

Land of Sky Regional Council
Advisory Council on Aging Minutes
January 9, 2014

Present: Calvin Titus, Fred Noble, Charles Dickens, Bob Tomasulo, Deana Stephens, LinDa Campbell, Delores Stroup, Patricia Stanley

Staff: LeeAnne Tucker, Linda Kendall Fields, Rebecca Chaplin, Barbara Hinshaw, Nathan Rice, Terry Collins, Carol McLimans, Justin Hembree, Christina Giles

Guests: Catherine Frank, OLLI at UNC Asheville Executive Director

Welcome and Introductions: Charles Dickens welcomes the Council and asked staff and guests to introduce themselves. LeeAnne introduced the Executive Director of Land of Sky Regional Council. Justin talked to the Council about the rebranding process that Land of Sky is involved in. The changes include a new logo with new brochures and rack cards. LOS is also focusing more on outreach to the community and to our local governments.

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

Presentation – Happenings at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) – Catherine Frank:

25 years as a program and 10 years in the Reuter Center - Great celebrations in September. A useful and engaging history of the program developed by our marketing committee. Some improvements to the building: solar shades, repurposing our computer lab, installing a hearing loop, new signs. All possible because of the maturing of the Janirve Endowment. OLLI received the \$2 million endowment from the Osher Foundation early in 2013.

2014 Regional Meeting for Lifelong Learning to be held at the Reuter Center on the UNC Asheville campus - OLLI at UNC Asheville working with OLLI at UNC Wilmington, the Encore program at NC State University and OLLI at Duke University to create the program - 200 people from 16 states - Topics to cover issues specific to OLLIs and lifelong learning organizations, but as senior centers and other care providers become more “alike,” these meetings are designed and run more as learning opportunities for a variety of programs aimed at older adults. We invite our community partners from groups like RSVP or SHIP to make presentations.

Diversity Initiative - OLLIs and LLI throughout the country tend to be white and middle or upper middle class. That may be part of who we are, but we also have many teachable moments where we can create a more complex understanding of the way race conditions our view of the world. We began with a cultural climate study with direction from Deborah Miles and Don Locke (both of whom have led diversity education efforts at UNC Asheville). We understand that Asheville’s racial history and demographics complicate an effort to be more inclusive, but they offer an opportunity to learn more. We are focused on race and ethnicity, but we hope that convening these difficult conversations will help us in other ways to develop a more caring and informed community. We are meeting today to look at next steps and build a team of ambassadors to tackle small projects to make a difference.

Civic Engagement and Leadership Asheville Seniors - LAS is our oldest program here at OLLI and just had very successful program completed in November under the leadership of our new program director Laurel Jernigan. OLLI’s Civic Engagement Committee is organizing a series of opportunities through the

Asheville City Schools Foundation offering opportunities primarily at Ira B. Jones, Asheville Middle, and Asheville High. We have 40 people signed up to learn more at a meeting on January 15. Our interest is in providing opportunities to serve and also to provide a sense of camaraderie for the people who work on these issues.

Life Transitions - We have seen volatility for registrations for our national programs and have never really recovered from the 2009 crash when it comes to enrollments for the Creative Retirement Exploration Weekend, which focuses on relocation in retirement. There is a lot of competition in the marketplace when it comes to retirement planning tools, so we have to figure different ways to market the programs. We have also added two local programs, one on Continuing Care Retirement Communities, and the other on end of life planning, called The Gift of Time. Our Health Education Series committee has planned wonderful programs on end of life planning using the Five Wishes document, and we are now offering quarterly installments of those programs. The next is February 13, 7-9 pm here at the Reuter Center. Two of our staff members are notaries and can notarize the documents on the day of the workshop or any time people want to stop by the Reuter Center. We have worked with doctors locally to let them know about our efforts and hope that you will all help us spread the word.

College for Senior - CFS is holding record numbers of courses and we are seeing record numbers of registrations. Our curriculum committee has done an excellent job of supporting faculty and continued to improve the quality and quantity of offerings in all areas, from the perennially popular history and current affairs courses to hands-on arts and crafts.

Presentation – LGBT Elder Advocates – Rebecca Chaplin and Bob Tomasulo:

Many LGBT older adults are not 'out' or have gone back in the closet out of fear of discrimination or harassment from professionals, family members and peers. For this reason, it is difficult to have accurate statistics about the number of LGBT older adults in Western North Carolina. We can look to some national statistics to extrapolate:

- Drawing on information from four recent national and two state-level population-based surveys, the analyses suggest that there are more than 8 million adults in the US who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual, comprising 3.5% of the adult population. In total, the study suggests that approximately 9 million Americans – roughly the population of New Jersey – identify as LGBT. (<http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/research/census-lgbt-demographics-studies/how-many-people-are-lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender/>)
- There are almost 3 million LGBT Americans over 65, or 12.6 percent of the population. This will nearly double by 2030. (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, FAQ sheet on LGBT elders & Outing Age 2010)

Since 2011, Land of Sky created a small advisory board, LGBT Elder Advocates of WNC, aim to improve the quality of life of LGBT Older Adults in our region by (1) connecting people to resources; and (2) promoting cultural change by raising awareness and providing education. Comprised of an advisory board of LGBT older adults and service providers and over 100 "Friends" of the LGBT Elders.

