

LAWRENCE DOUGLAS COUNTY ADVOCACY COUNCIL ON AGING

Independence Inc., 2001 Haskell Avenue, Lawrence, KS 6044

Minutes of February 21, 2017

Attending: Judy Bellome, Mary Johnson, Ellen Paulsen, Saunny, Brenda Nunez, Michele Dillon, Artie Shaw, Guest speaker: Tom Markus, Guest: Bobbie Walthal

Judy opened the meeting by introducing our speaker. Tom Markus, City Manager for Lawrence. He and his wife Debbie moved from Iowa where he had served as city manager for Iowa City, IA for the past 5 years. Originally from Minnesota, Tom mentioned that he likes working with a university town and the unique challenges that a diverse population provides.

- Tom provided the group with a copy of the City Strategic Plan as well as the Capital Improvement program. The city has not done a strategic plan for a long time.
- Because the current form of our city commission can be reactionary at time, Tom has reminded the commission that they cannot make decisions based on who shows up to demonstrate at the meeting.
- Social services have been the purview of the state and in the past few years, the responsibility to oversee social services has been passed to the city/county governments across the state. They have received the responsibility but no money to carry services out.
- To address the mental health and jail concerns, last year a team from Lawrence visited San Antonio, Tx to see their program in action. And last year, the city of Lawrence created a mental health squad to delve into this concern.
- Tom told the group that we are fortunate to have a great collaboration between Lawrence the city and Douglas the county. Communications are open and ongoing.
- He also pointed out that the city has 800 full time employees and a \$191 million budget with a capital improvement component.
- The mission of the city centers on the health, safety and welfare of the city citizens.
- Tom addressed the affordable housing topic. There has been some scattered site housing developed. He pointed out that the developers have not used the tax credit program to full advantage.

2 handouts – City Hall February 2017 and the city Strategic plan are attached to these minutes.

Updates – CARE Act – Judy told the group that the bill came out of committee on February 20th. She asked that we keep an eye on the legislation as it moves through the house and senate.

JAAA – Jocelyn will be retiring as director of JAAA after 40 years of service. She will be saying goodbye at the end of June 2017.

The next meeting will be March 21 at 11:30 for eat and greet so bring your lunch and visit.

– Guest Speaker Shannon Oury, Executive Director, Lawrence Housing Authority.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Johnson

Breakout groups:

Transportation – Brenda, MaryJ, Ellen, Dawn

Caregiving – Michele D, Tamara, Artie, Judy

Accessibility – Saunny, Nate

Affordable Housing – Tamara, Brenda, Dawn