

MEETING DATE: February 24, 2017

SUMMARY OF: N.C. Coalition on Aging Meeting

RECORDED BY: Marty Lamb

TO:

**D
I
S
T
R
I
B
U
T
I
O
N**

PARTICIPANTS IN ATTENDANCE:

May Bethel, Coalition President
Bill Lamb, NC FOR-LTC (Coalition Past President)
Marty Lamb, Coalition Secretary
Alan Winstead, Meals on Wheels (Coalition Treasurer)
Joan Pellettier, NCPAAA
Susan Helmer, Intern FOR- LTC
Ann M. Young, NCARA
Les Geller, SAGE Raleigh
Teresa Johnson Troup, N.C. Adult Day Services Association
Karen E. Brewer, NCALA
Frances Messer, NCALA
Heather McLaughlin, NCARA
Susan Meador, Center for Volunteer Caregiving
Julia Griffin, Center for Volunteer Caregiving
Suzanne Merrill, NC DAAS
Tom Akins, Leading Age NC
Beth Oakley, NCALTCF
Amanda Borer, Charles House
Tavy Colvard, AHHC of NC
Ana Pardo, NC Justice Center
Bill Rowe, NC Justice Center
Sarah Jacobson, American Heart Association
Dee Hatch, Advocate
Dick Hatch, Access Dental Care
Margaret Kirkman, NCAFCA

Guest speaker: Julia Adams-Scheurich, Oak City Gov. Rel. LLC

On Phone

Linda Shaw, NC PACE Association
Nicole Miller, NAMI
Kay Castillo, NASW-NC Chapter
Julie Wiggins, Region D AAA
Carol Meyer, The Carolinas Center
Jennifer Albright, Autumns Way
Paola Learoyd, Randolph Cloud and Associates
Kristen Brannock, Resources for Seniors

OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING: to hear updates including from Mary Bethel, Suzanne Merrill of State DAAS, committee reporters, and others; to hear from Julia Adams-Scheurich, lobbyist at the legislature; to plan and share further.

******PROGRESS AND DECISIONS******

What key decisions were made during the meeting?

SUBJECT	
Introductions	Persons identified themselves and the organizations they represented.
Minutes	Draft minutes were shared of the January 27, 2017 meeting, and Mary asked those who did not see their names on the attendance list to add their corrections or additions.
Treasurer's Report	Allen thanked people for paying their dues. There have not been expenses during the last month. The current balance is \$11,969.91. Mark Hensley with DAAS looked through books for the year, and he approved as an auditor. Lifelinks Care and Navigate NC have joined as new organizational members and Tamara Griffin, Susan Helmer, Polly Williams, Kathryn Doddridge, and Jenn Weeks have joined as new individual members.
Activities and Updates since January meeting	<p>An <i>Update</i> was sent out Feb. 17. House Speaker Ryan has come out with plans for repealing the ACA. A team from the Coalition has met with legislators and legislative staff to discuss the Coalition's legislative priorities. Legislators visited so far include Sen. Joyce Krawiec, Reps. Donna White, Beverly Earle, Nelson Dollar, Josh Dobson, Graig Meyer, Rena Turner, Pat Hurley, and Chris Malone. In addition, a meeting was held with former Rep. Marilyn Avila who is now a policy advisor for the House Speaker Pro Tem. Mary thanked all the Coalition members who had gone on the visits. She also thanked our speaker Julia Adams-Scheurich who also went on some of the visits. Julia introduced herself and indicated she has a special interest in persons with IDD living with their older parents at home. She noted that there are legislators on key committees who have personal and professional interest in our interests. Mary said that Coalition members have been warmly received by all who were visited. Rose Hoban with <i>NC Health News</i> will probably do a story at some point on the aging tsunami in North Carolina. Mary did an interview with her. Visits have been scheduled with Sens. Louis Pate and Tommy Tucker next week, and Mary is trying to get meetings set up with Sen. Ralph Hise and Rep. Donnie Lambeth. Mary hopes that these preliminary visits will be a good prelude to our Day at the Legislature. There was a strategy meeting about the personal care issue and moving it forward. The Dual Eligible Advisory Committee report should be posted soon on the Legislative website. Carla Obiol, formerly with the NC Dept. of Insurance, has been hired by Care4Carolina to lead their efforts. We set up the Coalition's banner at the NC Assoc. of Retired Govt. Employees Assoc. legislative day on February 7 and at the AARP legislative day on February 14. The new NC Alzheimer's Coalition will meet March 20 and several members of the Coalition have been invited to be a part of this. Mary did an advocacy presentation for the Regional Advisory Council at the Kerr Tar AAA on Feb. 8, and she will be on a panel for a workshop on legislative advocacy and aging issues at the NC Assoc. on Aging Conference on March 17. Tommy Goldsmith mentioned the Home and Community Care Block Grant and APS/Guardianship for a story he did for <i>Indy Weekly</i> on 6 Ways Legislators Could Spend the Budget Surplus.</p>
Update from NCDAAAS	Suzanne Merrill, DAAS Director, reported from DAAS. The Division has done a briefing with Mandy Cohen, the new DHHS Secretary, and her leadership team and has been working with the Department on budget development. She said that there has been an issue with the release of un-encrypted information that inadvertently went out that had Medicaid ID numbers on it. 11,958 Special Assistance recipients and 773 guardians were informed of the error. A negative outcome is not expected, but county DSS's have been notified as well. The error has been

