

# MINUTES

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

June 14, 2005

- Members Present: Jane Boren, Vice-Chair; Mary Johnson, Jean Jordan, Steve Kraus, Paul MacLearn, Debbie Olsen, Alice Putnam, L.M. Reese, Oguilvia Skelton, Carolee Smith, Jane Strasdas, Joe Xavier.
- Members Excused: Mae Westfall Cook, Marion Esty, Jack Ewing, Anna May Herbert, Darlene Puls, Rikki Rainey, Steve Skipton.
- CR Member Present: Dianne Burch.
- Guest Present: Susan Montana.
- Staff Members Present: Kay Metzger, Ted Stevens.

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Jane Boren called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Debbie Olsen announced a new program – making gardening fun for seniors – being sponsored by Home Instead. She distributed a program brochure and informed the group that coverage on the program will appear on KVAL-TV.

## 2. CONSIDERATION OF THE MEETING AGENDA

**Action:** Without objection, Jane Boren ruled that the agenda for the meeting be accepted, as presented.

## 3. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2005 SSAC MEETING

**Action:** Without objection, Jane Boren ruled that the Minutes of the May 10, 2005 meeting be accepted, as written.

#### **4. LCOG REPORTS**

##### **a. Board of Directors**

Ted Stevens reported that the LCOG Board Executive Committee considered, at its May meeting, the 2005-06 Update to the agency's 2003-07 Area Plan on Aging and Disability Services. In addition to addressing the Plan Update, as recommended by the SSAC and DSAC, it considered minor amendments offered by the SSAC and S&DS staff. Ted explained these minor amendments (which were shared with Council members by memo in advance of the meeting), linking two to PeaceHealth's decision to terminate its contract with S&DS for the provision of Senior Mental Health Counseling Services on June 30, 2005, and the others to the unanticipated availability of additional OPI funds in the amount of \$11,515. Ted reported that the Board Executive Committee approved the Plan Update and the minor amendments, and authorized staff to submit the Plan, including the Option #1 version of the budget, as amended, to DHS for approval.

##### **b. Disability Services Advisory Council**

Ted Stevens also reported on the June 10<sup>th</sup> DSAC meeting. He shared that the Disability Council elected the following officers for Program Year 2005-06: Chair, L.M. Reese, and Vice-Chair, Dan Arkin. In addition, Ted reported that the Council forwarded membership appointment recommendations to LCOG, as follows: the re-appointment of five current members, the appointment of three new members, and the appointment of five community representative members. Finally, Ted reported that the Council received reports from Standing Committees, members, and S&DS staff.

#### **5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2005-06**

##### **a. Presentation of the Slate of Officers**

Joe Xavier, SSAC Nominating Committee Chair, reminded members that he placed the following slate in nomination at the May SSAC meeting: Chair, Anna May Herbert; First Vice Chair, Jane Boren; and Second Vice Chair, Marion Esty.

##### **b. Solicitation of Nominations from the Floor**

Jane Boren asked for nominations from the floor. None were offered.

**c. Election**

**Motion:** Moved by Jane Strasdas, and seconded by Alice Putnam, to instruct the secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for the slate of officers proposed by the Nominating Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

**6. ACTION ITEMS**

No Action Items were presented for Council consideration.

**7. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**a. Vice Chair's Report**

Jane Boren reported on Barney Speight's decision to leave his post as Administrator of DHS' Office of Medical Assistance Programs and to take a management position with the State of Washington. She expressed her disappointment with Mr. Speight's decision, since he has been very helpful in getting a dialogue started locally between LIPA and local senior and disability advocates. She noted, during his brief tenure, that more effort has been put into resolving local advocates' complaints against LIPA and OMAP than during the preceding two years. She also expressed concern about the future of these problem resolution efforts, since the prior OMAP Administrator, Lynn Reed, has been re-appointed by the DHS Director to the head role at OMAP.

To emphasize the severity of the problems being addressed by local senior and disability advocates, Jane stated that she has had to lay off three employees at her medical equipment supply business due to reduced levels of payment from OMAP.

