

MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 25, 2024 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Cranberry Creek Clubhouse.

There was a Flag salute and a moment of silence for our military and world peace.

Roll call was taken. Board members in attendance were: Ken Miller, Chairman, Linda Cicco, Nancy Cotter, Diane Coyle, Richard Dutton, Rosemarie Martelli, Donna O'Brien and Lisa Stevens. Township Committee Liaisons Ray Gormley and Dan Maxwell were also in attendance.

The first speaker was Chief James Hawkins of the Little Egg Harbor ("LEH") Police Department. He reported that the Department was recently re-accredited by the New Jersey Chiefs of Police after having previously been accredited in 2018 and 2021, and that it was one of only 12% of Police Departments in the State to have been re-accredited twice. Obtaining accreditation is a detailed process and involves documenting performance in the areas of policies, procedures and practices. He also reported that the Department is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year, 1974 having been the first full year it was in existence, and that the LEH Citizens on Patrol is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year. In response to questions from the audience, he said that squatters in a house in Sunrise Bay have been evicted, and that there are still some homeless individuals in town. Finally, he encouraged residents to feel free to call his Department about any matters that concern them, even ones that may seem minor, and that residents can call the Department's non-emergency number, 609-296-3666 x100, as an alternative to calling the emergency number, 911.

The next speaker was Anne Markel-Crozier, the Director of Elder Law Coordination for Bratton Estate and Elder Care Attorneys. She reviewed the ways in which her firm provides assistance to seniors, the various documents it prepares, and some of the considerations involved in preparing them. She noted, for example, that New Jersey is one of only four states that does not have a law authorizing one's next of kin to make health care decisions on one's behalf and that it is accordingly important to have a health care power of attorney authorizing an agent to make such decisions and to discuss one's wishes with the agent. Such a document should not be put in a safe deposit box or other inaccessible place and the agent should know where it is located. She then said that her firm also assists with asset protection, which may involve planning to become eligible for Medicaid, and that Medicaid has a five-year lookback period so that it is important to keep records and receipts to be able to prove that one has not made gifts of property to relatives or friends to reduce one's assets and hasten Medicaid eligibility. Also, she said, one should think about one's funeral wishes and consider appointing a "funeral representative" to carry out those wishes and communicate with the funeral home one chooses. She further added that the Executor named in one's Will must have the original Will to file at the Surrogate's Office in Toms River following one's death; that the Will should be a "self-proving" one, that is, executed in such a way that it will not be necessary to contact the witnesses following one's death to ascertain that all statutory requirements were met; that in addition to a health care power of attorney one should have a general power of attorney that authorizes one's agent to take broad actions in financial and similar matters; and that trusts may be created for a number of purposes in addition to asset protection, including trusts that provide funds to care for "special needs" individuals in such a way as not to affect government benefits the individuals would otherwise receive. She said that her firm also does health care advocacy and can assist with the placement of individuals in facilities if needed. The firm has six offices, the nearest of which is in Linwood, with others in Neptune and Cherry Hill, and its normal "consult fee" for an initial one-and-one-half hour visit is \$300.

Board Chair Ken Miller then reviewed some of the rules for recycling, noting especially that "no plastic bags or food items, period" can be included in recycling bins. He further announced that there will be a free "educational breakfast" on December 3 from 9:30 to 11:30 A.M. at the Terraces at Seacrest including a presentation titled "Taking Control of End of Life Care: POLST [Practitioner Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment] and Advance Directives".

There will be no Senior Advisory Board meeting in December. The next meeting of the Senior Advisory Board will be on January 27, 2025 at 10:00 A.M. at the Harbor Bay Clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Dutton, Acting Secretary, LEH Senior Citizens' Advisory Board