Presentation from Julia Adams-Scheurich, Oak City Government Relations

fixed. There is a call center set up to receive calls (1-800-662-7030) to address concerns. Other news from the Division is that Dawn Gartman has been hired as the Project C.A.R.E. Director, and Allie Banks has returned to the Division to provide administrative support to the Service Operations Section. They are recruiting for a budget officer. Cathy Schindler retired. Joan asked about deinstitutionalization efforts moving forward. Suzanne said that on January 9, the Dept. of Justice (DOJ) brought suit against the state for not moving quickly enough to move forward with their responsibilities under the DOJ settlement to divert people from going into adult care homes and to move them out, into supported employment, etc. Availability of alternative housing has been a major challenge as has finding the right fit for individuals. The Department has until next month to respond to the DOJ. The Special Assistance report to the General Assembly is due in April. Delinking Special Assistance from Medicaid causes numerous problems so no solution is presently available that does not affect the Medicaid budget. The report will point out barriers to delink.

Mary introduced our speaker for today, Julia Adams-Scheurich. Julia worked previously for the Arc of NC and has held other advocacy positions, but recently she has gone out on her own. Mary noted that she is seen as a key go to person for legislators on health and human services issues. Highlights of Julia's remarks: Legislature got a slow start for a lot of reasons with transition period of governance this year. Legislators have just received ethics training. We are \$552 million above revenue projections, but there are many interests grabbing for pieces of the pie. Consensus reporting on numbers is now being done, which is good. We expect a positive budget surprise in May. A robust rainy day fund was passed. We still have robust rainy day fund but not constitutional amendment. That takes 15% off the top. Republicans are coming in this year with having accomplished a lot and thinking about what more should they do. What else do voters want to bring to the front? Aging Coalition will have a chance to present but the planning process will be a long one. What needs to be funded and what are critical needs of the state? Nothing will be rushed through now, which is good. There are many voices coming out from hospitals, MD'S, behavioral health, etc. It is important that we NOT wait for the federal government to make decisions. On federal level, there's talk of state block grants, which will not be good for state of N.C. Anything about capitation or block grants will not help our state. In other states that expanded Medicaid they can count more Medicaid lives in their figures; we can't. DD services under behavioral health have been capitated for six years, and each year the capitation rate would decrease. Republican governors are flocking to D.C. to indicate their concerns. There does not seem to be a lot of will to expand Medicaid, but there may be the will among Republicans to develop a "N.C. solution". This will be one of biggest topics we need to be looking at. We have CMS waiver request sitting in D.C. If it passes we'll have capitation on capitation, which will not be good. HHS will get a set pot of money and hopefully legislators will act wisely. A competing issue will be teacher raises, and avoiding a war there will be important. 5% raise is being discussed. She hopes there are good things in the health budget as well. A bill has passed the House that will require new study of how we fund education in North Carolina. Opportunity scholarships will not be in this budget. Tax policy is an issue as well. House wants to wait. Senate is thinking maybe we could lower taxes more. Mary asked if there is less snarkiness between the two chambers now. Julia said she sees more attempt to be on the same page to move strong policy forward. They, however, are two different personality types. There are still 170 persons with different ideas.

