

North Carolina Coalition on Aging

Agenda

Friday, December 8, 2017 – 10:00 a.m.

Room 104, Brown Building (801 Biggs Drive on Dix Campus)

In attendance: Mary Bethel, Alan Winstead, Janice Tyler, Marty Lamb, Bill Lamb, Pam Palmer, Margaret Toman, Nancy Smith, Margaret Kirkman, Joseph Wheeler, Teresa Troup, Gregory Pandorf, Mary Edwards, Tom Akins, Roger Manus, Les Geller, Hank Bowers, Nancy Ruffner, Chandra Henson, Pat Martin, Jimmy Parker, George Smith, Chad Walker, Kay Castillo, Mary Stillwell, Beth Oakley, Lee Little, Ana Pardo, Karen Appert, Kent Earnhardt, Suzanne Martin, Joyce Massey-Smith

On phone: Dick Hatch, Dee Hatch, Katherine Doddridge, Rosalyn Pettiford, David Litman, Eric Kivisto, Richard Rogers, Leslie Roseboro, Dot Crawford, and Carol Kelly

Opening Remarks and Introductions – Mary Bethel, President

Approval of Minutes from October 27, 2017 Meeting – Marty Lamb, Secretary. Minutes were approved.

Review of Treasurer's Report – Alan Winstead, Treasurer. As of 11/27/17 the financial balance was \$15,810.07.

Activities and Updates Since October Meeting – Mary Bethel reported attending a number of meetings and sending updates to the Coalition members letting them know the present status of various initiatives related to aging. She thanked members for the membership renewals already received.

Mary reported on the meeting of our executive committee with Michael Beckett and Ben Poppins with DHHS where we discussed aging issues, our Coalition

priorities, and the work of the social services regionalization/supervision workgroup. It was noted that prior to coming to his present position with DHHS, Michael Beckett had been the Director of the Durham County Department of Social Services.

Bill Lamb reported on his attendance at the CAP-DA listening session in Raleigh. Only two persons signed up to comment, and Bill was one of them. Each speaker had 5 minutes to make comments. He spoke about reimbursement rates and renewing the waiver. There was discussion about the need to increase the reimbursement rate for services like home delivered meals and adult day health and for support for more case managers. Mike Bowles from Wake Resources for Seniors was the other speaker at the session. We have one of the lowest reimbursement rates for adult day care and community based services in this country. Our rate for home delivered meals is \$2.99 while the meals cost is \$7.53 in Wake County. A Division of Medical Assistance advisory committee has been set up, and Bill is on it.

N.C. Health News had an anniversary celebration, and has received several grants. They hope to hire a full-time reporter on aging. Rose Hoban, Editor of NC Health News, interviewed Mary for a story on medical deductions.

The first organizational meeting of the Aging Subcommittee of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services was held on November 17. Mary and Bill attended this. The Subcommittee is asking for information about the needs of older adults, and they want recommendations on how to address the needs. The next meeting is December 13 and Mary has been asked to make a presentation to the Subcommittee. Issues shared as being important to discuss included support for families caring for family members, particularly with Alzheimer's, and Medicaid sustainability. Roger Manus, chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging and convener of an Aging Leadership Roundtable, advised we not stay away from the "f" word - "funding." Support for affordable housing and transportation was noted. Mary reported that a House Select Committee on Strategic Transportation Planning and Long Term Funding Solutions has asked for a presentation in early January about aging and its impact on transportation needs.

In other updates, Mary shared that the Institute of Medicine has initiated a new fellows program for legislators, particularly new legislators, to provide them with in- depth information on health issues and resources. Eighteen legislators have signed up with several more expected. George Smith talked about property rights

of people and the importance of having access to a planner. Ana Pardo shared that the NC Justice Center has an initiative about paid family caregivers and is partnering with Moms Rising and NC Child to push for a study by the Child Fatality Task Force on paid family medical leave. A report is considered for next fall. Tom Akins with LeadingAge NC indicated interest in friendliness of technology and how it may affect aging populations. He spoke of the concept of Uber Eats and driverless cars.

Update from NC Division of Aging and Adult Services – Hank Bower, Deputy Director

Suzanne Merrill, Division Director, is home recuperating from surgery. (note: Coalition members signed a card at the meeting to send to Suzanne). Hank reported that the Alzheimer's Coalition will have its third meeting next week. The focus of this meeting will be addressing public safety recommendations from the Alzheimer's plan. The second meeting of the Statewide Dementia Capable Workgroup will be January 10. The Division is following up with the Aging Subcommittee of the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services to provide information Subcommittee members requested from staff at their November presentation to the Subcommittee including information about waiting lists. He reported on HB630 which pertains to regionalization/supervision of Social Services and the work underway by the workgroup leading this effort under the guidance of the UNC School of Government. He shared the time line for selecting a vendor for work on this. Efforts are underway to develop measures for the county performance contracts. He noted that adult services is included in the discussions by the workgroup.

