

**Land of Sky Regional Council  
Advisory Council on Aging Minutes**

April 9, 2015

**Present:** Charles Dickens, Bob Tomasulo, Penny James, LinDa Campbell, Kathe Harris, Fred Noble, Deana Stephens, Gene Knoefel

**Staff:** LeeAnne Tucker, Janice Payne, Carol McLimans, Nancy Hogan, Ruth Price, Sherry Christensen, John Connell, Stephanie Stewart, Ann Whisenhunt, Nancy Smith-Hunnicut

**Guests:** Celeste Selwyn, Emily Pitts, Hayley Prosser, Crystal Meadows, Angela Allison

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

**Presentations:**

**Crystal Meadows, In-Home Aid Supervisor, Madison County Community Services.**

We serve more than just meals; we transport people to their medical appointments, and are family to our seniors. Meals are delivered 4 days a week to the homebound. There are 2 centers for senior to go to throughout the day, six meal sites throughout the county. We provide respite care for our families and deliver sixty five food boxes a month which consist of potatoes, corn meal and pinto beans. Since June we have given out 585 boxes to the community. We have a food pantry. Some of the seniors have learned computer skills at the center and have started a Facebook page. In-home aides care for clients and provide emotional support. Binders have been placed in client's homes with information for a new Aide with contact names, doctors, and medications. All clients have "vials of life" in their refrigerator with a sticker on their door containing vital information for EMS.

**Angela Allison, Meal Site Manger in Marshall.** Serve over 190 meals a day and depend on volunteers to deliver meals. One-third of Madison County residents are seniors. Have activities and crafts at this center and do trips once a month. Meals are now prepared at the new jail but only for the meal sites.

**Ruth Price, Regional Ombudsman, introduced Barbara Rice,** a Community Advisory Committee (CAC) member for Madison County. Ruth indicated that CAC visits are public information and the committee is required to visit Family Care Homes only once a year. One facility was particularly troubling so the committee decided to take charge and visit every month for four months to follow up and make sure facility lived up to its promises. Ruth passed out a copy of the reports which indicate that with this committee's help the facility improved the quality of their family care home care and services. Madison County CAC is very dedicated to improving resident's quality of care.

**Emily Pitts and Hayley Prosser, Social workers at the VA Medical Center**

Provide primary care along with variety of other services to veterans. We receive many calls from veterans who want to know what services they are qualified for in the home and how to obtain them. The most common are in the non-institutional care programs brochure that was passed out and discussed:

- *Home Health:* Adult Day Health Care is available to those who qualify. A co-payment may be required and transportation may be provided.
- *Homemaker Home Health Aide:* This is not a maid service but aid service that helps with hands on personal bathing and other activities of daily living for homebound six hours a week. Equipment is also available that may help keep client in their home.
- *In-Home Respite:* Available for veteran's non-paid caregivers to help manage daily stress of caregiving. Must be homebound and require hands on bathing and assistance with activities of daily living (ADL's) to qualify.

Penny James indicated that there are wait lists for these services and as budgets continue to be cut the criteria for these services are being evaluated.

*CLC Respite:* Community Living Center (CLC) respite. If a veteran has been recently hospitalized there is a 30-day wait period before using CLC respite. Veterans may use 30 days at CLC or in combination with in home respite. It requires a stay of no less than 7 consecutive days.

Not discussed but listed and described in the brochure are the following two services: Home Based Primary Care and Skilled Home Health Care.

**Minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes was made by Kathe Harris and seconded by LinDa Campbell. Motion carried.

**Updates from Henderson, Buncombe and Transylvania Counties:**

*Transylvania:* Kathe Harris reported that a date has been set for Older Americans Month event and will be 1:30 p.m., May 7, at Silvermont Senior Center. Centenarian recognition will also be combined with this event.

*Henderson:* Meeting place is being searched for October meeting. More info to come.

*Buncombe:* none

**Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL):**

Gene Knoefel: Indicated that he was the new kid on the block and Charles was certainly missed. There were five points to use as we visit our local representatives.

1. Restoring or preserving optimal Medicaid services
2. Maintain funding for senior centers
3. Strengthening NC Adult Protective Services program
4. Notify Medicare when patients admitted to hospital for observation
5. Home and Community Care Block Grant funding

Four of these five cost money and it is tough to ask for more money this year when there have been cuts. The one thing that does not cost is notification of Medicare patients when admitted for observation. Most people don't know that if you are admitted for observation for less than 72 hours Medicare will not pay. Seniors need to be made aware of this and legislation needs to be changed.

Gene also pointed out his concern about the loss of health services tax deduction for seniors. In Buncombe there is a large block of seniors who vote and many were upset when they did their taxes this year. They seniors got the legislators attention and hopefully something can be done about it this session.

**Staff Reports and Challenges:**

There was a different approach this time and staff was asked to highlight what they feel is their most important activity. The Century Club is one way of honoring some. However, staff would like suggestions on how to recognize those seniors who now make up one-third of our population. Gene indicated that this is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Older Americans Act and maybe that could be worked into the celebration. LeeAnne asked that if you think of anything to please let her know.

**Director's Reports:**

Membership update list was passed around and LeeAnne asked that everyone check to see if their information is correct. She also indicated that we still need another member from Transylvania County. LeeAnne welcomed Celeste Selwyn as guest and a possible new member. Then LeeAnne introduced two new staff, Nancy Smith-Hunnicuttt who has come back to LOS as an Ombudsman and Ann Whisenhunt, the new RSVP Coordinator.

**Other Business:**

Next meetings: July 9 in Transylvania County and October 8 in Henderson County.

No other business. Motion made to adjourn by Gene Knoefel and seconded by Fred Noble.

*Submitted by: Janice Payne, AAA Program Support Specialist*