

Brevard County's Aging Plan

It is August 2022, and I decided to look at our county aging plan for help optimizing my resources to manage how I want to live the rest of my life. My concerns were not only for me but for my best friend, my wife, who helped me accrue our assets. To my dismay I found no written county plan, nor any written references to such plan. Though we do have a Housing & Human Services Department and a Commission on Aging, there is no service planning for the elderly—this is difficult to accept in a county with a population over 700,000.

As an elder advocate, I knew that a local nonprofit called Helping Seniors of Brevard had developed a concept paper in 2015 on the need for a county aging plan. I did a little research and learned that, while the



HELPING SENIORS OF BREVARD
JOE STECKLER

paper was submitted to all five county commissioners, its receipt was never acknowledged. Why have our elderly constituents (who make up 25% of Brevard's population) ignored five people who oversee a county budget of \$1.3 billion, yet direct such a minimal amount to affordable housing or nonprofits that assist seniors and caregivers?

My fear over a lack of concern for Brevard's

elders was growing, especially since we do everything possible to attract people here. To waylay my concerns, I decided to investigate paraphernalia on the upcoming primary and mid-term elections. I could see a lot of information about the Indian River Lagoon, as well as who supports who politically speaking, but I sure did not see a single word about affordable housing, homelessness, or a county aging plan. Do we live in 2022 or 1822? Do we understand that we have an aging population?

I am 88; I served my country for 38 years and have worked 30 years helping the elderly. I have been registered as a Democrat and a Republican, but consider myself more of an independent than anything else, as many Americans are doing today. More

importantly, I like to think I can research, listen, read, and watch television in order to make an intelligent choice on election day.

In deciding who to vote for, do not be misled by the hate mail you receive. Who profits by your belief or disbelief of such? A major concern I have is the way campaigns are conducted. For a county that has so many senior citizens, it is amazing to me that so little is said about our lack of affordable housing or a county plan that addresses caring for an aging community. We can do better and should make these issues a concern for those we elect.

Contact Helping Seniors at 321-473-7770, at www.HelpingSeniorsOfBrevard.org, or at P.O. Box 372936, Satellite Beach, FL 32937.

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