

Final minutes as approved by the COA on May 21, 2008

**FAIRFAX AREA COMMISSION ON AGING
FINAL MINUTES OF MEETING # 399
Wednesday, April 16, 2008
Braddock Hall – 9002 Burke Lake Road Burke, VA**

The meeting of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) was called to order by Tena Bluhm at 1:03 P.M.

Commissioners present: Tena Bluhm, Elly Doyle, Eileen Duggan, Jack Fritz, Charlie Gorse, Sally Hottle, Joe Heastie, Danielle Wight

Commissioners absent: Ian Kremer, Anita Kapper

Staff present: Grace Starbird, Carolyn Carter, Ursula Barretta

Others present: Alison Baez, Fairfax County Department of Administration for Human Services,
Norine Swaminatha, Alzheimers's Association

Guest Speakers: Fairfax County Department of Transportation:
Rollo Axton, Chief of the Transit Services Division and
Paul Mounier, Transportation Planner and Bus Stop Coordinator.

Minutes: The draft minutes of the March meeting were reviewed and the following changes were made:

1. Page 2: the first full paragraph, which reads: "Grace Starbird indicated that the date for the COA-BOS Aging Committee meeting where (the word "where" was changed to "in which") the first scorecard will be discussed is being changed because of the Board's schedule conflict."
2. The last sentence of that paragraph reads, "The scorecard can not be posted (word "online" added here) until the Board of Supervisors has received it."
3. The apostrophe in the word "supervisors" was taken out.

4. In the next paragraph, the following sentence was changed “Many (word “actions” added) may continue over several years with significant events along the way.”
5. The second paragraph under the section “FY 2009 Advertised County Budget Timetable and COA’s Role:” The word “of” was added to “Both (“of”) these requests can be funded through funds available within the department because of the streamlining of adults services but it will require approval in the County budget to create the positions and to transfer the funds for the food program.” (Word “program” added as last word of this sentence.)
6. It was noted that Sally Hottle attended the March 5th meeting regarding the budget.
7. Last paragraph on page 2 changed to read “The Commissioners will also testify to the need for food funding for the Meals on Wheels Program (MOW). The funds are needed because of the increased food costs, transportation costs and increased number of people on waiting lists for food service. Currently, a pilot project called Meals by Mom is being implemented. This program sends two weeks of frozen pre-prepared meals via UPS to people who due to circumstances such as medical reasons are not able to be at home to receive them when delivered.”
8. For page 3: The second paragraph, last sentence reads “Ian will follow to point out (“with the point” removed) that the future requires awareness and greater funding (“for seniors” added to end of sentence).
9. Third paragraph, first sentence has the word “pilot” added instead of “MOW program”. It reads: “Elly Doyle commented that one problem with the pilot program is that people are dropping off food but they don’t have anyone checking on them.”
10. Third paragraph last sentence changed to read: “Planning for the possible use of meals delivered via UPS for ongoing clients is being considered....” Instead of the previous planning for the possible use of UPS meals...”.
11. Page 4: 3rd paragraph changed to read: “We soon will fill Roseann Tergis’ vacant position. (sentence ends). New sentence starts with: “That person will work more closely with the COA.”
12. Page 4, next sentence; word “May” has been capitalized.
13. Page 4, last sentence changed to read: “Included in the County’s proposed budget, is the use of 1 cent for Housing to cover staffing costs. This needs to be monitored.”
14. Page 5, third paragraph changed: “One of the town homes is being set aside for a wounded veteran.” “Set aside” replaced “saved” and “veteran” replaced “warrior.”
15. Page 6, 3rd paragraph, first sentence; the word “weather” was corrected to read “whether.”

Motion: Eileen Duggan moved to accept the minutes as corrected. **Seconded** by Elly Doyle.

Action: The motion passed.

Tena Bluhm suggested that corrections to minutes be made via email in the future. This change in procedure was discussed and will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Tena introduced the new Lee District Commissioner, Danielle Wight. Tena will meet with Danielle and provide an orientation to the COA.

Guest Speaker

Rollo Axton, Chief of Transit Services for Fairfax County said the Fairfax County Department of Transportation is interested in linking services to transit and with this in mind, plans to visit the Commission on Aging three times in this next year.

Rollo announced a public meeting to be held April 19th at the Fairfax County Government Center, rooms 2 & 3. The meeting will present Fairfax County's proposal to use advertising at bus stops as a means to fund making changes to the existing bus stops and shelters. Changes will include improving accessibility at stops, as well as building new shelters, and keeping the shelters safe and clean. He noted that all of the buses in Fairfax County have become ADA compliant.

The meeting will also address some of the controversy that has formed from the proposed advertising.

Paul Mounier, a Bus Stop Coordinator for Fairfax County, was introduced and further discussed plans for the bus shelters. He indicated that in 2002, Fairfax County developed a 4 year plan to make its bus stops and shelters safe. This included identifying existing shortfalls to be addressed in the future.

