

**Royal Oak Aging in Place Task Force
Community and Health Services Working Group
May 4, 2022
Meeting minutes**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

Present: Becca Cheezum, Danielle Lupcke, Sue Schuldies, Teresa Bitti, Katie Wendel, Bob Larkins

Guest speakers: Angela Halverson (Gleaners), Peter Cherry (YMCA)

2. Approval of minutes from April 13.

Minutes from 4/13 meeting were approved.

3. Reminder of envision statements:

We envision a Royal Oak that promotes a successful, healthy, and meaningful life by acknowledging the diverse health related needs of residents in the Royal Oak community. We envision a Royal Oak that provides access to community resources, tools for a healthy lifestyle, and support for individuals aging in place.

4. Physical activity discussion

Guest speaker: Peter Cherry, Members Experience Director, South Oakland County YMCA

Peter Cherry - challenges that residents deal with - parking challenge, and accessibility. The Y crosses the gap of accessibility. We have parking for seniors and differently abled members. We bridge some of those gaps due to parking

Build community around physical and mental health. Covid has been challenging especially for our aging population; it has been difficult to reconnect. It's a virtual world, but this is not always user-friendly. Older population needs face to face contact. YMCAs offer coffee throughout the day. Huge on physical fitness and physical wellbeing. We offer programs- 33 hours of group exercise classes, Monday-Saturday, attended by any member at no cost. There are some classes that I recommend (yoga, chair yoga, water classes). Boot camps - he teaches Friday class - he has people 20-75 in the boot camp. Instructors can adapt movements to make them accessible to the population. The Silver Sneakers chair yoga classes are most popular classes.

Right now only offer minimal Silver Sneakers program, but starting in fall, there will be a classics class and strength-based classes. These were designed specifically for our insurance-based members, but anyone can participate. The entire membership is covered by some Medicare and Medicaid. Silver Sneakers members - they can use the full facility and all services offered members. The pool is accessible by handicap chair lift. There are a few members that don't qualify for Silver Sneakers, but they have an age-based discount that reduces the price by 10%. They can access any YMCA in the association (there are 7 of them). They offer the same things roughly at each branch. Handicap accessible

Bob Larkins would like to see firefighters/paramedics refer people. Who do they talk to? That is Peter: 248-733-5602 or he can be reached through general YMCA number.

Do you have any connection with the Royal Oak senior center? Not that he knows of.

Sue S. always heard a lot of good things about the pool program at the YMCA. Transportation can be a problem. Peter shared that usually the SMART bus is what people use to get there.

Becca: Can you talk about the renovation? Peter - It started in September and was completed in February. New Child watch, new exercise studio, new windows, new flooring, new gym floor, some of our space upstairs was improved to be more accessible, and had the elevator redone. Wanted to make the branch as friendly to all as possible.

They do complimentary orientations for new members.

5. Food security discussion

Guest speaker: Angela Halverson, Director of Donor Engagement, Gleaners

Angela Halverson - Been in Royal Oak 2013, chose this community when they were looking for a place to raise their family.

Director of Donor Engagement - address food insecurity in SE Michigan is their purpose. Difficult to get Royal Oak-specific data. Food insecurity is a big issue in Michigan. Seniors have choices to make: houses, utilities, medication, food. Sometimes they may forgo food to pay the other bills. Seniors with disability have higher rates of food insecurity than those who are not disabled. Grandparents who are forgoing food because they want their grandkids to have the food. This was exasperated when kids were home during Covid. SNAP has been consistent in its application with the covid-increased benefits. This provides an additional \$95 per month (Covid emergency dollars). That amount was based on pre-inflation rates, but now this does not go as far with groceries.

Some resources that Gleaners has that they can help: Pantrynet.org - you can get to it on their website. You can plug in your zip code and find out about food pantries nearby. This website will have more details about who can go.

211 - (conjunction with United Way) - you can call this and they can link you with the resources you need.

Double-up food bucks location. If a senior has a Bridge Card, they can double the value. The closest place that accepts this is on 9-mile. There are no double-up food bucks locations in Royal Oak.

Mobile food groceries - trucks. There is one that comes on Thursdays at Royal Oak Manor.

Detroit Area Agency on Aging can provide assistance.

Gleaners has Cooking Matters classes - free nutrition and cooking programs

Bob Larkins - they see a lot of folks who have the food but are unable to prepare it. Do any give prepared food? Angela - No, not prepared food.

Katie W shared that someone over 60 and homebound, they can qualify for Meals on Wheels.

Gleaners has drive-through distributions where they put a box in the car, but these are not prepared. It is to prepare a meal.

6. Setting goals

Some ideas for goals:

A lot of these ideas take money. For example, the pool, but we don't have one, but then I learn the YMCA has one.

Becca urged the group not to let funding issues stifle creativity, but to consider goals that seem pie in the sky and then we can think about incremental ways to get there.

Sue S - Seniors can get a card (Gold Card) from the school district and can go to games and events for free. She thinks you can use the pool for free. She will check if she is right.

Teresa - she's looking at these wonderful resources all over Royal Oak. There's a lot to assist seniors. Are they going to invest in a senior coordinator that can keep this information up to date?

Pool together all the resources and communicate it electronically and hard copy. Seek funds (perhaps through intern) to support communication. Need a person to maintain all the resources. Try to locate some of those resources more centrally in Royal Oak, e.g., double bucks - get a Royal Oak store on board with that. Move that a little closer.

Improving accessibility to the health and engagement resources (transportation, parking). Aging well resource center- just used an office in the library. They were the coordinator of the entire city to make sure all the resources. One central person.

Lansing - public and private partnerships- such as Henry Ford, the YMCA.

The OPC - Senior Millage in the community pays for it.

The working group recommends that the city consider a senior millage -

Senior Wellness Center

The Senior Center - or a comprehensive community center - mix the age groups

Troy is a community center for all ages with a senior center within it, meal program for senior services, senior dining program. This could be a model.

Partnership with Royal Oak Schools or young people to offer support to seniors, such as staffing the ROSES program or perhaps support for caregivers.

Point person for healthy aging - update resources, connecting at the senior center. Then they can move over to a comprehensive community center.

Salter Center does a lot of activities for seniors during the day. Bob is going to check to see if they would have info to share with us at the next meeting.

A place involved and access to health-related engagement activities. Having a place. Rotating community locations - they are present at the library, senior center, senior housing.

Time - we don't always know how resources work for people. Hopefully the resource person over time could identify gaps or challenges with the resources that are out there.

The task force will offer joint meetings for the working groups so they can hear what the other groups have been doing. This will likely be mid-June.

7. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this meeting.

8. Next meeting

Next meeting – May 25th – will be the last meeting. We are almost done with the work. This will be to wrap up our recommendations. Becca will send out draft recommendations to the working group in advance of our final meeting.

9. Meeting adjourned