CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTER
Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Alderperson Chris Able, Mary Balte, Grace Brandl, Janet Breuer, Pat Chermak, Linda Hunter, June Kramer, Tony Mack, Joanne Vogds

Guest(s): Sue Sippel, Ralph Kramer

Excused: Mayor Justin Nickels

Minutes: Submitted by Linda Hunter

I. Meeting called to order at 4:03pm

II. City Update from Alderperson Chris Able
   a. The Penney’s mall would be dismantled by December and then the land sold.
   b. The Manitowoc Farmer’s Market will begin another season shortly.

III. Guest Speaker – Sue Sippel, Executive Director of the Domestic Violence Center
    a. The first shelter, a small house, was established in 1980 on the grounds of the Manitowoc Company.
    b. In 1988 the shelter on South 22nd Street was purchased. This property was a former convent and had nine bedrooms. This location soon became seriously overcrowded creating the need for a larger facility which will now be open mid-July 2015.
    c. Several societal changes caused an increase in the need. Mandatory arrest was passed by the legislature. Domestic abuse was recognized as a crime. The O.J. Simpson trial in 1996 also raised awareness of domestic abuse, and it caused a demand for services from all income levels.
    d. Transitional housing began in that period. The Domestic Violence Center owns a facility for that, but it requires knowledge of landlord issues, and they will eventually sell it. It is difficult to maintain. There is a two-year limit to living there, and case management comes with the option to use it.
    e. Since 2008, families had to use the living room or library almost every night. Sue Sippel documented the crowded conditions. The winter of 2013-2014 required an expense of $10,000 to house those who couldn’t be housed in the shelter. Stays of individuals average 40 days, rather than 10. More services are offered. They serve about 500 people a year, 350 of those are abuse situations. Only about half stay at the shelter, there are 85 families. Those who use these services are coming from more dangerous circumstances.
    f. In this new building administration is separated from housing for safety and confidentiality purposes. Each room also has a bathroom. Men are occasionally housed, but they are usually sent to a hotel. The tour was very interesting. We were invited to the Open House toward the end of June 2015.

IV. Next meeting will be Tuesday, 09.01.15, beginning at 4:00pm at City Hall, 900 Quay Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

V. Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm