

COMMITTEE ON AGING (CoA) MINUTES

September 9, 2016

Committee Members Present: Gene Hysjulien (on-site)

Conference Line: Bonnie Bieber, Deborah Melby, Ed Christ, and Mary Green
(No Quorum)

Committee Members Not Participating: Bruce Davidson, Delores Rath, Betty Keegan, Elaine Keepseagle, Madonna White Bear Azure, Peter Belgarde, and Ruth Boyer

Others Present: Nancy Nikolas-Maier and Sheryl Pfliger, Aging Services Division; Tom Solberg, Department of Human Services; Katie Schafer, West Central Human Service Center; Tami Ternes, IPAT; and Rebecca LaFavor, Edgewood Vista & Edgewood Village (all on-site)

Conference Line: Lacey Rustad and Emma Kuester, Williams County Social Services

Call to Order: Gene Hysjulien, Chairperson, called the meeting to order.

Welcome & Introductions: Nancy Nikolas-Maier, Director, Aging Services Division introduced herself and provided an overview of the restructuring of the Division. A handout was distributed outlining Services for Elderly & Physically Disabled that are now administered by the aging division. A listing of regional aging services staff and a listing of county case managers was forwarded to all members via email on 9/12/2016.

Discussion was held regarding challenges of finding qualified service providers to perform homemaker services, personal care, etc. throughout the state. Opportunities for securing supported employment through Vocational Rehabilitation, job coaching, and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) were discussed.

Tami Ternes, former contact in the Governor's office for the Committee, left state employment in July and is now working for IPAT. IPAT provides assistive safety and adaptive equipment for use at home, at school, or at the workplace. Tami offered to do a formal presentation for the Committee at a future meeting.

Aging Services Division (ASD) Report:

Committee on Aging Budget: A handout was provided indicating the Committee budget was overspent by \$1,385.37 due to the allotment.

State Updates: The Department is in the process of developing the budget for the 2017-2019 biennium per budget guidelines set forth by the Governor and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). It is anticipated that the budget will be submitted in early October. The budget will be validated by the OMB, and reviewed/adjusted by the Governor's Office. The Governor will present the Executive Budget to lawmakers during the organizational session in December.

Nancy provided information on the interim Human Services Committee Caregiver Study. The next interim committee hearing is scheduled for September 20-21, 2016. A link to the Caregiver Report, agenda for the next meeting, and the committee minutes were forwarded to all committee members via e-mail on 9/9/2016.

Sheryl provided an update on the work of the Statewide Aging Collaborative. A copy of the meeting minutes and a listing of the membership were sent via email on 9/12/2016.

Federal Updates: Congress is back at work! Priorities outlined by House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy include a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the federal government at current funding levels in FY 2017 for an unspecified period of time, starting October 1. Many want this CR to only last a few months, into the “lame-duck session” right after the elections; but, some conservatives want the CR to last until March, when a new President and Congress can determine funding levels. After a CR expires, Congress has to pass one or more spending bills (likely one or more “omnibus” all-encompassing bills) to fund the remainder of FY 2017.

Nancy provided information from the annual Home and Community-Based Services Conference. Topic areas included funding of Aging and Disability Resource Centers through leveraging Medicaid and Veteran’s Services funds; collaboration of the Administration for Community Living, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, and the Veterans Administration; and the increased emphasis on person-centered planning. Eliminating barriers for service access was also discussed.

Keeping the CoA Work Moving Forward: Members discussed ideas to keep the work of the Committee on Aging moving forward. In the Jamestown region, Delores continues to work with the regional aging staff in conducting workshops (Carrington 8/30 and one scheduled for Napoleon 10/14) for older adults. Gene encouraged members to continue to meet with regional and county councils – listen to their ideas, concerns, etc. and share with the Committee.

Future Meetings: Members were asked to share their views on future Committee meetings. Although all preferred on-site meetings, it was agreed that business could be conducted through the use of technology. All preferred video-conferencing rather than conference calls. Committee members will be reimbursed for any long-distance telephone charges incurred.

For the next meeting (December 9th), the Division will arrange for a video-conferencing meeting through the Department’s polycom system located at each regional human service center.

Call to the Public: Tom Solberg, Deputy Director, Department of Human Services was asked to introduce himself and explain his role in the Department. He shared that the Department was in a unique situation with current revenues and budget instructions. The budget will be presented in December and the new Governor will also have input into the process. Ultimately the Legislature will approve a final budget for the state.

Rebecca LaFavor shared that as a provider in the community, the ‘no wrong door’ concept was the way older individuals should be served. Person-centered care was the reason all of us were ‘at the table’.

Motion by Mary to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Bonnie; meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheryl Pfliger