There is not yet a plan to move forward on anything. In March the Senate is taking the lead on developing the budget. They would like to look at tax report. House would like to do very limited change; there is much frustration with MCO-LME system. Senate would like to do more on school choice. House would like to work more on Medicaid. Education policy comes out of the Senate; health issues come out of House. House has been wonderful on aging issues and demographics. Innovations Waiver providers may see rates reduced. On developmental disabilities side, state has been approved for an Innovations Waiver with Supports Intensity Scale. Contract has an issue. There are only 10,500 waiver slots, and that many are waiting for services. 250 new slots have been added. The Innovation Waiver rates are not high enough - you invest in tech., health care, etc. for employees to work with this, but workers leave to work at Target. There is a reduction in plan of care as percentage of their budget. This has to do with

Updates and Discussion on Coalition's Advocacy Efforts

how Supports Intensity Scale is being used in budgeting, which the tool was never meant to do. This problem is being brought to the attention of Dave Richard, Medicaid Director, and the Governor. There has been a cut in the budget as well. Writing a new waiver has to change for DDA group homes to be open 24 hours a day, but with no funding from the federal government. Access and tenancy rites would be a piece, but no funding. More Innovation Waiver slots and a raise in rates for staff and a PCS rate increase are needed. Teresa Troup mentioned an act requiring providers to have electronic records, and some adult day centers don't know what's coming. Julia said moving that start date back to 2020 would be helpful. SAS Institute is working on system, but there seem to be delays occurring. Request will be from her group to have start date move back to 2020. What to file and how to file and when needs to be planned. Julia was thanked for coming and sharing useful information.

We need to put face on issue with our legislature. Alan Winstead said his organization would be doing March for Meals soon. Inviting legislators to become more familiar with our programs again are needed. The more people hear, the better it will be. Teresa Troup shared that April 4 will be our Coalition's Day at the Legislature. The 1200 quadrant in the Legislative Building is reserved, and she has new fun team to help with this. Having our presence there will be good. She is working on identifying team leaders for group visits with legislators and encouraged Coalition members to come and participate. The Day also provides the opportunity for Coalition members to interact with each other and share information. Mary shared that as a part of AARP's February 14 Day at the Legislature, they had a kissing booth which generated a lot of interest so we might think about what kind of strategies we could use to attract people. On March 15, the Senior Tar Heel Legislature will be visiting legislators.

Mary read what Charmaine Fuller Cooper with AARP, who could not be present, wanted to share with us including the following:

- Alex Johnson will join the AARP staff on Monday as Associate State Director for Advocacy.
- AARP has secured two bill sponsors in the State House for the CARE Act (Reps. Donna White and Yvonne Holley, and two well respected Aging committee members are expected to champion as well. Senator Paul Lowe will run the companion bill in the Senate, and AARP is meeting with another Senator to co-lead.
- Charmaine met with both Rep. Hurley and Rep. White after the House Aging Committee, and both are interested in a staff workshop on caregiver resources.
- Rep. Donna White has also agreed to sponsor legislation to establish a Special Legislative Task Force on the financial exploitation of seniors and vulnerable adults. AARP has heard from several groups interested in forming a new task force.
- There is reported to be interest in pushing Uniform Power of Attorney model language in N.C. this year. If legislation is introduced, it will likely be led by the State Bar Association.
- AARP is continuing to meet with legislative and state leaders interested in championing Work and Save retirement security efforts for private sector employees in N.C. this year.
- The AARP Valentine's Lobby Day recognizing family caregivers was a huge success and great for relationship building. Many thanks were offered to participating groups. AARP volunteers will be in Raleigh again on March 1 and 15 and April 5. April 5 will focus on retirement security and will include a mock casino in one of the legislative courts with the theme "Don't Gamble with your Retirement Security."
- A National AARP speaker will keynote the luncheon at the upcoming N.C. State University Spring Social Work Symposium on March 30.
- AARP met with 11 of 15 members of Congress or their staffers (including conversations with staff for both US Senators) in the last two weeks to discuss support of AARP's federal health care priorities. There are additional meetings today through next week. Congressman Pittenger held a telephone Town Hall last night and Congressman Butterfield will hold a Town Hall in Durham at 1 p.m. on Saturday at Hillside High School. Attendees must register at www.butterfield.house.gov.

