

## Final minutes as approved by the COA on November 19, 2008

# FAIRFAX AREA COMMISSION ON AGING FINAL MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday, October 15, 2008

Braddock Hall – 9002 Burke Lake Road Burke, VA

Commissioners present: Tena Bluhm, Elly Doyle, Jack Fritz, Sally Hottle, Anita Kapper, Shak Hill, Lin Wagener, Danielle Wight

Commissioners absent: Eileen Duggan, Joe Heastie, George Myers

Staff present: Brenda McGrail

Others present: Grace Lynch, *Communications Manager, Area Agency on Aging*; Jacquie Woodruff, *Planner, Area Agency on Aging*; Yolanda Thompson, *Caregiver Program Supervisor, Area Agency on Aging*; Barbara Antley, *Director, Adult and Aging*.

The meeting of the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA) was called to order by Tena Bluhm, Chair, at 1:02 p.m. in the Braddock District Office Meeting Room. She formally welcomed new member Mr. Shak Hill to the COA as a representative for Sully District.

Mr. Hill introduced himself to the commissioners and mentioned that he is delighted to be a part of the COA.

### **Adoption of Agenda, Public Comment Period, Review and Adoption of September minutes**

The Agenda for the October 15 meeting was adopted and Chairperson Tena Bluhm presented the draft minutes of the September 17, 2008 meeting to the commissioners for approval. A motion to accept the minutes as it stands was made by Sally Hottle and seconded by Danielle Wight and Jack Fritz. All were in favor.

No public comments were made at this time.

### **Presentation: DFS Procedures for Proclamations and Resolutions to the Board of Supervisors**

With a brief introduction on the subject, Ms. Bluhm introduced Grace Lynch, Communications Manager for the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging and Division of Adult and Aging Services

## **Final minutes as approved by the COA on November 19, 2008**

Ms. Lynch gave a brief presentation on the use of county proclamations to promote awareness of significant issues and the process of submitting requests for proclamations to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Many proclamations, she said, designate a specific week or month for the county to become aware of an issue or support a program that addresses an issue.

Ms. Lynch said there is no written county protocol for submitting proclamations and that any resident can submit a request for a proclamation directly to any county supervisor. However, she said, if a commission member requests assistance from any staff member of the Division of Adult and Aging Services, an internal review process is followed which includes editing by the communications manager and review by the agency and division heads. This review process is necessary in order to ensure division and department leadership is aware of the request and that the proposed proclamation is written in accordance with the preferred style of the Board of Supervisors.

When considering a proclamation, Ms. Lynch said, the important thing to keep in mind is timing. The proclamation process involves two board meetings: one to consider and approve the proclamation and the second for the board presentation to the sponsors. Depending on the board's schedule, she said, this may take several months. It is, therefore, necessary to start the process as early as possible, she added.

In conclusion to her presentation, Ms. Lynch said that she is available to assist commission members with writing and editing proclamations.

Ms. Bluhm suggested that commissioners consult with Ms. Lynch for advice if they are approached about a proclamation. Proclamations should also be brought before the commission for approval or disapproval before it is submitted to the board, she said.

Ms. Wight was then given the task of preparing a template of steps to take when requesting approval to adopt, similar to steps she took when preparing the Caregiver Program's proclamation. The template would be emailed to members as well as incorporated in the minutes (see end of minutes for template) as a reference point for commissioners.

### **Presentation: National Family Caregiver Month in November**

Yolanda Thompson, Supervisor of the Area Agency on Aging Caregiver Program, talked to members about the definition of a caregiver and what their role is. She stated that any person who cares for older adults in their families, who cares for a relative's child or an adult with a disability, no matter the distance from which care is given, is considered a caregiver. The primary goal of the Fairfax Family Caregiver Support Program is therefore to help relieve the emotional, physical and financial hardships of providing continual care, and assists informal "family" caregivers through various services and supports.

## **Final minutes as approved by the COA on November 19, 2008**

Ms. Thompson stated that services are available for all, not only those who cannot afford private care, and several events and informational seminars, offered in the Fall and Spring, are available to support caregivers.

The Caregiver program is active in striving to improve awareness through such events as proclaiming November as the National Family Caregiver Month.

Ms. Thompson invited commissioners to a *"Is your Glass half Full?"* seminar at the Springfield Golf and Country Club on November 7, 2008 from 9am – 2pm.

### **October 6 Presentations by DFS to the BOS and Human Services Council on potential cuts to FY 2010 budget**

Anita Kapper mentioned that at the October 6 meeting with the Department of Family Services (DFS), the Board of Supervisors (BOS) and Human Services Council (HSC), the County Executive had asked each department to propose 15% in budget cuts for consideration. The numbers run from low to high, with the lowest number being recommended as the first to be cut.

Ms. Kapper pointed out that the FY10 budget cuts proposed to date for the Human Services would impact older adults and homelessness. She also mentioned that the County Executive's major budget cuts for FY09 would include hiring freezing and a one day furlough for staff.

The director of the Adult and Aging division, Barbara Antley, stated that the Department of Family Services has 53 reductions, and from DFS' perspective, the higher the number on the rank, the more drastic the cut. The Board may have a different perspective of how big a deduction they would like per ranking. She stated that there would be more opportunity for the commissioner's participation at budget public hearings.