Presentation by Joyce Massey-Smith, Adult Services Section Chief with NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS)

(note: Joyce used a Power Point which was e-mailed to Coalition members after the meeting). Joyce presented about what was learned from the listening sessions held on adult protective services (APS) and public guardianship and efforts related to the opioid crisis and older adults. She discussed the Divisions role in APS and guardianship which are mandated services and shared general comments on APS and guardianship. The federal Social Services Block Grant is the primary funding source for both services and funding has not kept pace with the need for services. 79% of funding for APS comes from county dollars. APS referrals are up 69% in the last 10 years, it is under-reported. 5% of reports are for abuse. Most reported are for self-neglect. The Governor's budget proposal had included additional funding for more staff and for funding for essential services for persons in need of services, but funding was not approved. Guardians are appointed by county clerks

of court. Departments of Social Services are disinterested public agents. A large number of the persons with public guardians are younger adults with severe and persistent mental illness. There is a Rethinking Guardianship initiative going on that is in its third year. The workgroup from this initiative will propose a package of legislative recommendations next year pertaining to improving guardianship laws. She noted how complicated APS and guardianship cases are and that county departments of Social Services cannot do it all. There is hope that APS and guardianship issues can be part of the discussion relative to DSS regionalization/supervision. Next she shared what was learned from the listening sessions on APS and public guardianship. There were 11 sessions held across the state. Over 300 people attended. Key points shared by participants included:

- There are not adequate resources to help individuals to stay independent to avoid guardianship
- Guardianship is often inappropriately used.
- There is lack of access to behavioral health services.
- There are many cross cutting issues at play including housing and transportation. Bed bugs were listed by several people as a problem.
- There is inadequate staffing and compensation for APS and guardianship staff (this is different from child welfare staff).
- There is no required pre-service training for staff.
- State statutes related to APS and guardianship need to be examined and changes made. NC was the first state in the county to have APS laws but needed changes have not been made over the years.
- We need to think about approaching APS differently with more focus on intervention on the front end.
- The bar should be higher relative to declaring someone incompetent.
- There is a need for multi-disciplinary evaluations.
- Partnerships at the local level are very important.

There were several questions from those at the meeting of Joyce including a question about the county resource survey and funding for guardianship corporations.

Joyce continued her presentation by discussing efforts related to the opioid crisis and older adults. She noted that the state has received a \$31 million grant to help address the opioid crisis. She talked about use of opioids by seniors for pain and issues related to over use of opioids. A statistic she shared is that 67% of those who are addicted to opioids get drugs from someone they know. Training was held on November 7 for APS and guardianship staff on the opioid crisis. Four more

regional events are scheduled for social services and addiction staff. Many human service people across the state are being trained in how to administer naloxone. DAAS is putting together a work group on combating the opioid crisis. She shared several resource materials focused on encouraging older adults to lock up their medications.

Update on Federal and State Developments – Mary Bethel and others who track federal and state issues provided an update on the latest developments related to proposed federal tax reform legislation. A conference committee will address the differences in the House and Senate tax reform plans. Aging advocates are concerned that both bills would increase the deficit by more than \$1 million which could lead to cuts in federally funded programs including Medicaid, Medicare, and Social Security. Congress has taken steps to approve a continuing resolution to continue funding of the federal government through December 22. On the state level, legislative committees are continuing to meet in the interim while out of session. Several legislative committee meetings of interest to Coalition members were noted earlier in the meeting.

Discussion of Plans for 2018 – Mary shared materials and led a discussion of several items.

- Membership renewal notices for 2018 have gone out. Members can make contributions to support the Coalition's work in excess of the membership dues.
- Legislative Priorities – After discussion, a motion as made by Bill Lamb and seconded by George Smith that our legislative priorities for the short session be those we had for the 2017 session for which action was not taken. The motion was approved by all. It was also agreed that the Coalition would be flexible if additional issues come up that we need to address.
- Draft Work Plan for 2018 has been shared with members. After discussion, there was a motion by Roger Manus which was seconded by Tom Akins that the work plan be approved. The motion was approved by all.
- Budget for 2018 has been shared with members. A question about dues payment was addressed. There was a motion by George Smith which was seconded by Pat Martin to approve the budget. The motion was approved by all.
- Workgroup on By-laws, 501(c)3 Status, and Financial Sustainability. Mary announced that this is being established. If interested in being on the workgroup, please let her know. It will meet soon.

Use of Stories in Advocacy – Roger Manus, Chair of Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging, talked about the importance of using stories when advocating with legislature and others. There was discussion about the merits of this. He proposed forming a group to develop/collect stories on behalf of the Coalition. Persons in the group volunteered to be a part of this including Carol Kelly, Margaret Toman, Chad Walker, Suzanne Martin, Ken Earnhardt, and Joseph Wheeler.

Sharing by Coalition Members – Those in attendance shared information including the following:

- Roger Manus – The Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging is developing recommendations to the Governor. They have numerous new members.
- Pam Palmer – The NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse will meet on January 17 at 9:30 a.m. at Triangle J Council of Governments.
- Beth Oakley – The NC Association, Long Term Care Facilities’ board has approved a name change of the Association to the NC Senior Living Association. This will probably take place in January.
- Les Geller – SAGE is looking at advocacy services for LGBT elders. They are partnering with Resources for Seniors for a Expo and are looking for sponsors.
- Suzanne Martin – The NC Oral Health Collaborative has a program on January 19. They have a new video on their web-site.
- Ken Earnhardt – He commented about the lack of citations for violations for handicap parking.
- Bill Lamb – He shared information about the Star Rating System workgroup. They have meetings scheduled for later in December and in January.
- Alan Winstead – He announced that Governor Cooper delivered their (Wake Meals on Wheels) 9,000,000 meal served since 1074.

Mary noted the meeting dates for 2018 which are listed at the bottom of the minutes.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned for networking and holiday cheer.

Meeting Dates for 2018

January 26

February 23
March 23
April 20
May 18
June 22
August 24
September 28 (annual meeting)
October 26
December 7

Martha Lamb, Secretary