



WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL
Held Wednesday, January 21, 2004
For the purpose of receiving a briefing on the Needs Assessment Study
completed by Sukol Communications

Mayor Davis called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. It was held in the Multipurpose Room of the Community Center.

PRESENT were Mayor Judith Davis, Mayor pro tem Rodney Roberts, and Councilmembers Konrad Herling, Leta Mach and Edward Putens.

ALSO PRESENT were David Moran, Christal Batey and Michael McLaughlin, City staff; Todd Sukol, Kathy Lambird and Lauren Shimmerlik, Sukol Communications; Julia Eichhorst and Gretchen Overdurff, Greenbelt Homes, Inc.; and many others.

Mayor Davis noted the purpose of the meeting was to receive a briefing on the Needs Assessment study recently completed by Sukol Communications. The study is to provide information to guide the City's Assistance in Living program.

Mr. Sukol made a presentation on the study, including its methodology and findings. The study uncovered five top-line areas of interest in the survey: transportation, healthcare, home safety/home maintenance, information, and finances. Regarding transportation, it was noted that seniors were generally aware of available public transit, the Greenbelt Connection and the assistance offered through the Greenbelt Intergenerational Volunteer Exchange Service (GIVES) but believe more transportation is needed. Another key finding was that seniors want to try to remain in their homes but need more information about home healthcare services. Similar findings were apparent regarding home safety and maintenance. There is a desire to have access to reliable contractors.

On the issue of information, it was expressed there is a need to get more information about what services are available to seniors. Mr. Sukol noted that while Greenbelt seniors say they want more information, there is also an indication that they know to contact the City's Community Resource Advocate for information. He added that it is key for information to be available from individuals who are identified as resources, since people often do not retain information themselves until they are in need of it.

Regarding finances, Greenbelt seniors generally have good financial status, but they are very concerned about the costs of medical service and prescriptions. Ms. Batey noted that the cost of prescriptions was the top issue for people who contacted her. On the good news side, she added that very often there are programs that can assist seniors.

It was noted that the next steps will include review by the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, helping to plan the future of the Assistance in Living program, and setting the City's fiscal year 2005 and future budgets.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael McLaughlin
City Manager