

MINUTES

Senior & Disabled Services
Senior Services Advisory Council
Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St., Eugene

December 13, 2005

Members Present: Anna May Herbert, Chair; Jane Boren, Mae Westfall Cook, Marion Esty, Jack Ewing, Mary Johnson, Stephen Kraus, Jim Patterson, Rikki Rainey, and Jane Strasdas.

Members Excused: Dianne Burch, Andrea Gillispie, Darlene Puls, Steve Skipton, and Joe Xavier.

CR Member Present: David Quale.

Staff Members Present: Sandy Karsten, Patti Little, Kay Metzger, and Ted Stevens.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Anna May Herbert called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM. Persons in attendance introduced themselves.

2. CONSIDERATION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

Marion Esty announced the Senator Ron Wyden will hold a Town Hall Meeting on Friday, January 13, 2006, late afternoon, at Campbell Senior Center, Eugene. She stated that this event will provide seniors an opportunity to speak about issues of concern, including the design and provisions of Medicare Part D, the new prescription drug benefit authorized by Congress in 2003.

Action: Without objection, Anna May Herbert ruled that the agenda for the meeting be accepted, as presented.

3. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 2005 SSAC MEETING

Rikki Rainey pointed out a typographical error in the Minutes of the October

SSAC meeting. In the second to last sentence of the first paragraph of Item # 6.b(4)(a), the Minutes should read as follows: \$.31/mile, rather than \$.31/meal.

Action: Moved by Mae Westfall Cook, and seconded by Jane Strasdas, to approve the Minutes of the October 11, 2005 meeting of the Senior Council, as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.

4. LCOG REPORTS

a. LCOG Board of Directors

Ted Stevens reported that the LCOG Board Executive Committee approved the Council-recommended amendments to the current year budget for Oregon Project Independence. Further, since the Oregon Department of Human Services released to LCOG its entire 2005-07 OPI allocation prior to the Executive Committee meeting, the higher version of the budget (i.e., the \$520,000 version) was considered and accepted. Approval of this matter was communicated to the LCOG Board at its meeting on December 1. Also, in honor of Ted's upcoming retirement, the Board, by resolution, recognized and thanked him for his years of service to the organization.

b. Disability Services Advisory Council

Ted Stevens reported on the November meeting of LCOG's Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC). He stated that the highlight of the meeting was a demonstration of the recently launched Network of Care web site for Oregon. Using a computer and an in-focus viewer, Patti Little displayed and explained the many features of the site, including the resource directory for Lane County. In addition to this demonstration, Ted reported that the Council received reports from the Standing Committees and staff.

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. Procurement and Monitoring Committee – In-Home Services Contract Extension

Patti Little reported on behalf of the Procurement and Monitoring Committee. She provided background information on this topic, presented the Committee's recommendation, and explained its rationale for the recommendation. Her presentation and the background memo forwarded to members in their meeting

packets prompted a number of questions. Several dealt with the qualifications of staff employed by Addus HealthCare to perform the work under this contract. Others dealt with the rates of pay provided by Addus to its employees. All of these questions were responded to by staff and other members of the Council with knowledge about these matters. On another matter, Patti was asked why the Consortium is seeking a nine month extension, rather than a six month extension. She explained that the entire provider selection process can take six months and, if a new provider is selected, that it can take an additional three months to transition the program from one vendor to another. Patti was also asked if there are other agencies interested and capable of bidding on this contract. She stated that there are other agencies that have expressed interest in receiving copies of the request for proposals and, by extension, one can assume that there are others capable of performing the work desired by the Consortium. In response to another question, staff explained the process used by Addus to check prospective employees' backgrounds to assure that they are free of disqualifying criminal records. Finally, Patti described the process in place to capture complaints about Addus and the work of its employees. Regarding this item, she stated that relatively few complaints have been received about Addus over the course of its multi-year contract. Notwithstanding this fact, she reported that several complaints were received recently, during the training period for a new scheduling coordinator. Now that she is more familiar with the job, the number of complaints has lessened.

In order to save time for consideration of the other items on the agenda, the Council Chair closed the general discussion period and asked the Council to express its pleasure on this matter.