**b. Committee Reports**

**(1) Long Term Care Committee**

Kay Metzger, S&DS Program Manager and staff to the Long Term Care Committee, reported on behalf of the Committee. She provided a final report on the Committee's project to re-survey former clients who lost services in 2003 during the large-scale downsizing of DHS services. She reminded members that the purpose of this project was to assess how these former clients are doing, after approximately two years without services. Regarding its findings, she reported that they were shared with attendees of the May 21<sup>st</sup> Legislative Dialog and, in

summary form, were mailed to all members of the legislative delegation from Lane County.

At the conclusion of this report, Dianne Burch thanked Steve Skipton, Committee Chair, members of the Long Term Care Committee, and Kay Metzger for their work on this project. She stated that its findings gave her valuable information to share with the legislators who represent western Lane County.

## **(2) Advocacy Committee**

Ted Stevens reported on both the May Advocacy Committee meeting and the May Legislative Dialog. Regarding the former, he stated that the Committee spent a significant part of its meeting preparing for the May 21<sup>st</sup> Legislative Dialog. He also shared that the Committee finalized its work priorities for the balance of 2005. Concerning the Legislative Dialog, he mentioned that it was well attended, that it was efficiently and effectively run, and that a good exchange of information and ideas occurred.

Following the presentation of this report, Ted Stevens reported that Representative Debi Farr will attend the Committee's June meeting. Since Rep. Farr has been unable to attend either of S&DS' 2005 legislative dialogs, he urged all SSAC members to attend the June 17<sup>th</sup> Advocacy Committee meeting in order to become better acquainted with Rep. Farr.

At the conclusion of Ted's remarks, Jane Boren spoke at some length about the influence of money on politics. She opined that those with money to contribute to candidates and employ high-priced lobbyists enjoy a disproportionate advantage in the legislative process. She lamented that small business owners, such as her, have little opportunity to influence the outcome of legislative debates.

After Jane's comments, Ted offered comments on the status of the 2005 legislative session. In addition, Dianne Burch urged senior and disability advocates to stay engaged in the political process after the conclusion of the legislative session.

## **(3) Procurement and Monitoring Committee**

Ted Stevens reported that the Procurement and Monitoring Committee will hold its final meeting of the program year on Tuesday, June 28, 12:30 PM, at Marie Callendar's Restaurant, Eugene. Other SSAC members were invited to participate.

**c. Staff Reports**

**(1) Update on Medicare Part D**

Ted Stevens distributed a two-page document entitled, “Enrollment Assistance Plan.” He explained that this is a summary of the plan being crafted by the Oregon Department of Human Services to fulfill its commitments regarding the enrollment of seniors and people with disabilities who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid (a.k.a. “dual eligibles”). He reviewed this document with Council members and provided other updates regarding the implementation of Medicare Part D.

Several SSAC members expressed concern and frustration with the complexity of Medicare Part D. Jean Jordan emphasized that S&DS needs to develop a very simple explanation of Part D, including the options available to seniors and people with disabilities. She opined that the information currently available is not appropriate for use with people, such as, the lower income seniors enrolled in LCC’s Senior Companion Program.

Regarding the process being spearheaded by the Social Security Administration to enroll lower income Medicare beneficiaries in the “low income subsidy” component of the Part D program, Paul MacLearn and Jane Strasdas reported that they had both received outreach letters from Social Security. They stated that they found them to be clearly written and easily understood.

**8. RECOGNITION OF OUT-GOING SSAC MEMBERS**

Jane Boren and Ted Stevens thanked Carolee Smith for six years of service to the Council. Ted also thanked Alice Putnam for her year of service. Both were presented with certificates of appreciation.

Following these presentations, Paul MacLearn announced that he is resigning from the Council, effective immediately. He explained that he is retiring from his pastoral position with the Oakridge Nazarene Church in September, and that he and his wife will be moving out of the area. Members expressed their appreciation to Paul for his dedicated service to the Council.

**9. REMINDER OF NEXT MEETING/ADJOURN**

Jane Boren reminded members that the next Council meeting will be held on

Tuesday, August 9, 2005, 1:30 PM, at Hilyard Community Center.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.

*(Recorded by Ted Stevens)*

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