

Hunterdon Seniors Public Hearing Reveals Support For Virtual Programming

The Meals on Wheels program, support for the County's Senior Center including the virtual programs, and transportation needs were key issues raised during the Hunterdon County Division of Senior, Disabilities and Veterans Services public hearing held virtually via Webex on June 10th, County Board of Commissioners Director Susan J. Soloway reported at the Board's June 15th meeting.

The public hearing, which solicits input from seniors, agencies and others in the community, is a required component, along with a survey and a needs assessment, to support the Area Plan grant.

Director Soloway noted, "This is my third year on the County Board and I have participated in this event each year because I believe the public hearing, along with the survey and needs assessment, are of great value to the county in making decisions regarding needed senior services."

Soloway pointed out the Area Plan grant for 2020 was \$845,000, "which allows the county to provide senior programs without overburdening property taxpayers."

Soloway said, "It was interesting to learn that over 60% of respondents noted they have connected with friends and family through social media platforms during the pandemic. Our senior community is becoming more and more technology savvy.

During the public comment Seniors offered a well-deserved thank you to the Division staff for doing such a great job with the virtual programming that kept Seniors in the community engaged throughout the pandemic. And I agree wholeheartedly."

Soloway added, "It may be that virtual programming is here to stay, as some Seniors expressed that they prefer the virtual class options, reporting that it saves them time.

Learning about changing attitudes and desired programming is why the hearing, survey, and assessment are conducted. It was a worthwhile event."