

***Final minutes as approved by the COA on June 18, 2008***

**FAIRFAX AREA COMMISSION ON AGING  
FINAL MINUTES OF MEETING # 400  
Wednesday, May 21, 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, Chair, at 1:03 P.M.

Commissioners present: Tena Bluhm, Elly Doyle, Eileen Duggan, Jack Fritz, Sally Hottle, Anita Kapper, Danielle Wight

Commissioners absent: Joe Heastie, George Myers

Staff present: Carolyn Carter, Ursula Barretta

Others present: Norine Swaminatha, Alzheimer's Association; Victoria Schall, Northern Virginia Legal Services

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

1. Outcome of the budget hearing Presentations on April 2, 2008 (see attachment F): Inserted the following sentence in front of the existing sentence: "Tena Bluhm, Eileen Duggan and Ian Kramer made presentations to the BOS on April 2, 2008 advocating for the needs of seniors during the current budget year and on a going-forward basis". This was inserted before the following: "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)".
2. Page 3, first sentence, "s" added to "plan" to make it "plans".
3. Page 6, sixth paragraph, replaced the original word "great" with "resounding success."
4. Page 6, second paragraph, first sentence, the word "after" changed to "before". It reads "Grace Starbird and Tena visited Supervisor Herrity before the testimonies".
5. Page 6, second line from the bottom of the page reads "results to the next meeting", which is changed from "at the next meeting".

6. Page 7, under the report for Eileen Duggan, the following words were added to the second sentence "attempt to" contact Chairman Connolly.

**Motion:** made to approve the minutes with the recommended changes by Sally Hottle. The motion was seconded by Jack Fritz.

**Action:** The motion passed.

**Tena Bluhm** announced that Ian Kremer and Charlie Gorse have both resigned which leaves two additional vacancies on the COA, totaling 3 without representation from the City of Falls Church.

**50+ Action Plan Monitoring/Tracking by COA:**

Carolyn Carter reported that she accepted edits to the plan, submitted to her as recently as yesterday. She then entered them into the matrix. Those changes were sent to contacts for their final review. Most of the changes were then incorporated into the document. The document text which is colored black is what is in the 50 + Action Plan, and what is colored blue, are the edits made by the Commissioners. Red text reflects edits made by a contact.

Commission members can email any changes back to Carolyn Carter by June 4<sup>th</sup>. They may also submit highlights and suggestions for future work plans to Carolyn Carter by June 4.

Sally Hottle: Suggested using a glossary of acronyms at the end of the scorecard to assist readers.

Tena Bluhm: The packet handed out is what the final scorecard will look like, with the addition of cover stock on the front and back pages. Page two of the document will have COA names and BOS names included.

Danielle Wight: Asked what scorecard topics need to be picked up.

Tena Bluhm: Caregivers. Danielle Wight said that she would be happy to help out with Caregivers if they don't get a new Commissioner by September.

Tena Bluhm: Will meet with Supervisor Herrity on the June 25<sup>th</sup> to present the Scorecard to him and ask for his input. She will also discuss the format of the meeting with the BOS. She will propose a round table meeting. She asked Commissioners to draft highlights from their topic areas for the front of the report for the BOS' attention and for discussion with the BOS. Highlights from each section of the report should be two to four sentences.

Elly Doyle: There is not any criteria to measure progress against. There is still time to gather statistics to measure progress.

Carolyn Carter: Commissioners can start a baseline measurement if they wish to, to note progress on recommendations or initiatives.

Anita Kapper: Would like for the City of Fairfax to get a copy of the report.

Sally Hottle: Could we list the COA by district and note the vacancies? COA should see final document before the June 18<sup>th</sup> COA meeting.

**COA Discussion: Rotate Meeting Location of the COA Public Meetings:**

Tena Bluhm: Brought up the distance factor regarding having meetings at the same location each month. She suggested rotating meeting sites, for example 4 months at one locale and then 4 months at the next. That way, the COA is more visible and also more available to its constituents.

Sally Hottle: The reason for rotating the meeting locations are good ones which outweigh the issue of driving a long distance.

Danielle Wight: Agreed with Sally.