See handout (attachment) which includes developed safety criteria and future plans. Every bus stop in Fairfax County was evaluated for its accessibility. 753 of the bus stops and shelters need to address issues of accessibility. Therefore, efforts will be focused on safety and accessibility; with the concentration on accessibility.

The first improvements for 60 of the bus stops, identified as a priority 1 stops, are scheduled to start, once improvements begin in mid may of 2008.

7% of the improvements are shelters along bus routes. Many of the shelters are 20-30 years old and in need of repair. The bus stop advertising program will contract out advertising of the shelters and the monies gained through the advertising will be used to make improvements, maintain, and keep the shelters clean at no cost to county.

Disadvantages of the advertising are that some residents find the advertising to be visual pollution. People are concerned that some of it may be inappropriate. Some people are concerned that some advertising could block their view, creating a safety issue. Fairfax County has looked at other areas such as Montgomery County, which is bringing in 5 million dollars per year with their advertising. There are guidelines in place to define the type of advertising for Fairfax County bus shelters, e.g. no alcohol or nudity. Safeguards will be in place against anything obstructing the view.

Contact Paul Mounier at paul.mounier@fairfaxcounty.gov if you have any questions. Note that any issues regarding accessibility take priority.

Q: Eileen Duggan asked if Montgomery County had similar problems implementing their advertising program.

A: Paul Mounier: Yes, but they had about 50 billboards which they got rid of in exchange for advertising at the bus stops and shelter.

Q: Danielle Wight asked if all of the shelters will look the same.

A: Paul Mounier indicated that there could be some different ones and he passed out a card which showed a photo of a model shelter.

Q: Tena Bluhm asked if there was support from the disabled community and older adults.

A: Rollo Axton: We have been reaching out to those groups and there is some support.

Q: Sally Hottle asked if the advertising is going to be inside and outside of the shelters.

A: Rollo Axton: indicated that it would just be on one side.

Q: Sally Hottle asked what the Commission on Aging can do to help.

A: Paul Mounier: Come to the meeting on Saturday and provide comment. The Disabilities Services Board has provided comment. Something written is helpful.

There is an FAQ section on the county website.

Motion: Elly Doyle moved that the Commission on Aging support the proposal to improve and install bus stops utilizing a public and private partnership that uses the private sector to advertise to pay for the cost. **Seconded** by Joe Heastie.

Action: Motion passed unanimously.

Tena Bluhm will write a letter and get copy to Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission.

Outcome of the budget hearing Presentations on April 2, 2008 (see attachment F):

After Eileen's presentation, Supervisor Bulova inquired about the funding requests and received a response from the Office for Management and Budget (see Tena Bluhm's report under Member Updates).

Chair's Items Including Older Americans Proclamation May 5, 2008.

The designated person to speak will be Tena Bluhm. Other Commission members and LTCCC members present for the proclamation will be asked to introduce themselves.

Board of Supervisors' Committee on Aging Meeting on July 28, 2008.

July 28th will be the first meeting at the Fairfax County Government Center, Supervisor Pat Herrity chairing.

Tena Bluhm said that it was imperative that COA members get information in by the 28th of April for the scorecard. If email is not an option, use snail mail. The scorecard will be brought to the May COA meeting and Commissioners will receive a draft with edits for review. If you did not have any contact with your contact person, indicate why in on the scorecard. Grace Starbird handed out the current scorecard updates for review.

Carolyn Carter said the COA's 50+ Scorecard Report will go to the Board of Supervisors in late June. On July 28,th the Commission on Aging will meet with the Board of Supervisors' Committee on Aging, a committee of the whole.

Grace Starbird explained that after matrix/scorecard materials are received by the COA, staff will share it with the contacts listed after each recommendation or initiative to edit for accuracy and intent. The COA has the final say on the content and wording of the Scorecard; this is the COA's report.

Tena Bluhm added that at the next meeting, the Commission will look at the draft of the matrix to be used in the scorecard.

Director's Update (ref Att. B, AAA Staff Unit updates 4/9/08).

NCOA and ASA had their joint national conference in Washington D.C. Area Agency on Aging had 14 staff there. Lots of staff volunteered and provided written summaries of the presentations. There is an AARP conference in the fall. We hope to facilitate getting COA members and staff to attend.

Grace participated on a panel at the NCOA/ASA conference, discussing planning initiatives and futures. She talked about the 50+ Action Plan.

AAA will be hiring Roseann Tergis' replacement soon. He/she will assist in staffing the COA, taking minutes of COA meetings.

Deputy Executive Verdia Haywood has a Transportation Steering Committee to provide strategic direction for county transportation services that will guide planning, coordination, and delivery of transportation and mobility services for populations with special needs. The COA's participation may be solicited, perhaps a slot on the Committee.

