

Land of Sky Regional Council
Advisory Council on Aging Minutes
April 10, 2014

Present: Ann Bass, Jack Roberts, Deana Stephens, Penny James, Fred Noble, Kathe Harris, Charles Dickens, Cal Titus

Staff: Rebecca Chaplin, Carol McLimans, Nancy Hogan, Barbara Hinshaw, Terry Collins, Sherry Christenson, Janice Payne, Christina Giles, Nathan Rice

Guests: Ray Rapp

Welcome and Introductions: Charles Dickens welcomes the Council and asked staff and guests to introduce themselves.

Agenda: A motion to approve the agenda was made by Fred Noble and seconded by Kathe Harris.

Presentation – Madison County Department of Community Services – Sherry Christenson reported for Regina Sams:

MC DCS successfully transferred the cooking of the senior meals to the state of the art kitchen we have at our jail. MC DCS is currently serving 180 seniors at 8 meal sites - The numbers have increased at the meal sites in the last 9 months, MC DCS is still working to keep those numbers growing. Currently they are working on a new “flyer” for our transportation department to get the word out that transportation is available for those in need.

Presentation – Madison County Health Department – Deana Stephens:

Deana Stephens reported that Madison County Health Department was just re-accredited by the state for another four years. She put out brochures about health department services on the back table. The Senior Games and Silver Arts are going on now. Flyer on back table as well. She is beginning to plan for Active Aging Week activities which will be during the last week in September.

Presentation – History of Mars Hill and Mars Hill University – Ray Rapp:

Ray Rapp introduced himself to the Council and Handed out the Madison County Self-Guided Walking Tours brochure and the Mars Hill Rural Traditions pamphlet. Ray Rapp told the Council a little about his background: he served on the North Carolina House of Representatives for 10 years, served two terms as a Mars Hill alderman, elected three terms as mayor and served as an administrator at Mars Hill College for 32 years. Ray talked to the Council about the history of Mars Hill University and the town.

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by Ann Bass and seconded by Calvin Titus.

Senior Tar Heel Legislature: The STHL met in Raleigh on March 20-21. During the meeting, leaders shared information regarding the rise in elder abuse cases in North Carolina. As one the STHLs five legislative priorities the information proved to be very useful for the group’s advocacy efforts to strengthen and fund the state’s Adult Protective Services program. Dennis Streets, Director of NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, and Nancy Warren, Adult Services Program Administrator for DAAS, were the speakers. Elder Abuse Awareness is being promoted from May 11 – June 15, 2014. The next STHL meeting will be June 12 – 13, 2014.

Staff Reports and Challenges – Future Funding Challenges – Carol McIlmans

Carol reported that the need for long term services and supports (LTSS) continues to grow while federal and state dollars to fund these services does not. In NC, AAA's rely primarily upon Older American Act of 1965(OAA) funding to provide services. The mission of the OAA is "to support older adults to live with dignity and independence at home and in the community for as long as possible."

As the number of older Americans continues to grow federal support for OAA services hasn't kept pace. The OAA has not been reauthorized yet and experts at the federal level state that it will probably be reauthorized eventually, however we need to plan for the funding to remain about what it is today. Federal funding commitment to aging services is diminishing. In 1980 this amounted to \$9.24 per adult age65+. In 2010 the amount was only \$3.85 per adult age 65+ We are advised to look for new funding sources, create public-private partnerships, develop business plans and charge for services.

Speakers at the recent Supercharge Your Aging Programs conference in Kernersville talked about ways to develop these partnerships, bundle services, and charge for them. We are often reminded that there is no such thing as a free service and we need to change the perception that we are the place to come to for "free" services. Our limited funding needs to be preserved for those most in need and the service recipient's ability to pay is an important consideration

Today the world of aging services is changing and we must change. What will the future of aging look like?

- OAA services and state aging funding targeted to serve those most in need
- Contracted funding for aging services from, other payers-insurance companies, hospitals, health homes and accountable care organizations, private businesses
- Private pay-assessments, care plans, broker for services

Carol asked the Council for ideas on how to get additional funding and Charles Dickens suggested creating a foundation for respite funds similar to the one that Brenda Reece has in Region D.

Staff Reports and Challenges – Aging and Volunteer Services Newsletter – Christina Giles

Christina reported that the Aging and Volunteer Services Newsletter has become challenging due to the mailing quantity. Currently the newsletter is being mailed to approximately 1,000 people and emailed via Constant Contact to over 1,500. Mailing the newsletter takes a lot of staff time and includes costs for paper, print and mailing. Christina asked the Council if they would like the newsletter to continue. If so, should it be just by email to save on costs and time or by both mail and email. The Council agreed that it should continue but just by email.

Director's Reports: Sherry Christenson reported for LeeAnne Tucker.

LeeAnne Tucker is out of the office on medical leave and will return to work on Monday, April 14.

Dennis Streets, Director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, is retiring from state government as of May 1. He plans to work at the local level as the Executive Director of the Chatham County Council on Aging. Suzanne Merrill, Adult Services Section Chief, will serve as the acting division director for DAAS. Suzanne brings more than 30 years of service to the area of Aging and Adult Services.

Gary Cyrus, Business Officer for NC DAAS, will also be retiring effective May 31, 2014. Gary has served older and disabled citizens for nearly 28 years.

As we near the end of FY14, funding looks stable. We anticipate no further government shutdowns nor sequestration. Funding for FY15 looks good as well and we've been told to expect level funding. Home and Community Care Block Grant funding is similar with small adjustments to funding based on census data. Buncombe County and Transylvania County will receive a small increase while Madison County and Henderson County will see a small decrease.

We continue to look for Alternates to serve on the Senior Tar Heel Legislators in Madison County, Henderson County, and Transylvania County. If you know of an older adult that might be interested, contact LeeAnne.

Lastly, we have staffing updates to share with the advisory council. Christina will transition all her time beginning July 1 to our Administration Department as the Webmaster and Communication Specialist. We appreciate her 9 years of working with the AAA and this advisory committee. Janice Payne will be the new contact person and she's here to today to see how the committee meetings run.

Barbara Hinshaw announced to the Council that she will be retiring as of July 1, 2014. She has been with the AAA for 9 years. Rebecca Chaplin announced that she will be leaving Land of Sky as of May 9, 2014 to explore other adventures. She has been with the AAA for 7 years.

Other Business/Reports: The October meeting is scheduled for October 9, which is around the same time as the Senior Tar Heel Meeting in Raleigh and the LOS Annual Celebration. Charles asked the committee to look at the Thursday before, October 1, or the Thursday after, October 16 as possible dates.

2014 Meeting Schedule:

October 9, 2014 – Henderson County

Submitted by: Christina Giles, AAA Project Assistant, for Delores Stroup, Secretary