**Motion:** Sally Hottle moved to explore the idea of meeting 3 or 4 times per year, each at a different location, depending on what sites are available to book. The motion was seconded by Jack Fritz.

**Action:** The Motion passed.

Tena Bluhm suggested the change begin in September if possible. Otherwise, it can begin in January of 2009.

**Director's Update (ref Att. B, AAA Staff Unit updates 5/7/08).**

Carolyn Carter: You have the Director's report from Grace Starbird remotely from Spain via email distribution!

The Northern Virginia Ombudsman Program received the 2008 Virginia Elder Rights Award. The Virginia Elder Rights Coalition has selected the Virginia Ombudsman Program to receive its 2008 Annual Elder Rights Award. The award, given every year since 2000, was presented at the April statewide Virginia Elder Rights Coalition and Virginia Guardianship Association Conference in Richmond.

Things are changing in the world of meals for seniors for Congregate Meals Program and the Home-Delivered Meals Program. The cost of flour and gas is affecting programs. We are working with vendors and volunteers to provide meals in the most cost effective way. We do have the benefit of having the Moms Meals vendor that provides fresh meals to the client's door. We piloted this program and it went well. Moms Meals are fresh, specially packaged meals that keep for two weeks. The downside about them is that they are delivered by UPS to the home and therefore, home delivered clients are not getting a personal visit for human contact and the opportunity to check in on our homebound Meals on Wheels clients.

Elly Doyle: How do folks qualify? Carolyn Carter responded that recipients have to be homebound.

### **Member Updates**

**Danielle Wight:** after providing highlights from a meeting she attended on Federal Legislation, Danielle submitted the following notes to staff:

“Advocacy in Aging Meeting on Federal Legislation on Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008 10 am:

Doug from Sen. Webb's office and Angela from Sen. Warner's office came to speak.

1. Life Span Respite Care Act: Program in the books but not in effect yet, no money funded for it as of yet. In 2006, \$300 billion was spent by care provided by a family caregiver(s). The National Respite Care Association is involved. Senator's Warner and Clinton got it passed and signed by President Bush. Was created but not funded – hoping for 2009. Budget Resolution was approved and included the 54 million dollars set aside for 2009.
2. Senator Webb proposed legislation to look at the fiscal sustainability of Medicare and other programs over a year. This information will be collected in order to make recommendations to Congress related to programs. They will make sure to address tough questions and get answers, as well as to ensure that programs stay in place. Are seeking co-sponsors but not approved. Probably won't be approved until after election, “safe bills” most likely to get the small amount of floor time that's in hot demand.

3. Other topics addressed:

10% cut in older American's funding in President Bush's budget proposal sent to Congress.

Quality of care in VA nursing homes is lacking due to so many buy outs and changing of hands- making it hard for regulating care and services.

Universal Health Proposal – we can hope that next year = health care reform.

Medicare cut backs hit treatments hard. All therapies (ex. Physical therapy) have been capped with lower maximum visits.

4. Arlington Co. Social Worker shared that many older adults move to Northern VA to be closer to adult children. 10 doctors in Arlington asked “would you take a new Medicare patient?” and they answered “no”. She shared that VA Medicaid is an even worse problem, for example: older adults on Medicare and/or Medicaid with diabetes and endocrinosis have to go further out than Loudon Co. for a doctor. The “gate keeper needs to be cut out”, more & more paperwork needs to be filled out, reimbursement pay cut 10% for doctors' July 1<sup>st</sup>- we already have a shortage of participating doctors, why would any new doctor get involved?

VA residents living alone with a life threatening disease need a Life Line Alert System- Medicare and Medicaid won't pay for this. She (an Arlington County Social Worker) spent 10 hours on the phone trying to get it covered but could not, and therefore had to move the woman who was capable of living at home with the system, into a nursing home, due to the fact that there was no other alternative.

Cancer drugs that were created for treating cancer were found for treating other conditions but Medicare (to cut costs) won't cover the drug without a Cancer diagnosis. Cancer drug found to positively treat muscular degeneration. “Off Labeling” means a drug was prescribed for 1 thing but used for another. Medicare won't allow off labeling in order to cut down on costs.

