

Aspire Johnson County

Large group meeting

Greenwood Community School Administration Building, Greenwood

May 24, 2017

Welcome

Kent DeKoninck. Round robin was held.

Cindy Cook welcomed from our meeting sponsor, Financial Center First Credit Union.

Johnson County Senior Resources

Dana Monson introduced Kim Smith from the Johnson County Senior Services and Karen Hibbitt-Brandon from Leadership Johnson County, Class of 2017.

Kim began with statistics on senior care in the United States. One of the current issues affecting the county is that financial scams are increasing. Many people call seniors and claim to be a relative in trouble or the IRS and they must go to Best buy for get gift cards and provide them the numbers. Many others are scammed through home maintenance and friendships on the internet. More attention to our seniors are needed in terms of noticing financial oddities and health care. Many seniors don't eat properly or keep their homes in a safe condition. It truly takes the entire community to notice and become advocates for our senior neighbors and relatives.

Another issue is abuse by caregivers. Often these are family members who may be stressed by the care and need assistance themselves. Others are paid caregivers and family members who are doing the care for financial reasons only and do not care.

Johnson County has the second highest senior population in the region and has a large number of quality senior care facilities.

Karen gave an overview of the LJC class of 2017 in which her team decided on creating a senior resource care website. They partnered with Aspire and created the Sources for Seniors in Johnson County website, that is on the Aspire website. The team will meet annually to review the site to make sure the information is current and the locations are still reputable. There is information on financial scams and how to get help if you have been scammed. Over 50% of seniors nationally regularly use technology themselves and others have their families who use these resources.

Food resources are another important topic. Many seniors are on a fixed income and as food prices rise, they have less money to pay for food. Many then do not eat healthy or enough food which leads to further health problems. There are a number of local churches and organizations that do provide hot meals for seniors and other senior food pantries, generally available Monday through Friday. One issue with this is transportation. Many seniors no longer drive and depend on others to take them or bring the food. In Johnson County, only Johnson County Senior Services brings food to seniors.

Transportation is the biggest challenge for seniors. Many no longer are able to drive and cannot walk to a curb to be picked up by public transportation. Access Johnson County is available as well as senior services to get seniors to locations such as the bank, grocery, doctor, library etc. This limits them socially

as well as affecting their health. JC Senior services provided 13,000 rides in 2016. Due to budget constraints, many organizations can no longer take on non-medical trips. JC senior services is the only agency still committed to providing these types of trips.

Home health is a growing area that enables seniors to live longer in their own homes. However, these types of services are threatened with budget cuts due to changes in health insurance. Often insurance will only pay for half of the durable medical equipment such as a walker. They often pay only for one item per year, so if they get a walker in the beginning of the year, then later in the year need a wheelchair, they have to pay the full price for the chair.

Placemaking update: activity book work is continuing on-schedule to have ready to distribute to third grade this coming school year. Lemonade day visits with Clark elementary and JC library home school groups. Rained on Lemonade day so participation was down.

Growth and planning: trails works continuing. Good participation at April 25 active living workshop in Whiteland. Next planning meeting for trails will be June 14 with a county wide group. Partnering with the Franklin Chamber for QuickBooks workshop.

Talent: job fair brought out two needs, one for a boot camp for older adults who need jobs since theirs has gone away or downsized, automated etc. They don't know how to interview or transfer skills to a new career. Other opportunity is for high school students who have graduated, but have no plans for the future. Help them devise a plan. Work ethic certification scheduled to begin in Central 9 this fall. New co-chair is Allison Naum.