Motion: Moved by Marion Esty, and seconded by Mary Johnson, to recommend to LCOG that (1) it approve the contract extension for in-home services with Addus HealthCare for the period of January 1, 2006 through September 30, 2006, at the reimbursement rates of \$16.45/hour for Home Care and \$18.50/hour for Personal Care, and (2) that it communicate its approval of this extension and rate increases to Northwest Senior and Disability Services, the lead agency for the In-Home Services Procurement Consortium. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Demonstration of the Network of Care Web Site to the Senior Services Advisory Council at its February 2006 Meeting

Ted Stevens asked the Council if it wished to receive a demonstration of the Network of Care web site at its February 2006 meeting. He explained that it will be necessary to hold the meeting at one of LCOG's offices due to issues involving

the availability of computer equipment and a connection to LCOG's computer network. By the motion which appears here, members voted to move the location of the Council's February meeting in order for them to receive a demonstration of this new resource.

Motion: Moved by Jack Ewing, and seconded by Mary Johnson, that the February 2006 meeting of the Senior Services Advisory Council be held at LCOG's Wells Fargo Building Office, 4th Floor Large Conference Room, 99 E. Broadway, Eugene. Motion passed unanimously.

Following the approval of this motion, Patti Little mentioned that she will also plan to showcase S&DS' revised web site at the same time. David Quale requested that staff include the web addresses for both sites with the February meeting notice and agenda.

6. INFORMATION ITEMS

a. Chair's Report

SSAC Chair, Anna May Herbert, stated that she has been recovering from surgery and, as a result, has been unable to attend recent meetings of the Standing Committees.

b. Committee Reports

(1) Advocacy Committee

Marion Esty reported on the Advocacy Committee meeting held on December 9th in Florence. She stated that nearly the entire meeting was devoted to a dialogue with the three legislators – Senator Joanne Verger, Representative Alan Brown, and Representative Arnie Roblan – representing western Lane County in the State Legislature. She opined that this dialogue was very interesting and informative. She reported that she was pleased by the degree of cooperation exhibited by these legislators, and by their candor with the members of the Advocacy Committee. Regarding the latter point, Marion mentioned that Senator Verger lamented the low priority shown to senior and disability services by the Governor and legislative leadership. To correct this situation, she offered the following advice: that advocates for seniors and people with disabilities adopt a different and more positive approach to communicating their needs and desires to elected officials. She also urged advocates to use the media to raise awareness of the needs both

groups with the general population and, to help with this process, that they identify and use a well respected Oregonian to be their spokesperson. Turning to other topics, Marion mentioned that the weather in Florence last Friday was beautiful and that the many members of the Committee enjoyed a delicious lunch at a local restaurant, compliments of Dianne Burch.

Mary Johnson shared her impressions of the meeting, as well. They were very positive. It was mentioned that Representative Roblan is serving on the House Revenue Committee in the interim between the 2005 and 2007 legislative sessions and that one of its charges will be reviewing Oregon's tax expenditure system. Mary also noted that Representative Alan Brown stated that he would work with his colleagues on the Emergency Board to obtain a rate increase for Medicaid funded Meals on Wheels.

At the conclusion of these reports on the December Advocacy Committee meeting, Ted Stevens announced that the January Committee meeting will be held on Friday, January 20, 2006, 1:30 PM – 3:30 PM, in the Community Room at the Boulders on the River Apartments on Goodpasture Road, Eugene. He stated that this meeting will be devoted to a conversation with Senator Vicki Walker and Representatives Bob Ackerman and Debi Farr. He urged all SSAC members to attend this meeting, if their schedules permit.

(2) Long Term Care Committee

Kay Metzger reported on the recent Long Term Care Committee meeting. She shared that the majority of the meeting was devoted to presentations from S&DS staff on the work the agency is performing to (1) educate Medicare beneficiaries about the provisions of Part D, the new prescription drug benefit, and (2) assist dual eligibles select the most appropriate prescription drug plan. Both Alicia Kehoe, Supervisor of the dual eligible enrollment project, and Brent Wood, the Medicare Part D Outreach Worker, gave presentations.

