

Final minutes as approved by the COA on October 15, 2008

FAIRFAX AREA COMMISSION ON AGING FINAL MINUTES OF MEETING

Wednesday, September 17, 2008

Kings Park Library Meeting Room – 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA

Commissioners present: Tena Bluhm, Eileen Duggan, Jack Fritz, Sally Hottle, Danielle Wight, Joe Heastie, Lin Wagener

Commissioners absent: Anita Kapper, Elly Doyle, George Myers

Staff present: Grace Starbird, Carolyn Carter, Brenda McGrail

Others present: Barbara Vernier, *Citizen*; Terri Corcoran, *Well Spouse Association*; Chester Freedenthal, *Chairman, Franconia Police District 'SALT' Council*; Patricia Rohrer, *Long Term Care Program Coordinator*; Nina Pitkin, *Volunteer and FCPS Retiree*; Robert Eiffert, *Long Term Care Program Manager*; Vicky Doff, *Volunteer and FCPS Retiree*; Yolanda Thompson, *Area Agency on Aging*

The meeting of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) was called to order by Tena Bluhm, Chair, at 1:03 p.m. in the Kings Park Library Meeting Room.

Ms. Bluhm handed the meeting time over to Carolyn Carter, Area Agency on Aging, who had previously requested public meeting time in order to receive comments on the advertised public hearing for comment on seeking a waiver for the required use of funds for in-home services from the Older Americans Act. Instead, federal funding will be used for integrated care and for volunteers providing in-home services provided through Volunteer Solutions. These in-home services for which federal funding is not required, include friendly visits, repairs, assisting with household chores, and other in-home services. There being one question for clarification and no objection to seeking the waiver for federal Older Americans Act funds, this part of the meeting came to a close in five minutes.

Adoption of Agenda, Public Comment Period, Review and Adoption of July minutes

The Agenda for the September 17 meeting was adopted and Chairperson Tena Bluhm presented the draft minutes of the July 16, 2008 meeting to the commissioners for approval. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Sally Hottle and seconded by Eileen Duggan. All were in favor.

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Ms. Bluhm introduced new member Lin Wagener to the Commissioners. Ms. Wagener was formerly the Director of the Prince William Area Agency on Aging. She was appointed by Supervisor Hudgins as representative of Hunter Mill District. Ms. Bluhm asked visitors to introduce themselves.

Request Board of Supervisors to proclaim November as Caregiver Month in Fairfax County

Ms. Danielle Wight reported on the upcoming national Family Caregiver Month and communication with Supervisor McKay regarding his willingness to sponsor a proclamation making November Family Caregiver Month in Fairfax County. Ms. Duggan made a motion to approve the Commission on Aging's support of the proclamation. This was seconded by Sally Hottle. The motion passed.

Introduction and background on topics for Board of Supervisors' Committee on Aging Agenda for Nov. 7

Ms. Bluhm reported that Supervisor Herrity, Chairman of the Board of Supervisor's Committee on Aging, requested the Commission's feedback and input on primary topics proposed for the Committee's November 7 agenda. Supervisor Herrity asked that the COA review the presentations and provide suggestions to Supervisor Herrity before it the topics/presentations are presented to the Board's Committee. The three main topics are shared housing, volunteer services, and the impact of the economic turndown on older adults.

Shared Housing: Patricia Rohrer, Long Term Care Program Coordinator, provided history and background of the shared housing program in Fairfax County. Initially, it was funded in the Department of Housing and Community Development. The program, "Operation Match," operated for a few years and with funding cuts, could no longer be supported. Subsequently, the need for shared housing surfaced and the non-profit Northern Virginia Family Services (NVFS) operated the program for a period of time. Ms Rohrer presented a concept and potential program that Ms. Nina Pitkin and Ms. Vicky Doff spent tireless hours researching, receiving input from providers and elected officials, and searching for funding.

The program they envision for which there is need and does not exist in the county will focus on the home provider, with the goal of the provider being able to stay in his or her own home while providing an affordable housing option to the home seeker. This home share program will look for home providers age 60 years and over who are seeking someone to live in their homes in exchange for non-medical services such as keeping up the yard or providing some assistance with household chores. The home seekers will be charged lower-than- market rental fees in exchange for these services. Home seekers will be individuals who are gainfully employed or students and will need to have their own transportation.

A one-time fee will be paid by the home seekers and providers to the non-profit who would be responsible for coordinating and overseeing this project. The coordinator will find a match that is an appropriate fit for both parties, thus building an

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assurance for success and to help sustain the cost of the program. An emphasis will be looking for grateful benefactors and grant opportunities to sustain the funding of this home sharing program.

Commissioners had several questions, including:

- 'Who determines the amount of rent to be paid?
- Can Fairfax County match the amount a non-profit would provide in running the program?
- Will the home owner have liability insurance?
- Will there be any requirements that the tenant have use of the kitchen?
- Can the County supply space, supplies, telephone for the program coordination?