Federal health care priorities are listed as:

- Oppose Age Tax which would increase health insurance age rating beyond the 3:1 ratio already in place
- Oppose Medicare Vouchers

Update on Workgroup on Direction of the Coalition
Other Business and Organizational Announcements

- Oppose Medicaid block and per capita grants
- Oppose Discrimination by Health Insurance companies for preexisting conditions
- Oppose attempt to increase Medicare costs or to reduce Medicare benefits
- Support closing the Doughnut hole under ACA provisions
- Support efforts to lower prescription drug prices

Charmaine can be contacted at cfcooper@aap.org, 919-508-0266, or 919-946-5714.

At the last meeting, we talked about forming a workgroup to look at the Direction of the Coalition. A few priorities were discussed. Kay Castillo has agreed to chair the workgroup to look at this more closely. A questionnaire is being developed, and Kay hopes we'll all participate. Ideas to move forward are requested. The workgroup will meet again on March 16 at 1:00 p.m.

The Southern Gerontological Society meeting will be April 6-9 in Asheville. The Association for Home and Hospice Care of NC will hold their conference on April 3-4 at RTP. Amanda Borer announced that the NC ElderCare Workforce Coalition will meet on March 17 at 2:00 p.m. at the NC Medical Society. This will overlap with the last day of the NC Assoc. on Aging Conference. Bill Lamb mentioned that Friends of Residents is supporting increased funding for the LTC Ombudsman program. The annual meeting of the NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse will be May 17 at the NC Judicial Center. Heather McLaughlin shared that the Alliance for Retired American's 6th annual golf tournament will be in Archdale on June 12. Ana Pardo said the NC Justice Center will present their Defenders of Justice Awards on May 19 in Durham at the Rick House. Dick Hatch noted that he is concerned that the Senate has introduced tax payer's bill of rights legislation. Julia commented on this. She does not think we have the political will to do Constitutional amendments at this time. Teresa announced that the Adult Day Services Association is doing a program on March 29 about making your adult day care center work. This will be at Resources for Seniors in Raleigh. The NC PACE conference is May 4-5 in Durham and Mandy Cohen, new DHHS Director, will be speaking. Registration materials will be online soon. Kay announced March is Social Work month, and over 600 social workers will come to Raleigh on March 1 for a Legislative Day. Carol Meyer shared that a palliative care conference will be held on March 29 at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill. Beth Oakley announced that the Long Term Care Association will have training at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro on March 8 on Making Voices Heard.

Adjourn

Our next meeting will be held March 24 in the Brown Building on Dix campus at 10:00 a.m..

HANDOUTS

- Agenda, announcement of NC Assoc. on Aging conference, information for legislative day April 4th, treasurer report, and draft minutes for corrections

Who	Assignments	WHEN
Kay Castillo	Her committee to continue addressing plan	Soon
Teresa Troupe	Continue planning for Legislative Advocacy Day	Ongoing

Marty Lamb	Route draft minutes to Mary	Soon
Mary Bethel	Send updates, make legislative visits and attend committee meetings	Before next meeting
Alan Winstead	Fulfill treasurer responsibilities	Before next meetings
****NEXT MEETING****		
Day / Date / Time	WHAT	Where
Friday March 24, 2017 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon	Next Coalition meeting	Brown Building on Dix campus