

ORANGE COUNTY
ADVISORY BOARD ON AGING
Minutes
February 13, 2018

PRESENT: Mary Alpeter, Colin Austin, Hanna Boyd, Alex Castro, Keith Cook, Rachel Hawkins,
Alicia Nelson, Donna Prather, Vibeke Talley, Dick White

EXCUSED: Heather Altman, Peggy Cohn, Winston Liao, Lorenzo Mejia, Yvonne Mendenhall

STAFF: Myra Austin, Kathie Kearns, Yvette Missri, Janice Tyler

The meeting was called to order by acting Chair Alex Castro. Mary Fraser announced that she will be retiring from her Department on Aging position as Aging Transitions Director effective July 1. It was also announced that Yvonne Mendenhall will be resigning her Advisory Board appointment but will maintain her role with the Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee.

The minutes of the January 9 meeting were approved following the motion made by Keith Cook and seconded by Vibeke Talley. The discussion of proposals for the upcoming Healthy Aging Summit was added to the agenda.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Janice Tyler asked Myra Austin to update the Advisory Board on the implementation of the Pass Management Senior Center check-in system installed in January. Key fobs with identification chips have been issued to more than 700 participants to date. Volunteers are being trained to assist in utilizing the check-in kiosks. Ms. Tyler expressed her appreciation for the staff effort to bring this project to completion.

Ms. Tyler announced the March 14-15 NC Association on Aging Conference and circulated the agenda which includes two workshops being led by Department on Aging staff. She also noted that the Ann Johnson Institute Leader Symposium for Senior Center staff will be held the previous day. This will include a presentation on Project EngAGE.

The Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) has received a Letter of Intent from UNC-CH for its Bookend Caregiving Project which Ms. Tyler and Mary Fraser helped to formulate. If approved a full application for funding will be submitted.

Department on Aging staff have been invited to attend a Community Response meeting on April 26 to address the opioid crisis.

Orange County's Rapid Response Team has met to consider the fate of mobile home park residents who are being displaced by development in the Chapel Hill/Carrboro area. The initial inventory lists more than 100 trailer parks in Orange County and 88% of the residents are Latino.

NEW BUSINESS

In preparing the FY2018-19 budget requests Orange County departments have been directed to only include operating cost increases when new offsetting revenues are available. The County Manager has also asked Department Directors to identify areas where cuts could be made to current budget levels. Ms. Tyler reviewed several strategies for continuing some of the OC CARES grant services past the August 31 end date with existing resources in an effort to meet the needs of a community that is aging with an increasing number of dementia diagnoses. Mary Fraser addressed the need for continuance of the occupational therapist position.

Ms. Tyler announced that the Passmore Center renovations will begin February 26. Also, one meeting has already been held with the architect for the Southern Human Services campus expansion project. She shared her proposal to expand the Seymour Center to include meeting space for the Commissioners' meetings.

Dick White, Vibeke Talley, and Alex Castro volunteered for the Outside Agency Application Review Team. The County Manager will meet with each applicant agency again this year. Keith Cook suggested that all aging services agencies that received Orange County funding be asked to meet with this Advisory Board during the year. The members supported this recommendation. Janice Tyler added that DSS has sponsored a meeting for all agencies dealing with food insecurity.

Latino community leaders have been invited to a meeting on outreach strategies at the Seymour Center on the afternoon of March 8. Discussion followed on options for increasing service to this subset of the senior population, such as connecting with the Refugee Coalition and Habitat.

Duke University has assigned a five-member public policy student group to focus on the issue of providing incentives to care for family members with Alzheimer's disease.

CONTINUING PROJECTS

Mary Fraser asked that each Advisory Board member assigned to a MAP Domain workgroup highlight the progress made in the last quarter.

Mary Altpeter reported that the Outdoor Spaces/Buildings workgroup is surveying community feedback about access to, and use of, natural areas and parks. The survey's availability was advertised in the Senior Times. She announced that the Walkable Hillsborough mobility project has been completed.

Alex Castro reported for the Transportation workgroup that the sidewalk project connecting the Eno Haven Senior Housing complex and the Sportsplex/Passmore Center is moving forward. A medical transportation subcommittee is being formed to tackle issues like out-of-service area trips.

Dick White stated that the Housing workgroup is developing strategies for enabling senior housing options. Ryan Lavalley is coordinating a subgroup to focus on home repairs. Discussion followed on the new Corbinton Commons senior housing community in Hillsborough and Habitat's project for older homeowners.

