



COMMISSION ON SENIORS RESOLUTION

Resolution Number: 20210310-04B:

Establishing an Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group

WHEREAS, on February 12, 2021 Governor Greg Abbott issued a Declaration of State of Disaster for all of Texas due to forecasts of severe winter weather, including prolonged freezing temperatures, snow and freezing rain; and

WHEREAS, more than 200,000 customers of Austin Energy lost power for days beginning in the early morning hours of February 15 due to mandatory controlled outages ordered by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT); and

WHEREAS, the freezing temperatures and prolonged power outages also caused broken water pipes, leaving many in Austin without water and with directives to boil water for the rest; and

WHEREAS, the community, local nonprofits, and city council members, often in coordination with the city, identified needs and implemented relief efforts that included delivering water and food to older adults and persons living with disabilities in apartment complexes throughout the city that lost water and power; and

WHEREAS, volunteers reached over 14,000 people through wellness calls and identified over 1,000 people who needed additional support including EMS, food and/or water delivery;

WHEREAS, City Council Resolution No. 20210205-006, which included in part:

The City Manager report on recommended actions related to disaster relief should include, but not be limited to:

- Recommendations for formalizing and improving the city's and the community's notification and disaster response systems for vulnerable seniors living in the community and facility settings, and for persons with disabilities, including systems for welfare checks, in consultation with the City of Austin Age Friendly Program Coordinator, the Commission on Seniors, and the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities. The City Manager shall endeavor to report on these recommended actions by September 1, 2021.

THEREFOR Be It Resolved:

The Commission on Seniors creates the Emergency Preparedness and Response Working Group. The purpose of the working group is to make recommendations to improve preparation, communication and response to extreme weather, disasters and other emergencies.

The working group will:

- Engage with members of the community, providers of services to older adults, community organizers, and city departments regarding lessons learned from the February 2021 Winter Storm;
- Make recommendations to the City Manager per Council Resolution No. 20210205-006 for formalizing and improving the city's and the community's notification and disaster response systems for vulnerable seniors living in the community and facility settings, and for persons with disabilities, including systems for welfare checks.
- Make other recommendations as the working group deems appropriate.

Members of the working group include:

- Commissioner Sally Van Sickle, Chair
- Commissioner Amy Temperley
- Commissioner Patty Bordie
- Commissioner Emily De Maria Nicola
- AARP-Texas
- Family Eldercare
- Meals on Wheels Central Texas
- A representative of a faith-based group
- A representative of the Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities or another representative of the disability community
- A representative of Travis County

The working group will report to the Commission on Seniors no later than June 30.

Vote 13-0

For: Briesemeister, Varteressian, Bordie, Cagle, Garcia-Pittman, Hauser, Jackson, Kareithi, Lugo, Nicola, Temperley, Van Sickle, Spain

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Angel

Attest:



Janee Briesemeister, Chair