

City of Birmingham
Regular Meeting of the Ad Hoc Aging in Place Committee
August 30, 2023

Conference Room 202

151 Martin Street, Birmingham, Michigan

Draft minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham's Ad Hoc Aging in Place Committee held on August 30, 2023.

1. **Call to Order:** Staff Liaison ACM Clemence convened the meeting at 4:04 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Leslie Pielack, Cris Braun, Rebekah Craft, Rackeline Hoff, Rosemary O'Malley, Pam DeWeese

Absent: Melissa Mark

Guests: None

3. Chairperson and Vice Chairperson Elections:

Staff Liaison ACM Clemence asked for nominations for the position of Chairperson. CM Braun nominated CM Hoff. No other nominations received.

Motion by CM Braun to nominate CM Hoff as Chairperson. Motion was seconded by CM Pielack. Voice Vote:

Yeas: Braun, Pielack, Craft, Hoff, O'Malley, DeWeese

Nays: None

Staff Liaison ACM Clemence asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chairperson. CM DeWeese nominated CM Braun. No other nominations received.

Motion by CM DeWeese to nominate CM Braun as Vice Chairperson. Seconded by CM O'Malley. Voice Vote:

Yeas: Pielack, Braun, Hoff, O'Malley, DeWeese, Craft

Nays: None

4. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Ad Hoc Aging in Place Committee of July 26, 2023:

Motion by CM Hoff to approve the minutes of the July 26, 2023 meeting as is. Motion seconded by CM O'Malley. Voice Vote:

Yeas: Hoff, DeWeese, Pielak, O'Malley, Craft, Braun

Nays: None

5. **Speaker: Cris Braun - Executive Director of Next**

Ms. Braun used a power point presentation to guide her presentation to the committee. Ms. Braun explained that the purpose of Next was to be a welcoming place that enriches the lives of our community. Ms. Braun stated that Next developed a strategic plan in 2016 and that no changes have occurred to that place since then.

- A. Ms. Braun emphasized that Next is an integral part of the community and enjoys solid partnerships with other community based organizations such as the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Association, the Birmingham Public Library and the Birmingham Public Schools. Ms. Braun stated that Next takes pride in being the community based organization that when someone needs something, Next is the “go-to” organization to get that something done.
- B. Next has been a part of the community for the past 45 years, has a membership of 2300 seniors and has approximately 1500 people visiting the center each week. Ms. Braun believes that this membership increase and weekly attendance boost are a testament to Next’s quality programming, staff and support services. Today’s older persons are more active than ever before, both physically and mentally and possess a higher level of education. Next has continued to evolve to meet the community profile and has adapted their operation/programming to that end. Ms. Braun explained that Next focuses on what they can do rather than what they can’t do or don’t have. The focus is on programming: approximately 230 offerings a month (70 to 120 people attend per night for special guest speakers), their partnership with Henry Ford Health, the creation and maintenance of a “safe, warm” space for people to gather and socialize (in-house café), their own library four walls of up to date books), outdoor fit park, computer lab and wall displays of member art.
- C. Ms. Braun explained that one of the key components to Next is their support services department. Ms. Braun feels that assisting those in need is the crux of any community and that despite their small staff, they accomplish a great deal, including: Meals on Wheels, transportation services (three SMART buses), medical equipment sharing, yard maintenance and snow shoveling (Community Development Block Grant or CDGB funds donated by municipalities), minor home repairs (includes interest free loans depending on financial eligibility for major home repair issues).

CM O’Malley asked about the home loan program and how it is funded. CM Hoff stated that a fund was established by the former “Foundation for Birmingham Senior Residents” utilizing funds secured by the City from a prior development project (Palladium). The program allows Next to distribute funds (interest free loans) for a major home repair project for income qualified individuals. CM Hoff stated that the funds were turned over to Next because the Senior Foundation did not have enough applicants that could qualify for the loans. CM Pielack asked if the Senior Foundation acted like an endowment. Ms. Braun stated that there was a one-time distribution of funds to the foundation. CM Hoff stated that no new monies have been added to that amount since Next received the funds from the Senior Foundation.

