

## North Carolina Coalition on Aging

**Minutes from Meeting on Friday, January 26, 2018 – 10:00 a.m.  
Room 104, Brown Building (801 Biggs Drive on Dix Campus)**

### **In attendance:**

Mary Bethel (President), Alan Winstead (Treasurer and Meals on Wheels Association on NC), Marty Lamb (Secretary), Pam Palmer (Triangle J AAA), Nancy Warren (NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse), Joan Pellettier (NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse), Erin Nortonen (Life Links), George Smith (NC STHL), Jimmy Parker (NC STHL), Teresa Johnson Troup (NC Adult Day Services Association), Julie Wiggins (NC Association of AAA), Sandy Gregory (NC BAM and NCAOA), Stan Mitchell (SAGE), Joseph Wheeler (SAGE), Lacy Cottingham (Cameron Commons), Kristen Brannock (Resources for Seniors), Randolph Cloud (Randolph Cloud and Associates), Linda Shaw (NC PACE Association), Pat Martin (Johnston County), David Litman (NC DSDHH), Leah Proctor (NC 2-1-1), Tracy Colvard (Association for Home and Hospice Care of NC), Carol Kelly (Rethink Guardianship/NC Guardianship Association), Lee Little (Durham County Government), John Thoma (Transitions LifeCare), Nancy Francis (Center for Volunteer Caregiving), Roger Manus (Governor's Advisory Council on Aging), Ana Pardo (NC Justice Center), Margaret Toman (Friends of Residents in LTC), Catherine Goldman (Wake County Human Services), Kelly Peterson (NASW – NC), Kathryn Freeman (NCSU Intern), Ruben Nuno (Food Bank of Central and Eastern NV), and two Interpreters. **Presenters:** Hank Bowers (NC DAAS), Theresa Matula (Legislative Analysis Division, NC General Assembly), Kelly Tornow (NC Center for Responsible Lending), and Alicia Blater (NC DAAS).

**On phone:** Dick Hatch (advocate), Dee Hatch (advocate), Dot Crawford (advocate), Dr. Sonya Hardin (ECU College of Nursing), Eric Kivisto (NC Health Care Facilities Association), Suzanne Martin (NC Oral Health Collaborative), and Bill Lamb (Past President and Friends of Residents in LTC; *note: Bill was home recuperating from knee replacement surgery. A get well card was circulated for all present to sign.*)

**Opening Remarks and Introductions** – Mary Bethel, President

**Approval of Minutes from December 8, 2017 Meeting** – Marty Lamb, Secretary. Minutes were approved.

**Review of Treasurer’s Report** – Alan Winstead, Treasurer. As of January 16, 2018, the financial balance was \$15,981.85. The goal is to have at least the same amount of money in the budget at the end of 2018 as we had at the end of 2017. Mary shared that new memberships have been received from (Aetna Medicare, Community and Senior Services of Johnston County, Greene County Department of Social Services, Meals on Wheels of Durham, Southern Gerontological Association, Sandi Gray-Terry, Carol Kelly, Margaret Kirkman, Franklin D. Saunders, and Jeanne Yocum). She thanked the new members as well as those who had renewed membership so far for 2018. She passed around a sheet that included information on membership renewals so those present who had renewed could verify we have received their renewal.

**Activities and Updates since December Meeting** – Mary Bethel reported attending a number of meetings and sending Updates to the Coalition members. She discussed the presentation that she made to the Aging Subcommittee of the Joint Oversight Committee (JOC) on HHS in December on behalf of the Coalition. Several additional Coalition members also presented at the Subcommittee meeting on behalf of their Associations. She shared information from a number of legislative committee meetings and also noted that she made a presentation to the Advocacy Committee of the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services on the Coalition’s priorities.

Roger said there are eight persons on the group he has pulled together on collecting stories to put a face on aging issues. They have considered what the goal is for the group, how to curate and edit stories, and when best to initiate contact with others about them. He invited others to join the group. Ana Pardo with the NC Justice Center shared that they will be working further with AARP to focus on seniors as well as with Moms Rising as a part of the NC Family Care Coalition to advocate for family leave benefits.

**Update from DHHS/NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS)** was provided by Hank Bowers, Deputy Director for the Division. Items he covered included:

- DAAS Awards for 2017 are being announced. He just got back from Iredell County where he presented the Messer Award to the Mooresville Mayor's Senior Roundtable.
- DHHS has announced new competitive grant funding to target the opioid crisis.
- The board for Cardinal Innovation, the behavioral MCO that has been in the news, will convene tomorrow.
- HB 630 (Social Services Regionalization/Supervision) – Reviews for the national contractor for this initiative are going on. The national contractor will be named on February 23. Work is on-going on the county contracts. There is a technical assistance workgroup within the Department.
- Work is on-going with the UNC School of Social Work on the third year of the report on Rethinking Guardianship.
- Work is starting on the 2019-2023 State Aging Services Plan.
- Michael Becketts, Assistant Secretary for Human Services at DHHS, has noted that he wants an emphasis on adult protective services and guardianship
- Dawn Oakey Gartman, Project C.A.R.E. Director at DAAS, has been asked to speak to the Aging Subcommittee of the JOC on HHS on February 12.
- Performance measures are being looked at.

