

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE OLDER ADULT NEEDS COMMITTEE
CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2023, AT 5:30 P.M.**

Member Casey called the meeting to order at 5:32 P.M.

ROLL CALL: **PRESENT:** Council Member Casey, Council Member Smith, Council Member Thomas, Kathy Crawford, Kim Nice, Debbie Wrobel*
ABSENT: Jay Dooley

*Member Wrobel arrived after roll call was taken

ALSO PRESENT: Jeff Muck, PRCS Director; Kit Kieser, OAS Manager

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

OAN 23-10-35 Moved by Thomas, seconded by Smith; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

To approve the Agenda.

Voice vote on OAN 23-10-35 Yeas: Casey, Smith, Thomas, Crawford, Nice, Wrobel
Nays: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

OAN 23-10-36 Moved by Smith, seconded by Thomas; CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

To approve the September 25, 2023, meeting minutes.

Voice vote on OAN 23-10-36 Yeas: Casey, Smith, Thomas, Crawford, Nice, Wrobel
Nays: None

REMARKS FROM THE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON: None

MATTERS FOR COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

1. Focus Group Facilitator Presentation

The Committee began with a quick round of introductions to its guest.

Scott Adler, founding partner of Insight Strategies, LLC spoke to the committee on his findings during the focus groups. In total, 41 residents participated in 4 groups broken down into age brackets. Of those participants, 88% had used Novi services before. The small groups met for a 90-minute open discussion. All age groups later combined for another hour session and were involved in a conversation guided by questions drawn from the previous focus groups. An interactive audience response system was used to track responses.

Scott described the main goals of the focus group process. These included:

- An improved understanding of:
 - What resident seniors (50+) say they need in terms of services and activities
 - What resident seniors expect regarding how those needs are addressed, including the role the City of Novi should play in meeting those needs.
- An initial definition of “senior center”
- An improved understanding of whether a “senior center” as defined by the participants is something seniors would utilize.

His key findings were:

- Participants are generally pleased with Novi’s Older Adult Service offerings, although there is also a general belief that Novi is playing “catch up” with surrounding communities.
 - There was strong support for the services currently offered
 - There was general satisfaction with the quality of the services offered
 - 47% felt that Novi’s older adult services is playing catch up with other surrounding communities
 - When discussing what was missing, the groups identified:
 1. No single location
 2. No pool
 3. No performing arts center
- A single location community center is needed.
 - 72% said it was very or somewhat important to be renovated space rather than new construction.
 - It was deemed essential that the center focus on the needs of seniors, but that it be considered a “community center” and not a “senior center”. 68% felt the single location could be for all ages, but it was essential that time for seniors was carved out.
 - The services/programs/activities that should be in the community center, included:
 - Enrichment activities (arts and concerts)
 - Physical fitness (pickle ball, chair volleyball, Zumba)
 - Social programs/opportunities (trips, cards, coffee shop)
 - Support programs (meals on wheels, transportation)
 - Mindfulness (yoga, Thai Chi)
 - Age-appropriate exercise (warm water pool, exercise room)
 - Available for rentals (birthday parties, retirement parties)
- A central location that creates/provides the opportunity for a sense of community is vital.
 - 50% felt more drop-in opportunities were the main element missing from Novi’s older adult offerings.

- Participants said they'd like to be able to stop by and see what's offered without having to register for all programs.
- There was a desire to have the ability to buy a single session rather than an entire series.
- A warm pool for exercise is missing from the available services for seniors.
 - There were three criteria required for the pool to be successfully utilized:
 1. The water temperature needs to be warm enough.
 2. There needs to be enough options throughout the day for seniors to access the pool.
 3. Children would not have access to the pool during senior times.
- Participants said they understand that this new programming isn't free and expressed willingness to pay for it.
 - Participants recognized the need to create a community center that would at least cover its costs each year.
 - Participants expressed a willingness to fund the community center.
 - 53% said a small millage was appropriate.
 - 30% said a monthly fee for some services or an increase in the individual classes or services was appropriate.
 - "We have to look at this for other generations that will benefit when they get older as well, not just this senior generation."

He left the committee with three final thoughts:

- Communicating what is offered is key.
 - Participants talked about how they struggled to stay "in the know".
- Participants said they appreciated being included in the focus groups.
 - 91% strongly or somewhat agreed that Novi wanted to hear what they had to say on these topics.
- The development of a single location should occur through renovating current space rather than new construction.

2. **Collaborate on Council Presentation**

The Committee finished the meeting by reviewing the slides and materials to be presented to City Council at the following meeting on 10/9.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 P.M.