

## MINUTES

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

October 9, 2007

Members Present: Chair; Steve Skipton, Dianne Burch, Mae Westfall Cook, Cathy Steadman Cox, Patricia Giles, Andrea Gillispie, Rod Holst, Mary Johnson, Jean Jordan, Kathy Mann, Jonathon Ramey, Dr. Sparky Rice, Dennis Shine, Betty Jane Shirley, Jane Strasdas

Community Reps Present: Susan Busler, Megan O'Connor, Yvaughn Tompkins

Members Excused: Jane Boren, Marion Esty, Jim Patterson, Donna Peterson, David Quale

Community Reps Excused: Melissa Bowers

Staff Members Present: Kay Metzger, Sandy Karsten, Lenora Crowson, Lorilee Davis, Elizabeth Willis, Lisa Shamoon

### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson, Steve Skipton called the meeting to order at 1:36 PM. All present introduced themselves.

### 2. **CONSIDERATION OF MEETING AGENDA**

Agenda accepted by consensus without additions.

### 3. **CONSIDERATION OF THE AUGUST MINUTES**

*Motion:* Jean Jordan moved the minutes be accepted with no corrections. Pat Giles seconded the motion. Minutes approved unanimously.

### 4. **LCOG REPORTS**

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

Kay Metzger reported that the LCOG Board of Directors met September 22<sup>nd</sup> in Oakridge. The end of session status report was discussed as well as

the priorities and outcomes regarding those actions. Other items included a discussion of the county population forecast. Kay Metzger announced that the LCOG Board approved the purchase of Park Place on West Broadway and Willamette Street, primarily to be used for those staff housed at the Wells Fargo Building located at 99 E. Broadway. Currently LCOG is leasing two floors of the building, and the purchase makes long term fiscal sense for the agency. Additionally, Kay announced that LCOG will have their annual appreciation dinner in January.

**b. Disability Services Advisory Council**

Kay Metzger reported that during the September 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, the primary item of business was the nomination of officers for next year and introduction of new members. The DSAC Council also received the 2007 Legislative Summary.

**5. ACTION ITEMS**

**a. Extension of Contract with Red Cross Meals on Wheels**

Pat Giles presented a recommendation from the Procurement and Monitoring Committee that the SSAC approve the extension of the contract between LCOG and Red Cross for metro area Meals on Wheels. The extension will place the Red Cross contract on the same 5 year cycle as other contracts.

***Motion:***

Pat Giles moved that the Senior Services Advisory Council recommend that LCOG extend the Red Cross contract for one additional year, FY09. The RFP will be issued in the winter of 2009 for FY10. Mae Westfall Cook seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**6. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**a. Chair's Report**

Steve Skipton shared the most recent LCOG newsletter, the Regional Focus, which contained brief bios of the new members. Steve also shared that Mary Ellen Riley has resigned for personal reasons.

**b. Committee Reports**

**(1) Advocacy Committee**

Mary Johnson thanked the outgoing members, including Kathy Jenness. Mary Johnson was elected to be the new Chairperson. The committee discussed continuing its focus on the four priorities

approved for 2007. Additionally, the committee heard a report from a Durable Medical Equipment vendor. The issue at hand is a proposed reduction in reimbursement rates, specifically for power wheelchairs, that will take effect in November. The vendor stated that this will result in some Durable Medical Equipment vendors choosing to not provide the equipment, even if it is a covered item, due to inadequate reimbursement. Dennis Shine reiterated that he is more interested in how this will impact the consumer, rather than the vendor. Several members expressed an interest in following up with their elected officials. Steve Skipton asked if the Advocacy Committee will pursue this and Mary Johnson said yes. They will discuss it further at the next meeting.

Mary also shared information regarding a growing trend within Oregon of licensed care facilities terminating their Medicaid contract. This is also a reimbursement issue. Several SSAC members concurred with this, stating they are also experiencing this issue as they work with families and those needing care.