He also announced that Suzanne Merrill, Division Director, is still home recuperating from surgery held the end of last year (*A get well card for Suzanne was circulated for all present to sign*). She is expected back in mid-February.

Following Hank's remarks, there were several questions. Nancy Warren asked about performance measure on adult protective services and guardianship. Hank noted they will be made public. Kristen Brannock asked if any progress has been made on getting overnight respite under the Home and Community Care Block Grant approved. Alicia Blater with DAAS responded that it is hoped that this will be in place for next year. Linda Shaw asked if there is the opportunity for public input into the 2019 State Aging Services Plan. Hank's response was "absolutely."

Roger Manus, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, reported that a letter has been sent to the Governor that contained the Council's recommendations for action. He will be sending an additional letter to the Governor which particularly focuses on the importance of adult protective services and guardianship. He encourages other organizations to have these issues as a priority as well.

**Presentation by Theresa Matula, Principal Legislative Analyst with the Legislative Analysis Division with the NC General Assembly.** In introducing Theresa, Mary noted that this is the third time she has presenting at a Coalition meeting. Teresa shared that she has been with the General Assembly for over 20 years. She staffed the former Study Commission on Aging. Now she leads the team on health at the Legislative Analysis Divisions. She discussed the different sections of legislative staff. Her section handles a lot of citizen requests. She gave us hand-outs for some of the most helpful sections of the General Assembly website. She noted a good article on the site from the General Assembly library that provides information about the different kinds of “sessions” of the legislature. A search can be done by topic on the website. Information on a particular bill can be found by just entering the number of the bill in the search box. The Analysis Division provides a final summary of session law. She distributed a summary of 2017 enacted legislation pertaining to older and disabled adults. A more complete 38 page summary of health and human service legislation passed is available on the website for the HHS Joint Oversight Committee (JOC). Agendas and hand-outs from HHS committee meeting are also on the website. The HHS JOC has three active committees. The JOC will meet next on February 13 (note: this meeting was cancelled because the General Assembly was in special session). Sen. Pate, Rep. Dobson, and Rep. Lambeth are co-chairs. The agenda for the committee meetings are posted the night before the meeting on the website. The JOC has three sub-committees, including the Aging Subcommittee which has met. The January meeting of this sub-committee was cancelled because of snow. The other two sub-committees should meet for the first time in February. April may be the last meeting of the JOC and its report with any recommendations will come out then. There are restrictions on what legislation can be considered in a short session, but study commission recommended bills can be considered then.

A JOC on Medicaid and NC Health Choice is also meeting. They have met twice and may meet three more times. A Legislative Research Commission (LRC) Committee on Access to Health Care in Rural North Carolina is also meeting. Mary shared that she had attended the first meeting of the committee and that one of the things that came through was the fact that economic development and whether there are things like adequate housing and good schools impact whether health care providers go to an area. LRC Committees are limited to four meetings unless given permission for more. The report from this committee is due April 1. The General Assembly will reconvene for the short legislative session on May 16. A bill has to go through a legislator before it gets to a bill writer.

George Smith expressed a concern that legislative assistant staff sometime do not pass on information left for legislators. Several questions were asked of Theresa about legislative priorities and what can be expected from the committees that have been meeting since the long session adjourned. Theresa noted that all legislative staff are sworn to confidentiality. Redistricting has gotten a lot of attention. Mary asked Teresa about the Aging Subcommittee meetings and whether any substantial recommendations could come up this year? Theresa said that the cancellation of the January meeting due to snow may have set the sub-committee back a bit. All subcommittees are to report to the JOC in March so time is short for them. Some subcommittees have not even met yet. Legislators on the Aging Subcommittee have at least learned about aging services in North Carolina. DAAS helps the legislature by preparing demographic data about the aging population by county. That gets their attention. Mary asked Theresa if she had recommendations of things the Coalition needs to be doing better to have more of an impact. Theresa noted that when we have presented hand-outs, that has been helpful. If we have issues of concern, we were encouraged to contact legislators. Theresa closed by saying that we can contact her at 919-733-2578 if there are public things we are looking for that are just hard to find. She said most representatives do read their e-mail.

**Update on State and Federal Developments** – In addition to state efforts previously noted, Mary shared:

- Since our last meeting, tax reform legislation passed. She sent out several things on what this might mean for aging programs and services and a time line for provisions going into place.
- There was a federal government weekend-long shutdown. Earlier this week a deal was reached and the President signed a short-term spending bill Monday evening that will fund the government through Feb. 8. The bill also extends the Children's Health Insurance Program through 2023 and suspends three Obamacare related taxes and fees. Senate Democrats agreed to the short-term spending bill to reopen the government after securing a commitment from Republican leaders that if there isn't a deal addressing the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program by the February 8 expiration of the short-term spending bill, the Senate will immediately proceed to legislation dealing with DACA and immigration. Yesterday, it was reported that President Trump says he will support DACA in exchange for building the Wall and other immigration concessions.