- Ms. Braun emphasized the importance of Next's support services department, stating that serving the community's most vulnerable residents is a critical mission and that there are more vulnerable people in our community than most people think.
- D. Finally, Ms. Braun stated that Next is a 501(c)(3) organization and receives only about 16% of their operational funding from municipal sources. Next receives an "in-kind" contribution of using the space at Midvale school and all utilities from the Birmingham Public Schools. The rest of the budget comes from a variety of sources such as programs fees, grants, sponsors, membership fees and donations.
 - E. Ms. Braun stated that Next is looking for a "sustainable and predictable" future and that she is excited about the YMCA building recently purchased by the City and that Next will be working on the November senior millage ballot proposal.

In response to questions from AIPC members, Ms. Braun provided the following information:

- A. CM Pielack asked if Next had any programming to assist members looking for part-time employment. Ms. Braun stated that they do not and that Next is not a career readiness program provider. CM Pielack asked if Next knew of any other resource a member could use for employment assistance. Ms. Braun stated that she believes that the Jewish Vocational Center would probably be the best resource. CM O'Malley weighed in and stated that Birmingham Adult Education may be a resource as well. CM Pielack asked if there was a need for part-time employment assistance. Ms. Braun stated that she was unsure, but that it could certainly be an issue to be examined moving forward.
- B. CM O'Malley stated that she was impressed with the services and programs offered by Next. CM O'Malley stated that at the recent Parks and Recreation Master Plan meeting attended by some of the AIPC members, the hostess mentioned a "block ambassador" program in Huntington Woods. CM O'Malley thought this program deserved some consideration as a possible program for the City moving forward. Staff Liaison ACM Clemence stated that he would contact Huntington Woods and get some information on the program and how it works and is administered for the AIPC.
- C. CM DeWeese asked how Next connects with other senior centers. Ms. Braun stated that Next has a good working rapport with surrounding senior centers and has developed contacts throughout the area to assist seniors. Ms. Braun stated that tours are sometimes conducted and connections are made between senior center staff members.
- D. CM Pielack inquired if there were any financial issues with senior centers. Ms. Braun stated that affordability is an issue. The level of care needed by a senior is the "tipping point" as it relates to the level of affordability. CM Hoff interjected that she had heard that the Baldwin House was no longer serving meals and that the cost associated with living at the Baldwin House is rising. CM O'Malley stated that the problem is twofold, there is a need for "interim" housing for active seniors wanting to age in their community in a place that is safe, accessible and affordable. The second is a place where when needed, more advanced care is available that is also

affordable. Ms. Braun agreed and reiterated that the more advanced the care needed, the cost is much higher.

- E. CM Pielack stated that she wanted to make a comment about the Next survey. CM Pielack stated that in reviewing the comments made by Next members, it underscores the importance of the staff and their level of customer service as it relates to how important human contact is for people. Ms. Braun thanked CM Pielack for the comment and stated that Next strives to be a welcoming place and that it begins right in their lobby. CM Hoff stated that Next's lobby area is usually busy and in use.

6. **Open to the Public for Items Not on the Agenda:** None

7. **Miscellaneous Communications:**

- A. All communications attached to meeting agenda packet
- B. Staff Liaison ACM Clemence went over each attachment in the meeting agenda packet and pointed out key demographic and existing trends information for consideration by the AIPC.

8. **Announcements:**

- A. That the September 27, 2023 regular meeting of the AIPC will feature a presentation by the City's Planning Department and Building Department concerning zoning and the 2040 Master Plan integration.
- B. That an additional meeting was added to the calendar for the AIPC on October 11, 2023 for a discussion of information to be used in the development of the survey to be distributed to the public. Further, that Staff Liaison ACM Clemence will author the survey based on the criteria established by the AIPC.
- C. That on the October 25, 2023 regular meeting of the AIPC, Staff Liaison ACM Clemence will present the survey for review and edit by the AIPC.

9. **Adjournment:** With no further business being evident, CM Hoff made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:02 p.m. Seconded by CM Pielack.