

**MEETING DATE:** December 9, 2016  
**SUMMARY OF:** N.C. Coalition on Aging Meeting

**FROM:**

**RECORDED BY:** Marty Lamb

<b>TO:</b>	<b>D I S T R I B U T I O N</b>	<p><b>PARTICIPANTS IN ATTENDANCE:</b></p> <p>Pam Palmer, NCPAAA  Richard Scott, Governor's Advisory Council on Aging  Karen Appert, Appert Marketing/SGS  Teresa Johnson Troup, NC Adult Day Services Assoc.  David Silver, Elder and Special Needs Law Section, NCBA  Chandra Henson, Catawba Co. DSS  David Litman, NC Div. of Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing  Les Geller, SAGE Raleigh  Polly Williams, NC Justice Center  Janice Tyler, Orange County Dept. on Aging/NCAOA  Heather McLaughlin, NC Alliance for Retired Americans  Dee Hatch, OWL  Magaret Kirkman, NCAFCA  Amanda Borer, Charles House  Jo Paul, SHIIP/NC DOI  Paola Learoyd, Randolph Cloud and Associates  Alan Winstead, Meals on Wheels of Wake Co./Meals on Wheels Assoc. of NC  Julie Wiggins, High Country AAA/NC4A  Sarah Jacobson, American Heart Assoc./Am. Stroke Assoc.  Frances Messer, NCAFCA  Leslie Roseboro, Leading Age NC  Kate Murphy, - NC DHHS (Public Affairs)  Mary Edwards, NC DAAS  Margaret Toman, FOR in LTC  Ana Pardo, NC Justice Center  Nicole Miller  Linda Shaw, NC PACE Association  Thomas Goldsmith, NC Health News  Charmaine Fuller Cooper, AARP NC  Secretary Rick Brajer, DHHS  Suzanne Merrill, NC DAAS  Mary Bethel, President  2 interpreters for NC Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><u>On Phone:</u>  Bill Lamb, FOR in LTC  Marty Lamb, OWL  Joan Pellettier, NCPAAA  Nicole Karin, NC NAMI  Jennifer Albright, Autumn's Way Care Home</p>
		<p><b>OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING:</b> to hear updates including from Mary Bethel, Secretary Brajer, and Suzanne Merrill, share with Secretary Brajer, review ballots results and plan for dissemination, and plan and sharing information further.</p>
<p><b>****PROGRESS AND DECISIONS****</b>  <i>What key decisions were made during the meeting?</i></p>		
<p><b>SUBJECT</b></p>		