Following Kay's remarks, David Quale reported that he had attended one of Brent's presentations and found him knowledgeable and effective. He also mentioned that he and his co-workers have had good results using the 1-800 Medicare enrollment assistance phone system. As a follow-up to David's comments, Ted Stevens shared information on the dates and locations of additional outreach presentations being given by Brent Wood in December and January. On a related topic, Mary Johnson reported that pharmaceutical manufacturers are changing the rules for their free and low cost prescription drug assistance

programs. Specifically, most are changing eligibility criteria to coordinate with the provisions of Medicare Part D.

Given the high interest in Medicare Part D, a general discussion of its provisions ensued. After several minutes, the Chair called off this discussion to allow sufficient time for the consideration of the balance of items on the meeting agenda.

(3) Procurement and Monitoring Committee

Anna May Herbert reported on the November meeting of the Procurement and Monitoring Committee. She shared that the Committee received reports on several monitoring visits. Regarding the monitoring of the Red Cross' Meals on Wheels program, Anna May stated that the program is delivering 300 meals per day – its maximum capacity. Fortunately, it does not have a waiting list, at present, but may need to institute one if many more referrals are received. Due to findings on this site visit, it is recommended that S&DS amend its monthly report form to more accurately capture selected program data. Concerning the monitoring of Family Caregiver Training services, Anna May reported that Committee members attended a training session sponsored by Cascade Health Solutions' Adult Care Center in its new location at Kaufman Senior Center. She reported that the setting is pleasing, but a little crowded. In addition to these reports, Anne May stated that Committee members also monitored the food services and the in-home care contracts. In closing, she reported that the Committee will not meet in December.

(4) Planning and Budget Committee

Jane Boren, P&B Committee Chair, reported on the Committee's meeting earlier in the day. She indicated that the Committee started its work on the development of next year's Area Plan Budget and Objectives. To this end, she reported that the use of Older Americans Act Title III-D funds was discussed, that preliminary information on the availability of Older Americans Act, OPI, and Medicaid and related funds for fiscal year 2006-07 was received, that assumptions to be used in the development of a budget for 2006-07 were considered, and that staff-generated ideas for Program Objectives for next fiscal year were presented. At the conclusion of her report, she stated that the Committee will meet next on Tuesday, January 10, 2006, 10 AM – 12 Noon, to continue its work on next year's Area Plan Update.

c. Staff Reports

(1) Medicare Part D Implementation Updates

Given the extended discussion of this topic earlier in the meeting, staff had little additional information to share.

(2) S&DS Staffing Transition Update

(a) New Program Manager

Kay Metzger reported that she has selected Nancy Sargent-Johnson to be the new Program Manager for S&DS. She reviewed Nancy's qualifications and experience and stated that she will join S&DS on Tuesday, January 3, 2006.

(b) Retirement Reception for Ted Stevens

Kay Metzger announced that LCOG is hosting a retirement reception for Ted Stevens on Monday, January 30, 2006, 4:30 – 6:30 PM, at the Downtown Athletic Club, Eugene. She stated that members of S&DS' Advisory Councils will receive invitations to the reception early in January.

7. OTHER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mae Westfall Cook reported on Home Instead's "Be a Santa to a Senior" project. She reported that over 60 agencies and organizations were contacted to help identify seniors in need of presents during the December holidays. With their help, over 800 seniors were identified to participate in this year's project. Thanks to the organizational and outreach work performed by Home Instead, these seniors will receive presents in the next few days. She invited SSAC members to join a present wrapping party to be held at Valley River Inn on Thursday, December 15, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. She also asked if any members of the Council would be willing to help with the distribution of the presents on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

While she had the floor, Mae Westfall Cook presented a gift to Ted Stevens from the Council honoring his years of service to S&DS and Lane County seniors and people with disabilities. The gift, a framed photograph taken by Council member Stephen Kraus, was signed on the back by members of the Council. Ted Stevens thanked the Council for this recognition.

8. REMINDER OF NEXT MEETING/ADJOURN

Anna May Herbert reminded members that the next Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 14, 2006, 1:30 PM, at LCOG's Wells Fargo Building Office, 99 E. Broadway, Eugene.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.

(Recorded by Ted Stevens)

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