Why is this important?

- One member of our advisory board (Cheryle Sullivan) was delivering a presentation on Brain Injury to a local adult day program (JCC) after the presentation one of the participants came to her privately and asked if she knew of anywhere that gay older adults can go to socialize with other gay older adults. This senior obviously picked up on our advisory board member's openness. She also happens to be openly gay. We know that socialization is an important factor in healthy aging and social isolation puts one at greater risk to experience health problems. LGBT older adults are

more likely to be socially isolated. We can equip ourselves, staff and those who we serve with these resources and thereby help to alleviate some of the social isolation experienced by older adults.

Social Stats

- LGBT seniors are twice as likely to live alone, half as likely to have close relatives to call for help and four times less likely to have children, the primary caregivers of seniors, compared to heterosexual seniors. (www.lgbtei.org)
- Despite their need for strong social networks, LGBT elders often feel unwelcome at senior centers, volunteer centers and places of worship. Few of these agencies engage in outreach to LGBT elders, nor are they often prepared to address incidents of discrimination toward LGBT elders by other clients and older people. (<http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org>)
- More than a quarter (27%) of LGBT boomers reported “great concern” about discrimination as they age, and less than half expressed strong confidence that healthcare professionals will treat them with dignity and respect. This is especially true among lesbians, of whom 12% said they have absolutely no confidence that they will be treated respectfully. (MetLife Mature Market Institute in conjunction with the Lesbian and Gay Aging Issues Network of the American Society on Aging and Zogby International November 2006)
- Over 70% of LGBT elders are “tentative” about using agencies that serve older adults. Only 19% of LGBTs have tried to have any contact with their local senior center. (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force)
- Compared to their heterosexual counterparts, those who identify as LGBT older adults are five times less likely to access aging services. (www.sageusa.org)
- A 2010 national survey of 769 gay elders, care providers, and family members found that 328 of those interviewed reported 853 incidents of mistreatment; just 22% felt they could be open with staff about sexual orientation or gender identity. More bad news: more than three-quarters said they would not disclose their LGBT status should they wind up in institutional care (LGBT Older Adults in Long Term Care, 2010).

Health Care Stats

- Related to LTC: Although 80% of long-term care in the U.S. is provided by family members, LGBT elders are twice as likely to be single and three to four times more likely to be without children than their heterosexual counterparts.
- LGBT people report lower rates of health insurance coverage. Because many LGBT elders fear discrimination by doctors and facilities that provide preventive and non-emergency care, they are more likely to delay getting the necessary care and prescriptions.
- Many professional caregivers are not accepting of LGBT elders and not trained to deal properly with their unique needs. These providers might be hostile, discriminatory or simply unaware that LGBT elders exist. For example, 8.3% of LGBT elders reported being neglected or abused by a caretaker due to their sexual orientation
- Studies suggest higher levels of chronic and other health problems among LGBT adults, including asthma, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, obesity, rheumatoid arthritis and certain illnesses such as cancer. LGBT elders, thus, have aged into their later years with these additional health concerns or gender identity.
- All of the health stats come from:
<http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/pdfs/LGBTOlderAdultsFactsataGlance.pdf>

Examples of projects to date:

- Developed and delivered sensitivity workshop for professionals delivered at MAHEC in October 2012, Currently being revised for future dissemination; please let me know if you are interested in

scheduling a sensitivity training for your staff.

- Collaborated with the Fine Arts Theatre to show documentaries GenSilent, followed by a discussion with director Stu Maddux in 2012 and Before You Know it in 2013
- Hosted or co-hosted 3 social events for LGBT Elders; working in collaboration with Land-of-Sky Regional Council, GLOW part of the JCC, Youth Outright and the Fine Arts Theatre and Blue Spiral Gallery
- Created an LGBT friendly social and service resource list
- Outreach – (1) Facebook page with over 200 “Likes” to share information about LGBT elder friendly resources, events and programs; (2) exhibit table at Blue Ridge Pride in 2012 and 2013; (3) collaborated with Gayashevillenc.com to provide central location for resource list and calendar; (4) marketing: created logo, decal and rack card.
- 2014 initiatives: Health care service provider LGBT-friendly directory starting with Physicians; deliver sensitivity workshop; a story-telling project; more intergenerational projects

Presentation – Buncombe County Aging Plan Update – Linda Kendall Fields:

Report on The Buncombe County Livable and Aging-Friendly Plan 2013 – 2017 – The Aging Plan is contains 6 categories with 14 targeted goals the aim to be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Research-based, Time-bound (SMART). From the Greatest Generation to the Boomer Generation, together is 42.8% of Buncombe County’s population. A copy of the full plan is on the Land of Sky website.