Ms. Rohrer, Ms. Pitkin, Ms. Doff, and Bob Eiffert, Long Term Care Program Manager answered questions and concluded their presentation for this new countywide home sharing program. Next step: They will be seeking a non-profit organization to obtain funding for and operate this new model. Ms. Bluhm thanked them on behalf of the commissioners.

Volunteer Services: Eileen Duggan reported that she had a meeting with staff from the AAA Volunteer Solutions and Grace and outlined what it takes to manage and run a volunteer program. The components are: recruit, train, place, monitor, evaluate, reward, and oversee volunteer matches. Ms. Duggan suggested a one stop shop for volunteer opportunities as opposed to going through the individual departments for information on volunteering.

Effect of Economic Turndown for Older Adults: Ms. Carter gave examples of some of the information she and the planning unit of the AAA have recently identified in researching the plight of older adults in Fairfax County in light of the recent downturn in the economy. Supervisor Herrity requested the following areas be examined: job loss, increase in energy cost, increase in food and basic survival needs, trends in real estate tax exemption, decrease of property values, increase in request for county services by older adults, and trends in reports of Adult Protective Services. Ms. Carter provided a few anecdotal examples of individuals after speaking with a non-profit agency for older adult job seekers and county social workers who receive requests for assistance or help at the human services' intake line.

Mr. Heastie suggested limiting the information to primary needs of senior adults in Fairfax County. The magnitude of the potential impact of the economy is overwhelming.

The COA Committee of the Whole will meet on October 1 to learn more about the proposed presentations on the three topics to the Board of Supervisors' Committee on Aging on November 7th and will subsequently provide feedback to Supervisor Herrity at his request.

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Director's Updates

Ms. Grace Starbird, Director of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), reported that Mary Taylor, who had been a receptionist for AAA for many years, passed away. She also announced the November 22 "Reinventing Your Home" event. She reported on her visit to Clifton's kick-off for their "village." Turnout was good and included Supervisor Herrity, Chairman Connolly and Delegate Hugo. Ms. Starbird informed the commissioners about Ms. Carter's retirement party which has been scheduled for December 16.

COA Member Activity

Sally Hottle shared that the 'Savvy and Sage,' a magazine she received, has an article on long term care "Finding the Care Older Adults Need". She also reminded commissioners that Alzheimer's Day is Sunday, September 21.

Elly Doyle (absent). Ms. Bluhm reported that Ms. Doyle forwarded a written position to share with Commissioners. Ms. Bluhm suggested that Ms. Doyle speak to her concerns at the next COA meeting.

Eileen Duggan shared that she did not attend the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN) meeting and has passed on the COA's representation to NVAN to Lin Wagener with Ms. Bluhm's approval. Ms. Duggan reported that Ms. Wagener graciously accepted the position. "Senior Advocacy Day" in Richmond with the General Assembly is scheduled for January 28, 2009 and commissioners were asked to mark the date on their calendars.

Tena Bluhm reported that the State of Virginia is looking at senior issues. She also reported that she received 2 letters, one from Frank Belchman of CareFaxLTC and one from Kevin Bell, Chairman of the Human Service Council.

Joseph Heastie: No updates at this time.

Jack Fritz shared that he was asked to participate in the Emergency Medical Shelter Preparedness exercise on October 7th.

Danielle Wight reported on a symposium at the Virginia Hospital Center on November 8 from 8am – 1pm.

Lin Wagener reported on the Green House project presentation at the NVAN meeting of September 16th. It is a model for long term care nationwide, providing housing and services for 4 - 7 people in one setting with individual bathrooms for each and a central living room. There are two CNA's at all times, roving nurses between the facilities, and core staff consisting of counselor's, physicians, dentists, and case managers. At the moment, there are 18 sites in 13 states and 17 more in development in 9 states, all of which are non-profits.

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Old Business

NVAN 2009 Legislative Platform

A motion to accept and adopt the 2009 NVAN Legislative Platform for the Virginia General Assembly was made and seconded by Eileen Duggan. All were in favor of the vote and it was passed.

New Business

Ms. Duggan suggested the COA write a letter of appreciation to Dana Paige, Director of the Department of Family Services, in appreciation for his support of the COA. Mr. Paige retired from his position last week. Ms. Duggan offered to draft the letter.

COA "Goes Green"

Ms. Bluhm suggested cutting down on paper and encouraged the need to go paperless. No hard copy meeting notices and packets will be sent to the commissioners via postal mail in the future. They will all be sent electronically by email. Ms. Bluhm asked if that would work for Commissioners and all were in favor.

Other (FA-DSB Library)

The COA received a copy of a letter in the meeting packet from the Fairfax Area Disability Services Board (FA-DSB) in support of making computer terminals at the libraries accessible for people and seniors with disabilities.

Ms. Hottle made a motion that the COA endorse the accessible computer terminals, making each library accessible for people with disabilities and to send a letter to the public libraries and write a letter to the Libraries with a copy to the FA-DSB. This motion was seconded by Ms. Wight. All were in favor.

Meeting Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda McGrail