Donna Prather summarized the Social Participation/Inclusion workgroup review of the wide variety of options available through the Department on Aging and its Senior Centers.

Colin Austin stated that the Civic Participation/Employment workgroup received updates on the accomplishments of the Senior Employment Specialist and graduate intern. A marketing campaign is being developed on the benefits of hiring older employees.

In Peggy Cohn's absence the Community Support/Health workgroup was represented by Mary Fraser and Yvette Missri. Issues included the continuation of OC CARES services following the expiration of the grant in August. Another concern discussed was lack of funding to continue the EMS Stay Up and Active project. Managed Care funding for community based services is being discussed with UNC Healthcare. Project EngAGE is exploring ways to improve access to the complicated healthcare system. Myra Austin suggested contacting the Public Health Reserve Corp through the OC Health Department. Another possible PE initiative is helping older adults manage their household business through a payee program.

Discussion followed on the other activities growing from the Project EngAGE program: housing repairs, OCRA, food box distribution, Faith Outreach Initiative. Keith Cook requested that copies of the resource guide be brought to next month's Advisory Board meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

NC Senior Tar Heel Legislature – Dick White distributed the attached 2018 Legislative Priorities Fact Sheet. He announced that the next STHL meeting will be held on March 13-14. This year is the 25th anniversary of that organization.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Tyler, Secretary

FACT SHEET

North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature 2018 Legislative Priorities

Increase HCCBG Funding

The North Carolina Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) is vital to assuring the availability of cost effective home and community-based services to the elderly, the malnourished, homebound, dependent and those who are socially and economically needy. Approximately 10,500 seniors are on the HCCBG waiting list for services and 1.2 million more are expected to turn 60 years of age by the year 2034. This rapidly increasing older adult population of North Carolina places an increased pressure on the service delivery system which is insufficient to meet the current needs of those seeking services. The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests the General Assembly increase the Home and Community Care Block Grant funding by \$7 million dollars in recurring funds.

Increase Funding for Senior Centers

Increase funding for Senior Centers by an additional \$300,000 in recurring funds. There are 164 Senior Centers in 97 counties that provide programs and services to enhance the health and wellness of older adults. These services are of significant benefit to help elders remain independent, thus delaying their potential for costlier services or housing options. Senior Center General Purpose money is vital to support critical center operations. To maintain operation, senior centers must leverage resources from a variety of sources that include federal, state and local governments, special events, participant contributions, and grants and volunteer hours. Funding for senior centers has not met the needs of the increasing aging baby boomer's generation who now constitute more than two-thirds of the 50 plus population. It is recommended that the General Assembly increase funding for Senior Centers to continue to meet the vital needs of North Carolina's growing population of older adults.

Sustain and Expand Project C.A.R.E.

Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternative to Running on Empty) was designed and tested in North Carolina. It has become a national best practice model for providing respite services to family members who are caring at home for a relative with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. The number of North Carolinians affected with these dementias now approximates 160,000, and is expected to exceed 210,000 by 2025. North Carolina must develop methods to both encourage and support families to assist their aging family members and relatives to remain at home. Resulting savings in public funds are substantial. We recommend that the General Assembly increase recurring funding for Project C.A.R.E. in 2018-2019 by ten percent annually and thereafter to meet the expected growth, statewide.

Strengthen and Fund North Carolina's Adult Protective Services Program (APS)

North Carolina's APS Program must be strengthened and funded in order to respond to the accelerated growth in the State's aging population, some of whom may be at risk of becoming victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The State of North Carolina has not provided any funding for the APS Program since the 2010-2012 State budget. The only funding for the APS Program is provided by county governments and a decreasing federal Social Services Block Grant. We recommend that the North Carolina General Assembly recognize and value its vulnerable and older citizens by making available \$5 million in recurring funds in the State budget to meet the growing need for APS in North Carolina.

Reestablish the Study Commission on Aging

The General Assembly of the State of North Carolina created The North Carolina Study Commission on Aging in 1987 to study and evaluate the delivery of services to older adults and recommend improvements that would meet their current and future needs. In 2011, this commission was repealed, creating an information gap between the older adults in need of assistance and organizations concerned with meeting those needs. The North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature requests the North Carolina General Assembly reestablish the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging. **UPDATE: The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services has designated a Subcommittee on Aging which began meeting in November of 2017.**