Reinventing your Neighborhood event of April 12 was shared around the state because the Virginia Department of Aging attended the event and sent information out to other Area Agency's on Aging.

Member Updates

Chairperson Tena Bluhm:

The presentation of testimonies on the budget hearings went well. Supervisor Bulova asked for more information about the request for reallocation of funds for budgeting of two merit positions and increase for food service for MOW and congregate meals.

Grace Starbird and Tena visited Supervisor Herrity before the testimonies. He is very supportive of senior issues and the 50+ Action Plan. He said that after the budget is completed he plans to become more active on senior issues. In a Board meeting, he requested that the 50+ Action Plan “encourage universal design concepts to meet the needs of every age and degree of mobility and that it can be easily adapted to new construction as well as renovations”.

Supervisor Herrity also asked for “unanimous consent that the Board direct staff to compile a short list of contractors with expertise in universal, accessible, or adaptable design to be made available to residents upon request. Without objection, it was so ordered. “

Supervisor Herrity offered a proposal to the Board of Supervisors to “create and fund two additional merit positions in the FY 2009 budget for APS” and asked the Board of Supervisors to direct that these positions be paid through reallocated Adult and Aging funds”.

After the testimonies on April 2, Tena visited with Supervisor Bulova to ask for her support for the two requests that were made in the testimonies and said that Supervisor Bulova is very supportive of the requests. She was also complimentary of the effort within the AAA in providing their services in an efficient way, resulting in cost savings which could be used to finance the merit positions and increase in food services.

The *Reinventing Your Neighborhood* event was a resounding success with an estimated 325-350 persons attending the event. The program will be broadcast on Channel 16 on April 24 at 8 PM. Evaluation forms were given out and Tena will bring the results at the next meeting.

Building for All Committee (BFAC) is in the process of planning an education program about Universal Design.

The Planning and Zoning Department has assigned ombudsman duties to Tina Goss in addition to her other duties. She assists citizens in obtaining assistance if needed in using Universal Design in renovations or additions in their homes.

FACT, the organization that involves high school students in the building of homes, has incorporated Universal Design in the home in which they will start in either July or August. The home is located in the Green Springs area. The county authorized additional money to incorporate Universal Design into the homes.

Sally Hottle:

Faith Communities in Action has not met since the last Commission meeting. She attended the *Reinventing Your Neighborhood* event, about which had only good things to say. She would like to note however that the “Village Concept” may not work for some residents who have limited means and it therefore may not be a viable option for everyone.

Sally reported that she serves on a subcommittee of the LTCCC’s Access Committee and they are working on having full access to public buildings, using the county Government Center as a model.

Elly Doyle:

Elly belongs to a discussion group in Great Falls and each person takes a turn presenting a topic. She discussed Beacon Hill and the discussion group was almost exclusively interested in the Beacon Hill model but not interested in the co-housing concept. The group raised the issue that not all older adults can afford to stay in our homes and have 24-hour care, even if they can obtain it.

Elly commented on the AAA Staff Update of April. She added that not only are drugs cheaper at Costco, but hearing aides are cheaper there too, and they have a big selection.

Charlie Gorsey

The housing bubble presents an opportunity to resolve some issues. Chairman of the Board Gerry Connolly proposed having the county buy some foreclosed homes. There has been some criticism of this idea. Charlie has some information for Carolyn Carter he has gathered on “affordability” for the 50+ scorecard. He asked contacts about the county buying up foreclosures and the response was they are waiting on the Federal Government to see what they will do.

Eileen Duggan

Eileen had nothing new to report. She will attempt contact Chairman Connolly on the need to fund the Adult Protective Services position and the Meals On Wheels program and hopes to meet with him if he can find the time! She thought that *Reinventing Your Neighborhood* event was great.

Joe Heastie

Joe attended the *Reinventing Your Neighborhood* event which he thought was very well done. You could take ideas from each concept and apply them to your own community. He is very impressed with Supervisor Smyth’s approach to issues on aging. She is very interested in the COA’s report card.

Jack Fritz

Regarding the 50+ Action Plan, he has had excellent reception from his contacts. He attended a meeting of the Northern Virginia Technical Council on Health. The subject was personal health records and it was proposed that by 2015, everyone will have a personal health record. An example of something that could be implemented is the "File of Life" pencil and paper approach to maintaining medical and emergency information. Jack would like to be point person on this topic and would like to do a presentation, recognizing this is not entirely a senior issue.

Tena Bluhm suggested that Jack keep the COA updated on this.

Old Business:

Tena reminded Commissioners to pass in their Volunteer time sheets.

New Business:

None.

Motion: Sally Hottle moved that the meeting be adjourned. **Seconded** by Eileen Duggan.

Action: The meeting was adjourned at 2:59.