1. Service & Support Coordination

- **Goal 1:** Advocate for increasing Home and Community Care Block Grant and County Supplemental funding
- **Goal 2:** Improve understanding of the challenges faced by the county’s rural older adult population.
- **Goal 3:** Increase coordination of multiple systems (i.e. home & community-based services, facility-based care, self-directed care initiatives, medical, mental health, Community Resource Connections)

2. Safety & Security

- **Goal 4:** Improve safety and security for community-dwelling older adults.
- **Goal 5:** Improve safety and security for older adult residents of adult care homes (ACH)

3. Financial Well-being

- **Goal 6:** Increase financial planning & management among older adults.
- **Goal 7:** Establish Basic Needs Case Conferencing process.

4. Health & Wellness

- **Goal 8:** Identify and address depression among older adults.
- **Goal 9:** Identify and address depression among family caregivers.
- **Goal 10:** Improve healthy weight among community dwelling older adults.
- **Goal 11:** Increase health equity among Buncombe County’s older adult populations.

5. Social Engagement

- **Goal 12:** Increase social engagement and employment among older adults.

6. Living Environments

- **Goal 13:** Expand housing and community living options for older adults
- **Goal 14:** Improve mobility by expanding transportation options.

The plan is prioritizing and phasing in goals; working with present ACC (Aging Coordinating Consortium) committees and established teams; and is focused leadership where needed

Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes as corrected was made by LinDa Campbell and seconded by Fred Noble.

Updates from Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties:

Henderson County – Cal Titus reported that the county is in the process of turning an old Christian High School into a community center. The Home and Community Care Block Grant committee was able to tour the facility and look at ways to establish it as a senior center (Henderson County is one of three counties in North Carolina that does not have a senior center). Fred Noble spoke to the Council about his mentoring experiences with Big Sister and Big Brother of Henderson County. Fred currently mentors a 7th grader in middle school that is interested in law school. Mentoring allows a student to gain experiences that they don't get from school or home.

Madison County – LinDa Campbell announced that the Department of Community Services now has a new Executive Director and the Council on Aging will begin meeting again on a regular basis. The Mars Hill Seniors Group has sponsored two insurance seminars for the community with a speaker from SHIP. The next Advisory Council meeting will be in Madison County.

Transylvania County – No report for Transylvania County.

Senior Tar Heel Legislature: Charles Dickens announced that the Senior Tar Heel Legislature met in Raleigh the in March. The delegates and alternates have been working on the resolutions since the October meeting to be entered into the process to select the priorities to be presented to the General Assembly for the 2015 Session.

Staff Reports and Challenges: Delores Stroup asked about Ruth Price's October report - Attended "Alive Inside" workshop in Statesville. Hope to work on getting iPods incorporated into more nursing homes as a therapeutic intervention for residents. Barbara Hinshaw responded that the Ombudsmen are encouraging nursing homes to apply for Music and Memory grants for the Alive Inside program. Alive Inside provides residents with dementia iPods that contain music they have listen at a younger age to help awaken the injured brain with memories. Delores also asked about other presentations that the Ombudsman have given and are they available for other counties and facilities. Is there a plan for outreach? Delores encouraged the Ombudsmen to outreach more.

Calvin Titus asked Barbara about a Family Care Home Activity Grant that the Buncombe County Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee (CAC) provides to an adult care home yearly. The BC CAC gets funding from Buncombe County every year to use towards travel and expenses. The Committee chooses to use part of this funding for the Activity Grant.

Staff Challenge: LeeAnne Tucker asked the Council what the Area Agency on Aging could do to spotlight seniors during Older Americans Month, which is in May. Previously the AAA has sponsored the Successful Aging Conference, Centenarian Celebrations, and provide assistance to county events.

Director's Reports: LeeAnne Tucker passed out the latest Advisory Council member list and we still have a vacancy in Buncombe and Madison Counties and also the VA and DAAS representatives. LeeAnne also passed out a Region B HCCBG Survey Results from the NC Department of Health and Human Services. She pointed out that 628 seniors are on a wait list for home and community services. That number is just from what was reported. Also, the largest group was waiting for in-home aide services.

LeeAnne invited the Council to the Land of Sky Open House on January 22 and Supercharge Your Aging Programs Surviving and Thriving at Piedmont Triad Regional Council on February 28.

Other Business/Reports: No other business.

2014 Meeting Schedule:

April 10, 2014 – Madison County

July 10, 2014 – Transylvania County

October 9, 2014 – Henderson County

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