

DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

July 13, 2023 - 12:00-1:00 PM

City Hall Back Conference Room, 1134 F Street

Attending: Mark Havens, Constance Vance, Jessica Grainger, Matt Ruth, Mike Feeney

Not Attending: Eric Peterson, Amy Brogan

Non-Members Attending: Mayor Dan Johnson, Nikki Province, Leah Burris

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- a. None.

III. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. CREATING TOMORROW: THE AGING OF THE VALLEY: Presentation by Commissioner Mark Havens on the Lewis Clark Valley aging population - Presentation

Mr. Havens states Interlink, his organization, digests data from the US census. Mr. Havens provides handouts on Nez Perce and Asotin County population pyramids. Washington and Oregon are more of a pyramid shape, the US in general is more of a silo, but Asotin County is a “sombrero” pyramid. There is a large population of 60-64 year olds. Mr. Havens states this displays that a lot of retirees are relocating to Asotin County. Nez Perce County has a much larger population of females at 85 years and older and more at that age in general than Asotin County. Mr. Havens also states the Valley is old and getting older. Mr. Havens provides another handout graph demonstrating students vs. seniors in Nez Perce and Asotin Counties. Over a 30year period of time, the number of students has slightly decreased but the number of seniors as grown significantly. The increase in the senior population coincides with baby boomer retirement rates. Interlink is estimating an increase of 8,000 seniors over the next 20 years, bringing the total to about 21,000 seniors by 2040. Mr. Havens shares a draft of a report that was prepared for community leaders. The percentage of the population over age 65 is 20.1% which is higher than the United States as a whole. If the region wanted to keep that number constant rather than increase, the population of the Valley would have to be 106,000. It is unlikely the Valley’s populate can increase that much in the next 20 years. The median age in the Valley is increasing more quickly than the rest of the country. The Valley’s age demographic is very similar to Florida. Interlink researched age demographics for every metropolitan area in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, and none had a population as old as the Lewis Clark Valley. Mr. Havens also states the current population of 45-65 year olds will probably retire and stay in the area rather than move away. There is a large population of 50-70 year olds selling their homes in Western Washington, Oregon, California, etc. and moving to the Valley. This area has a lower cost of living, low crime, beautiful weather, recreational activities, and healthcare services which is attractive to older populations. Mr. Havens discusses what all of this

means. He states the Lewis Clark Valley is headed into an age of “more.” For example, more retirees with time, more retirees with money, more elders using the internet, etc. Our community needs to be prepared to increase services seniors need. COVID accelerated baby boomer retirements, which created a major labor force shortage. This region is never going to grow its way out of the increase in the aging population. The goal should instead be focused on keeping this aging population healthier longer and working longer. This aging population could overwhelm the healthcare system in the Valley. Mr. Ruth states he has witnessed this over the last 10 years of his career. Mr. Havens states Interlink has tried to find a “peer” community with similar demographics and has not been able to find one. If they could, they could analyze how these other areas are facing these challenges. Mr. Havens states the focus of their quarterly meetings has been on health and how they keep that aging community healthy. He anticipates two reports going to City Council. One would be the data report and the second would be about health initiatives. Mr. Feeney asks Mr. Havens about getting this information out to states. Mr. Havens states he has been in contact with state representatives from Washington and Idaho but does not expect any initiatives to come out of Olympia or Boise. Mr. Havens states some of the obstacles they are running into is people not believing their data, not believing that they will be effected personally, or not believing they can do anything about it. Mr. Havens also discusses the challenges of getting information to the older populations and encourages everyone to ask the older people they know where they get their information. He also adds that our region’s seniors are below the poverty line at lower rates compared to the rest of the country. Mr. Havens wraps up by providing a flyer for a senior summit meeting occurring August 2, 2023

IV. ACTIVE AGENDA

- a. None.

V. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- a. Nikki shares some of the topics discussed for next meetings were transportation and/or Coast Transportation, and the legal department discussing ADA and City services. Mr. Feeney suggests having a speaker in the healthcare community come speak about what Mr. Havens just presented on. Mr. Havens states someone from the North Central District Health Department may be able to attend a meeting.

VI. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- a. Comments should not be related to an item currently before the Commission or an item that may come before the Commission in the foreseeable future, and should be limited to comments, not discussion.

VII. STAFF LIASON COMMENTS

- a. None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

- a. Mr. Ruth motions to adjourn and Mr. Havens seconds the motion. The meeting is adjourned at 1:08pm.