**Letter to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Relative to PayDay Lending** – Coalition member, the Center for Responsible Lending, has in the past taken a strong stand on payday lending. Kelly Tornow, Director of North Carolina Policy for the Center, shared that the Center would like for the Coalition to sign on to a letter to the NC Congressional delegation to oppose a move in Congress to repeal the national payday lending rule. She provided information about payday loans which have very high interest rates (300 % APR). Pay day lenders target older Americans because many make under \$30,000 a year and they have a regular source of money each month like Social Security. Almost 75% of pay day loans are taken out by low income people numerous times. The effort by Congress is a big deal as it not only rolls back the law, but guarantees no such legislation can be brought up in the future unless Congress approves. Congressman Walter Jones has been a huge ally against payday lending, but others in Congress are not on board. Our two Senators might vote to roll back current provisions. Payday lenders are huge contributor to legislators. She has stories on elderly borrowers. The letter the Coalition is asked to sign on to emphasizes why the present legislation is strong and needed. She also has a report on money saved that otherwise would have gone to payday lenders. Roger Manus reviewed the letter we were being asked to sign and thought it was fine, but since not all members of the Coalition had seen the letter, he made a motion which was seconded by Nancy Warren that tentative approval for sign on be given and that Mary send the letter to all Coalition members by e-mail and if there were no objections received by Wednesday, January 31, the Coalition would sign on. The motion was approved by consensus, and Mary will e-mail a copy of letter to everyone. (note: There was no objection received so the Coalition signed on to the letter).

**Respite Voucher Program** – Alicia Blater, Family Caregiver Support Program Consultant and Lifespan Respite Director with DAAS, talked about how caregiver services are administered. DAAS received federal Family Caregiver Support funding, Project C.A.R.E. funding, and Lifespan Respite funding. Lifespan Respite funding is available to improve respite, not just for older adults, but to improve respite across the lifespan. Funding is available for \$500 respite vouchers to 200 to 250 family caregivers who have difficulty paying for respite and who have not accessed public funding in the last 6 months. The Project C.A.R.E. model is very similar to the Lifespan voucher program but is specifically for caregivers of persons with dementia. It takes a 20 to 25 minutes interview to complete the application to receive such funding. 80% of those receiving the assistance have never tried respite care. There is not a requirement about who they can hire with this voucher to provide the respite care. The caregiver completes an

application with a local agency. If found eligible, the caregiver is given a reimbursement based voucher and completes a time sheet. The High Country Area Agency on Aging is the contractor for processing the vouchers. There are still 110 vouchers available to be spent in the next three months (to be used through June). John Thoma asked a question about the time frame for vouchers. Caregivers can get one voucher per contract year. This funding is available until 2020.

### **Announcements:**

Mary listed the persons who had signed on to be part of the Coalition's workgroup on long term sustainability. Other announcements were as follows:

- SGS conference will be held in Lake Lanier, Georgia.
- Family Medical Leave Act anniversary is February 25.
- An Expo for LGBTQ adults and family members will be at Five Points Senior Center on June 23. Between 40 and 60 exhibitors are expected. Corporate sponsors are being sought.
- Partnership to Prevent Elder Abuse annual meeting is May 16<sup>th</sup> at Wake Community College.
- STHL meeting will be held March 13 and 14 at Sheraton in Chapel Hill.
- The Center for Volunteer Caregiving will have its Red Carpet Rendezvous at the NC State University Club on February 9 from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. The Center is pleased it is this year's recipient of the Maddox Award from DAAS. They will have a Lunch and Learn on March 13 and a Caregiver Academy starting on April 12.
- Dementia Capable Summit in Cary will be January 30.
- NC Association on Aging will have the State Aging Conference on March 14-15 at the Great Wolf Lodge.
- NC PACE Association Conference will be April 12-13 at the Sheraton Imperial. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PACE in North Carolina.
- NCBAM is "Ramping It Up" to build more ramps. They have a record of building 321 wheelchair ramps in one day. April 28 will be a big build event. All are invited to come join them in building ramps.
- Friends of Residents in Long Term Care will sponsor four listening sessions across the state in Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Wilmington on February 27, and Asheville to discuss long term care interests and concerns.

Mary drew everyone's attention to the sheet on the Coalition's 2018 legislative priorities. She announced that her e-mail has been hacked. Let her know if you are receiving any "crazy" e-mails that look like they come from her. Mary shared

that the General Assembly will no longer allow groups to congregate in the indoor courtyards for things such as information fairs or legislative advocacy days so this will impact the Coalition's Day at the Legislature. We will need to decide how to restructure our efforts for this.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting is scheduled for February 23. The Brown Building is not available so the meeting is tentatively scheduled to be in the large conference room at DAAS.

Martha Lamb, Secretary

**Meeting Dates for 2018**

February 23

March 23

April 20

May 18

June 22

August 24

September 28 (annual meeting)

October 26

December 7