For the SSAC's information, Kay distributed copies of written testimony from the October 4<sup>th</sup> hearing of the Interim Committee on Services to Seniors and People with Disabilities, chaired by Senator Morrisette.

### **(2) Long Term Care Committee (LTCC)**

Betty Jane Shirley reported that David Quale will be the Chairperson. Steve Skipton reported that the LTCC talked about the process for approval of exceptional service payments. The LTCC will be advocating for process improvement.

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

Pat Giles was elected as the new chairperson and the PMC is looking at a change in the schedule to accommodate more members. Other business issues of the PMC have already been addressed earlier in the meeting.

## **c. Staff Report**

### **(1) Senior Meals Advisory Council Recruitment**

Sandy Karsten encouraged people to join the Senior Meals Advisory Committee. This committee helps monitor program operations and advise the Senior Meals Program on operating policies. Any interested parties should contact Sandy by the end of October.

### **(2) LCOG Budget Committee**

Kay Metzger reported on an opportunity to be on the LCOG Budget Committee. This committee reviews and comments on the proposed

LCOG budget. There are approximately 3 meetings during the budget-making process. Anyone interested should contact Kay.

### **(3) S&DS Overview: The Front Door to Services**

Lisa Shamoon, S&DS Program Supervisor of the Support Unit, and Elizabeth Willis, S&DS Program Supervisor of the Disability Services and Screening Units, presented an overview of how individuals and family members access our services.

Lisa reported that her unit covers 3 key positions: Front Reception, Phone Reception and Medical Transportation.

Front Reception staff greet people who come into the office for various reasons, including intake appointments, inquiries into potential services, make premium (or pay-in) payments, and food stamp cards. Additionally, many clients need assistance filling out the annual paperwork needed to remain eligible for the programs they receive. A Home Care Worker job board, which posts current in-home care job vacancies for Medicaid clients, is also available in our lobby.

The staff members who are responsible for phone reception deal with a wide array of calls from many different types of people, including requests from brand new clients as well as current clients who have questions about the paperwork or services received. Additionally, hospitals, facilities and other offices contact our office. Calls regarding services such as Meals on Wheels, Adult Protective Services, the Family Caregiver Program, and Senior Connections are received on a daily basis. Seasonal calls such as those for utility assistance, flu shots, tax assistance and farmer's market vouchers are dealt with each day.

Medical Transportation is a separate number for Medicaid clients on the OHP Plus package who don't have other means of transportation to medical appointments and cannot negotiate the LTD bus system. S&DS staff arrange transportation by taxi for those who are eligible for medical transportation.

Lisa Shamoon also shared with the SSAC that S&DS staff have undertaken a pilot project recently. The S&DS "phone tree" has been turned off and all calls are answered by a live person. Our interest is in providing personal and responsive service. The S&DS Management team plans to review customer service issues (such as wait time) to determine if this is a good strategy to implement on a permanent basis.

Elizabeth Willis reported that S&DS has 2.5 full time workers talking to people inquiring about services, and setting up appointments for those who may be eligible. S&DS has chosen to use experienced staff in this role to allow people to immediately speak to the “eligibility experts”. Screeners are knowledgeable about the Older Americans Act programs and can refer to Senior Connections and Meals on Wheels. Kay stated that our goal is to answer questions in the most efficient and thorough manner possible. Since July 1, we have worked with 1,241 callers who have inquired regarding potential services.

## **7. Other Reports and Announcements**

Mae Westfall Cook recognized the full attendance and the new sign-in sheet.

Dennis Shine reported that The Springfield Beacon newspaper is now in operation. They have reported on some of the problems caring for aging parents and a letter from Senator Bill Morrisette, in which he talked about Medicaid rates for care facilities.

Sandy Karsten distributed information on a fund raiser for Senior Meals. Sandy stated, “We have a wonderful group of volunteers who have opened a resale shop for gently used items and have raised \$5000 for Senior Meals.” The shop is at the Olive Plaza.

## **8. REMINDER OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

**December 11th, 2007, 1:30 p.m.; Hilyard Community Center**

## **9. ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.