<p>Introductions</p> <p>Secretary Brajer</p> <p>Input to Secretary Brajer on Needs of Older North Carolinians and Their Families and About What is Working Well and Where Challenges Exist in Providing Programs and Services for Our State's Older Residents</p>	<p>Persons identified themselves and the organizations they represented.</p> <p>He made brief opening comments and noted that elections don't change daily truths. We ascribe to basic truth that we are only as good as we protect most vulnerable. All life has inherent worth and dignity. It's true at all stages. He stated he is here to listen and to learn. What unites us is what we agree is needed in our state.</p> <p>Teresa Troup shared that adult day centers are in over 50 counties. Rates of reimbursement have not changed since 2006. She noted there is a need to change how rates are set and she also advocated for HCBG, particularly the restoration of funding that will expire at the end of this year. Julie Wiggins was also spoke on behalf of the HCBBG. People want to age in place. Mary Bethel also noted the request by the NCAFCA and the Assoc. for Home and Hospice Care for an increase in rates for PCS.</p> <p>Sec. Brajer said having a pool of funding to increase Medicaid rates for PCS and other services might be a consideration. A challenge is legislators may have to run again for election next fall which means that this coming long session will be like a short session and be highly politicized. For any population that benefits from community based services, there are two metrics about outcomes we should look at . You can look at return on investment with conservatives but demonstrate examples where we can achieve positive outcomes. Marty Lamb indicated while she understands initiatives towards rewarding positive outcomes in health care, she was concerned this would encourage providers to serve the most healthy for whom they can achieve improvements and positive outcomes (creaming), and to ignore persons with more serious illnesses who may not improve but need treatment, possibly long term. She asked how this could be addressed. He said that just yesterday, as a state, we came up what metrics that will be used with Medicaid reform. No one was there at the meeting represented the aging. It was asked who should be considered from this group represents aging that has the ability to contribute to discussion in metrics. Follow-up discussion continued with concern expressed that Medicaid reform does not have much focus on the elderly. The Secretary shared that N.C. is one of the top ten aging states. 40% of Medicaid expenditures are with adults. He noted that Sabrena Lee and Trish Farnham with the Division of Medical Assistance are dedicated to this interest with Trish dedicated to LTSS. He added, that when we talk of reform, we need to talk about what is in our waiver and what's happening at federal level. He said that Speaker Paul Ryan's view of the world gives states flexibility in use of Medicaid dollars. What is right in N.C. and how do we keep people in their homes may gain higher priority. He went on to say that aging has friends in Dave Richard (State Medicaid Director), Sabrena, and Trish.</p> <p>The Secretary asked who are friends now in the legislature. Sens. Tucker, Barefoot, and Robinson, and Reps. Dollar and Lambeth names were mentioned. He said Rep. Lambeth will be assuming more of a key role in the House related to HHS issues. He recommended we consider developing a stronger relationship with Senator Hise (from Spruce Pine) who has strong family beliefs. He recommended, formally and informally, that we consider developing allies. He said that Kender Gerlock's (DHHS Public Affairs) mom is long term secretary of Sen. Berger and it would be good if we could use that relationship to help make connections with Sen. Berger. He also suggested that we meet with Jim Blaine on Sen. Berger's staff to have him learn of our interests as well as meet one on one with people like Senator Hise who is expected to take the lead in the Senate on HHS issues and seek his advice. Someone made the comment that Senator Hise is very genuine. It was suggested that Sens. Jackson and Brown may be interested in aging interests. The Secretary suggested that we come up with an aging success metric that could be recommended that might have a money impact – ex. how costs can be controlled by keeping older adults healthier and out of places that are more expense.</p> <p>Charmaine Fuller Cooper thanked the Secretary for his work and wondered what DHHS persons we should try to obtain data on in certain counties. Cindy Deporter with Div. of Health Services Regulations was suggested as a source of institutional data. He recommended we work though Suzanne Merrill with DAAS for data. It was noted that only 17 of our counties will be growing younger in a few years. You need to convey simple messages, positive messages, and negative messages. The example of how Sen. Tucker became an advocate for child protective service was noted, and Mary Bethel pointed out that we also have many adult protective service</p>
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	<p>challenges in the state that need a champion. He said we need to share adult protective service numbers with legislature as well. They need to hear the numbers to hone in on the fact that real human beings are being hurt and displaced. Polly Williams said we've been focusing so much on funding that it's been hard to make progress and be proactive on issues. She said that the deposition of elder abuse is a big concern for her. She'd like to know how many protective service referrals are turned down because abuse is not by a caretaker. She said that we need to hear about issues multiple times to hone in on them. Someone pointed out that the Penalty Review Committee helped focus attention on this but this committee was dissolved at the end of the year. The Secretary asked for more information about that. Several people offered background information. Bill Lamb, as ex-chair of the Penalty Review Committee, shared on behalf of Friends of Residents in Long Term Care that he thought the Committee allowed transparency outside of just industry talking to the regulators and gave families the opportunity to bring issues forward. That transparency has been lost. Bill said there is an adult care stakeholders' group and he noted that automation is not well funded in the Department and staff time supporting penalty review was a concern related to its elimination.</p> <p>Mary Bethel shared that she is excited by the Alzheimer's State Plan and the opportunity this Plan offers to add visibility to important issues. She thanked the Secretary for his attendance and thoughtful input and heartfelt comments.</p> <p>She directed peoples' attention to hand-outs regarding air quality issues in N.C. (how impacts seniors) that were available for pick up. There was a short break while the Secretary departed.</p>
Minutes	Upon reconvening after the break, the minutes of the October 28 meeting were approved.
Treasurer report	\$11361.90 is the current balance. There were few transactions this month. People were reminded by Mary to send in their dues if they have not already.
Updates and Activities	<p>Many announced that the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association has joined the Coalition. There are also two new individuals members as well. Another <i>Update</i> will be sent out shortly. The draft report from the Dual Eligible Advisory Committee should be sent out soon. She attended a recent Care4Carolina meeting. The Coalition had an exhibit at the Aging and Environment conference at N.C. State. Aging issues have not been on radar screen of DHHS which may be good or bad. Amanda Boyer, the Health and Aging Fellow, indicated she has been learning about health policy in D.C. She'll be looking at home and community based services and caregiving issues in N.C. Mary said looking at the return on investment for supportive services is important.</p>
DAAS Division update	<p>Suzanne Merrill, DAAS Director, announced that there are two new positions to move the Alzheimer's plan along in the Division. The No Wrong Door (211) initiative, is being led by Stacie Hurley. Nancy Warren retired from the Division December 1. She will probably be active in advocacy for guardianship. Comments are now being accepted on the rules for the ombudsman program through the Administration for Community Living. Policies and procedures are changed in relation to meeting new federal requirements. As a result of action taken in the last legislative session, a temporary payment of State/County Special Assistance (SA) is being made to adult care home providers of \$34.00 a month. The Division will be convening a work group in January to study how to increase SA payments without affecting the Medicaid budget. No changes are being seen by the Division that would affect government shutdown.</p>
Voting results for Priorities for legislative agenda	<p>Mary reported that 13 issues were on the ballot for voting for priority issues for the Coalition's 2017 legislative agenda. 28 organizations of the 46 member agencies/organizations/groups actually voted. Top vote getter was HCBG, 2nd - study commission to addressing aging issues,, 3<sup>rd</sup> - APS/guardianship, 4<sup>th</sup> - increasing reimbursement rate for Medicaid PCS and CAP-DA, and 5<sup>th</sup> - closing coverage gap (few votes but those who voted gave top vote), etc.</p>

