Los Altos Hills Town Council with a minimum age requirement of 55 years. The first meeting of the Senior Committee took place on June 4, 2010. On April 26, 2011, the City Council approved the Senior Committee to become a permanent City Commission. At the City Council meeting of March 12, 2013 the City Council changed the membership of the Senior Commission from nine to seven members. There are currently five commissioners from the City of Los Altos and two commissioners from the Town of Los Altos Hills.



DATE: 6 April 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 9

AGENDA REPORT

With staff support, the Commission has made significant accomplishments, including...

2010/11

- *Took the lead on becoming an Age-friendly City.
- Created and Implemented Senior Questionnaire.
- Compiled basic resource book for seniors to assist seniors and/or their family members find supportive services. Topics covered are Transportation, Housing, Health Services, Food and Meal Programs, Education, and Social Participation (includes Volunteer Opportunities).
- Made recommendations to improve the Senior Lunch Program
- *Appoint Los Altos representative to Sourcewise Advisory Council (formerly known as Council on Aging Silicon Valley).
- Created a Scholarship Fund to help financially stressed seniors pay for Los Altos Senior Program services.

2012/13, 2013/14

- Compiled a research binder validating the importance of benches for seniors.
- Compiled information regarding the Valley Transportation Authorities most widely used routes and bus stops that do and do not have benches in Los Altos.
- Compiled a listing of resources identifying Age-friendly design elements for housing.
- *Collaborated with the Senior Center on a variety of educational programs including, Age-Well Drive Smart and a Medicare Changes and Update presentation.
- Suggested new avenues of informing the community of the existing Los Altos Emergency Preparedness Program.
- *Updated the Commission sponsored Resource Manual.
- *Share with appropriate city officials the results of our after-dark downtown grid lighting surveys.
- *Support marketing for senior resources and programming.
- *Increased publicity regarding Scholarship

2014/15

- Creation of a new Commission handbook.
- Made recommendations to the Civic Center Master Plan Committee

*Indicates goal in multiple year Work Plans

Age-friendly Los Altos

The City of Los Altos has earned the distinction of being a World Health Organization Age-friendly City. The World Health Organization Age-friendly City designation connects Los Altos/Los Altos Hills to a network of cities and communities that share a desire and commitment to promote healthy and active aging and a good quality of life for older residents. Age-friendly cities and communities use eight domains to identify and address barriers to the well-being and participation of older



DATE: 6 April 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 9

AGENDA REPORT

people. Commission and staff have given particular attention to five of those domains (Transportation, Aging in Place/Community, Updating of the Senior Center, Keeping Active—Mentally, Physically and Socially, and Emergency Preparedness). These domains were needs that were identified through the 2011 senior questionnaire. The questionnaire and five domains supported the creation of the Commissions annual work plan. Former Senior Commissioner Anabel Pelham and Senior Program Coordinator Candace Avina attended an Age-friendly Cities Conference in Quebec, Canada in 2013.

Attachments

- A. Memorandum, April 12, 2002 Los Altos Senior Center
- B. January/February 2015 Spotlight Bi-Monthly Newsletter
- C. Age-friendly Design Element
- D. Senior Commission First Year Quarterly Reports
 - a. August 24, 2010
 - b. December 14, 2010
 - c. March 22, 2011
 - d. July 26, 2011
- E. Senior Commission Work Plans
 - a. 2012.13
 - b. 2013.14
 - c. 2014.15