### **Presentation: Fairfax County Older Adults Registered and How Many Voted in the Last Election by Voting Precinct**

Jacquie Woodruff, a planner with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging presented the commissioners with voter statistics for older adults aged 55 years and older in Fairfax County. Ms. Woodruff reported that in 2007, 56.94% of the total population were registered voters. 19.6% of registered voters were over the age of 56.

Mr. Hill asked if there was a reason why seniors were not voting. Ms. Wight reported some of the voting population are still registered in other states or jurisdictions although now living in Fairfax County and therefore are not eligible to vote in the county. A spreadsheet copy of the Preliminary Voter Turnout Statistical Report for 2007 November general elections will be sent to the commissioners for review.

# Final minutes as approved by the COA on November 19, 2008

## Director's Updates

In the absence of Grace Starbird and Carolyn Carter, Ms. Antley was available as a back up for any questions.

## COA Member Activity

Sally Hottle None at this time.

Anita Kapper shared that she had attended the CCFAC meeting on October 14 and there had been big concerns about the impact of the budget cuts on non-profit organizations. She mentioned that HUD had revealed a new program for funding to help some home owners against foreclosure. This includes Fairfax County buying some of these foreclosures and renting them out to low income families and the elderly.

Jack Fritz reported that he participated in the Emergency Medical Shelter exercise on October 7 and played the part of a 90 year old man with severe arthritis who lived alone. The participants were taken to the shelter and taken through the steps of filling the forms for the medical register and seeking help for medications. Mr. Fritz stated that he thought the exercise was valuable and better to go through the steps involved than read about it in the emergency plan.

Danielle Wight mentioned that she attended the NVAN breakfast. She also informed the commissioners about the Senior Information fair taking place on Saturday, October 18 from 8am – 1pm at the Walter Reed Multipurpose Center. Admissions is free and there will be free senior ID cards, Emergency 911 cell phones, blood pressure, vision and hearing screenings, etc.

Shak Hill asked if there was anything in Fairfax County earmarked towards widows. Ms. Bluhm mentioned the 'Forever Young' group, a social group that has a widow/widowers club that meets once a month.

Lin Wagener mentioned that she had also attended the NVAN breakfast meeting and found their PowerPoint presentation very well presented. She mentioned that she had sat at a table with Delegate Russ and had the opportunity to talk to him.

Tena Bluhm also reported that she had attended the NVAN breakfast and had the opportunity to talk to Senator Saslaw about Universal Design.

She reminded commissioners about the Reinventing Your Home event slated for November 22 at the Government Center Auditorium from 8am – 1:30pm and encouraged them to attend.

## Old Business

2008/2009 COA Meeting Location Schedule

## **Final minutes as approved by the COA on November 19, 2008**

The updated meeting location schedule was distributed to the commissioners. The meetings will be rotated among the different district offices within the county to make it easier for the public to attend.

### **New Business**

#### COA Calendar of Events

As requested at the last meeting, the commissioners received a Calendar of Events that would remind them of events they desired to attend and/or participate in. This will be constantly updated and distributed to members as needed.

October 22, Ms. Bluhm and Ms. Starbird will meet with Supervisor Herrity to finalize the presentations for the Committee on Aging exploratory meeting on November 7.

November 7 Committee on Aging exploratory meeting to hear presentations by Fairfax County staff on the new Home Sharing Program.; Volunteer Services in Fairfax County presented by Eileen Duggan (with back up by Tena Bluhm) ; and the Effects of the Economic Turndown for Older Adults with presentations by Joe Heastie, Jack Fritz, Lynn Wagener and Sally Hottle. Staff will draft write-outs for the presentation of these topics.

### **Meeting Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:37pm by chair person Tena Bluhm and seconded by Sally Hottle.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda McGrail

## Final minutes as approved by the COA on November 19, 2008

### Template of steps to take by COA when requesting approval to adopt a Proclamation

Family Caregiver Proclamation, how it took shape...

1. In August 2008, I was approached by Yolanda Thompson, Supervisor of the Fairfax Family Caregiver Support Program of the AAA about making a request to the BOS to proclaim November as Family Caregiver's Month. She felt that this would bring about added awareness to the contributions of family caregivers.
2. I agreed this would be beneficial and agreed to pursue the request.
3. I consulted with Tena Bluhm about the process to bring forth this request to the entire commission.
4. Yolanda Thompson drafted the language for the proclamation which went through an approval process within the Department of Family Services' Fairfax Area Agency on Aging communication team.
5. I received the draft language for the proclamation.
6. The proclamation was presented to COA at our September 17 meeting where it was approved and unanimously supported.
7. I, then, approached Supervisor Jeff McKay's office about his support of the proclamation. I corresponded with his Chief of staff via e-mail and phone contact, and e-mailed him the draft proclamation. Supervisor McKay supported the proclamation and presented it to the BOS at their very next BOS meeting, Sept. 22. It was then voted on at the following BOS meeting and approved.
8. At the Oct. 20 BOS meeting the proclamation was presented and received by three family caregivers, myself, and Tena Bluhm.
9. Basically, this process took 3 months!