<p>Discussion</p>	<p>There were comments about some of recommendations. Bill Lamb, Charmaine Fuller Cooper, Ana Pardo and Linda Shaw spoke. Mary reviewed questions that members were asked to consider in casting their votes. She asked, in the future, do we want to consider broader issues. Linda said yes. Charmaine said AARP is always being asked how are you encouraging people to save their money for retirement. Polly Williams spoke as well. Teresa Troup mentioned that discussion at our meeting is helpful in considering what are issues. Mary asked about submitting the top 6 as our priorities. Initially there were few responses. Then there was lively discussion including whether issue three should include the provision that staff hired for APS/guardianship be degreed social workers. There was not clear agreement that degreed social workers should be required, therefore, it was agreed that this requirement would not be included. The issue about requiring a “pass through” of at least 50% of any increase in PCS and CAP-DA rates to employees was next discussed. After discussion, it was agreed this provision would not be included. Mary noted that because the legislature has not been receptive to wage issues, this provision could possibly jeopardize the request for an increased reimbursement rate. It was noted that clarification on the national average rate of reimbursement for PCS will be obtained. Charmaine said AARP is watching efforts related to the Affordable Care Act closely. Mary acknowledged there is a lot of uncertainty about what the landscape will be these days. A comment was made that we need to be nimble. Charmaine suggested we just go with the top four priority issues. Mary noted that she was concerned there were 11 agencies/organization/groups who voted for the issue about supporting working caregivers although most did not have as a top priority. She asked if we wanted to include that issue in the list of priorities? It was agreed to add this as the 5<sup>th</sup> priority issue for the Coalition.</p> <p>Charmaine expressed concerned we did not have “maintaining financial security” in any of our recommendation, and that is a major issue and an AARP concern. May suggested that we look at wording for the recommendation about establishing a joint legislative committee to examine issues pertaining to older adults and include addressing issues related to financial security as a part of that. Several suggestions of wording were made. Mary will send out draft language for members to review and to vote on final wording for this priority.</p>
<p>Long range plan for Coalition and other business</p>	<p>Mary noted that we need to think about a long range plan for the Coalition and where we want to direct our efforts. She noted that she is now spending three days on doing each <i>Update</i>. Charmaine wondered if we need to think of a full-time lobbyist. Teresa asked about how we can pave the path so we continue moving forward. Questions asked included: Is our current direction where we need to be going? Is there value in this? How do we make the Coalition sustainable? Where do we want the Coalition to go as a diverse group? Mary suggested that we need to be proactive not just preserve what we have. Should focus be on education, sharing, lobbying, or where? Mary concluded by saying we are just beginning to think about these issues, but need to continue the conversation at the next meeting.</p>
<p>Organizational Announcements</p>	<p>Teresa shared an effort she is undertaking to recognize the direct care workers at an assisted living facility where her uncle is residing. She hopes this can be a model that other people may want to replicate to honor caregivers.</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.</p>

**HANDOUTS**

- Agenda, Ballot results, air quality handouts

<b>Who</b>	<b>Assignments</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
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All	Send final comments on priority issue related to establishing a legislative committee to study aging issues to Mary	Immediately
Mary	Put together final recommendations to route	Soon
Marty	Route draft minutes to Mary	soon
<b>****NEXT MEETING****</b>		
<b>Day / Date / Time</b>	<b>WHAT</b>	<b>Where</b>
Friday January 27, 2017 10:00am until 12 noon	Next Coalition meeting	DAAS on Dix campus