**Victoria Schall:** Legal Services of Northern VA documents that they do a Health Care Declaration and we call the physicians and anyone else that needs to be contacted.

**Jack Fritz:** He submitted a proposal on Personal Health Records for next year, to a conference for presentation in London England. He attended an AARP class on driving. You get a certificate and a discount on your insurance for taking the class.

**Tena Bluhm:** showed the plaque provided by the BOS of the proclamation for *Older Americans Month in Fairfax County*.

Tena attended the Senior Adults Celebration luncheon sponsored by DCRS. Both Supervisor Bulova and Supervisor Herrity were in attendance. There were an enormous amount of volunteers there.

The Building For All Committee (BFAC) is going to host an event, "Reinventing Your House" modeled after "Reinventing your Neighborhood." The feedback regarding the "Reinventing Your Neighborhood was positive, however some people indicated that it was a bit too long.

Jane Edwin has contacted her and they have put out a newsletter from Mount Vernon at Home. They are trying to partner with the COA and would like to have a forum and have us talk about the 50+ Action Plan. They are also interested in having a newsletter which has a column about what is happening in the 50+ Action Plan. Tena Bluhm will be in contact with her.

**Anita Kapper:**

The last CCFAC meeting was a debriefing from the SAC for the last round of proposals for RFPs. The meeting mostly focused on that topic.

**Elly Doyle:**

If you have a contact in your church that wants to establish a group for seniors, please advise them to attend the Interfaith Summit which will be held at Mason on June 11<sup>th</sup>. It will provide such groups with needed information on getting the resources to start a group.

**Sally Hottle:**

CareFaxLTC has John Carlson as its new Director.

**Eileen Duggan:**

Eileen attended the May NVAN meeting. Jane Wood, a former Director of the VA HHS who had served in both the Senate and House of Delegates, was the featured speaker. Jane stressed the need to seek funding outside of the normal channels; i.e. state and federal government. Money is very tight, and creative thinking is needed to meet the Commonwealth's human services needs. One suggestion was to partner with other government agencies in requesting funds so as to avoid duplication and to increase efficiencies. Other potential partners are disability and veteran's organizations. Jane stressed the importance of getting acquainted with your local elected representatives, and to keep your issues in front of them. She suggested that NVAN focus on two or three major issues, and to present them to elected officials by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Eileen also attended the Regional Long Term Care Family Council where an alternative resident care model adapted from the Eden model was presented. Information about the plan can be found at [www.greenhouseproject.com](http://www.greenhouseproject.com).

The NVAN Legislative Breakfast will be held on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at Greenspring. The keynote speaker will be Jim Furman, Executive Director of the National Council on Aging (NCOA). A Brainstorming session to develop the Legislative Platform for 2009 will be held on June 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM. RSVP to Jacquie Woodruff if you can go. Eileen encouraged Commissioners to attend the brainstorming session, if possible, and reminded them that one of COA's tasks is to meet with legislators and advocate for senior issues.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

Jack Myers saw an article in AARP that indicated that a freeze on the release of credit checks was passed. VA residents will therefore be able to put a freeze on the release of their credit for a fee. This will hamper ID theft. He indicated he would like to write an article on this for submission to the *Golden Gazette*.

Anita Kapper announced that she needs to be reappointed as a COA representative to the CCFAC if she is to continue to be on it. Carolyn clarified that this was an appointment by the Chairman. After a very brief discussion, Anita agreed to serve and Tena offered to do what was needed to reappoint her. Tena Bluhm, stated, "I reappoint Anita Kapper to continue to serve on the CCFAC".

Tena asked the COA what they thought about using the *Golden Gazette* for an ongoing column which features topics that relate to the 50+Action Plan, as well as other issues that the COA are working on.

Eileen Duggan: Thinks that it is a great idea.

Carolyn Carter: Suggested Tena speak to Becky Adams about the idea. Finding space in the Golden Gazette may be an issue. Tena Bluhm will contact her.

**Motion:** Eileen moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Sally Hottle.

**Action:** Meeting adjourned at 2:50.