

# BLUE RIVERS AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Minutes

### Regular Meeting

October 20, 2021

A regular meeting of the Advisory Council of Blue Rivers Agency on Aging was called to order at 12:29 pm at Table Rock Senior Center, Table Rock, NE.

Council members present were: Janice Price; Jennifer Schell; Jessica Gerdes; Tracy Wieckhorst and Karen Richardson

Absent: Lana Likens

Guests: Danny DeLong, State Unit on Aging Advisory Committee member

Blue Rivers Agency on Aging staff members present were: Carla Frase, Executive Director and Tracie Fossler, Administrative Assistant.

Price, Chair, presided over the meeting and Fossler recorded the minutes of the meeting.

**MOTION** to approve the agenda as printed by Richardson; second by Schell; voice vote; motion carried.

**MOTION** to approve the minutes of June 22, 2021 as printed by Richardson; second by Wieckhorst; voice vote; motion carried.

### **DIRECTORS REPORT**

- June 15 Williams and Frase traveled to SENCA home office in Humboldt to do our sub-recipient monitoring of the Tecumseh Senior Center.
- June 16 Frase attended Unite Nebraska Workshop; Webinar-n4a Membership meeting; Met with Annette @ the Beatrice Daily Sun regarding Agency Advertising.
- June 21 Unite Nebraska introduction with Ericka Lewon and met with Toni Harms AFLAC representative.
- June 22 Advisory Board Meeting
- June 23 Service Provider Meeting with DHHS and met with Delores Marmon and Roger Huls who are members of the Beatrice Senior Center Board.
- June 29 Met with building staff regarding Big Give Gage Event which is scheduled for September 10, 2021; our mission: Meal Delivery
- July 1 Disability Education Series: Legislative Resolutions: Advocacy Beyond Legislation.
- July 2 Webex meeting; Emergent CMS Issue, DHHS
- July 7 Check in call with Cynthia Brammeier and Big Give Gage meeting at Beatrice Community Hospital.
- July 8 Interview with Dylan Dell-Haro for the Care Manager position, hired him on the spot.
- July 8 Met with Sonja Workman of Foster Grandparents to re-establish our partnership.
- July 13 AAA Directors meeting in Kearney in person

- July 14 effective immediately; Grocery delivery for clients via transit services, paid for through transit program.
- July 14 Elder Rights Coalition
- July 20 July Nutrition coordinators meeting
- July 22 Laura Weatherby in the building regarding background check regs.
- July 27 Met with Stan Wirth, City of Beatrice Mayor, Mark Pethoud, City Building & Grounds and Tobias Tempelmeyer, City Administrator at the Beatrice Senior Center.
- August 3 AAA Directors/AD Waiver Supervisors meeting.
- August 3 Drove to Davenport with Williams and McKeever to meet with the Achievement Board regarding the usage of the facility. We learned that they are not on tax rolls and there is no city involvement and that they fundraise on their own. We discussed our agencies and the need to lessen our expense there. They were very positive and gave ideas for additional funds such as grants, regulatory meter for our use and trash reduction.
- August 4 met at Beatrice Community Hospital with the Big Give Gage committee regarding the fundraiser to be held September 10, 2021
- August 5 NIRMA Spotlight Seminar Series on employment laws and practice at the Champions Club.
- August 10 met with Stan Wirth and Tobias Templemeyer. Presented a report to the Mayor regarding our Agency's services to Beatrice citizens. It was a positive meeting with the end goal to meet with Deb Drewel for better relations and coordination of services to seniors.
- August 12 was Bev Burhs' funeral our long time transit employee in Beatrice.
- August 17 AAA Director's meeting in Lincoln at Aging Partners.
- August 20 SUA/AAA Partner Agency funding Distribution Methodology Updates and Discussion.
- August 24 ADRC Leadership Team Meeting
- August 25 Caregivers & Self-Directed Care IHB & E Self Directed Care & September 13 email whereas we are praised by the SUA for our diligence. Also attended a meeting at Beatrice Hospital at the same time.
- August 25 Verjean, Service Coordinator, Frase, APS representatives and Director of Nursing at the Beatrice Community Hospital Tasha Hesman & Co. regarding the discharge of an APS person that the hospital called our services to take the client home on our bus, with inappropriate clothing. Frase believes it was a personality conflict between the discharge nurse at the hospital and the APS worker and our agency was caught in the middle. We discussed the diagnosis, the fact that this person had been brought to the hospital in an ambulance and we had no idea why she had been in the hospital, so the last minute call was the last time we will deal with a last minute called. As we have protocols that we must adhere to as well. Our driver was put into a difficult position. Frase made them aware that we want to continue a good relationship with them, but we will be unable to meet a last minute demand if we have not transported them to the hospital.
- Sept. 2 Staff meeting at 8:30am regarding Big Give Gage and current issues.
- Sept. 2 NIRMA HR Monthly Roundtable with Woods and Aikens.
- September 9 Check in Call with Cynthia Brammeier. They discussed Big Give Gage? Leadership, Beatrice/Board Meeting/Audit change of date/Monitoring/Mac funds/the fact that the 6-month monitoring follow up is good to go.

- September 10 Blue Rivers had a booth at the Vintage Venue for Big Give Gage, raising funds for meals delivery vehicle. We had donations totaling \$2185. T-shirt sales were 41 shirts of which we received \$10 each. It was very successful. These funds will be match by the Gage County Foundation and a check will be presented to all non-profits who participated on October 7 at Classics. A total of \$300,000 was raised County Wide.
- September 13 Interview were held for the Fiscal Assistant-Receiveables position.
- September 14 AAA Director's meeting in Kearney.
- September 15 Non-Profit Day for Leadership Beatrice. Frase gave a 15-minute presentation to the 14 individuals present regarding our services, Agency, goals & objectives.
- September 15 Chore Unbundling on web-ex
- September 15 Interviews for Fiscal Assistant position.
- September 16 Made decision to hire Amy Mason for the Fiscal Assistant/Receiveables position and offered her the job. She accepted. Her start date will be October 7, 2021.
- September 16 Management Team Meeting. Discussion topics: new funds we are receiving, staff issues, bus disposal, Erik's survey of clients, time study, Covid-19 policies revisited, MAC 3 amounts, a key check out plan at the outlying offices to be implemented and a presentation from the Brain Injury Alliance.
- A letter is attached to the Director's notes to Don Kracke for his assistance in the valuation of the proper we reside at for In-Kind purposes. He was the only realtor in our area willing to provide this service for our Agency.
- Also attached is a letter regarding the Healthcare Grand Award to assist in purchasing meal delivery van.

Upcoming dates:

- September 28 – October 1 Agency Audit in house
- September 28 – Nutrition Coordinator meeting
- September 29 – SPR Training via web-ex
- September 30 – Staff meeting in house
- October 2 – Senior Fair @ Beatrice Senior Center
- October 4 – October NE RMTS workgroup meeting
- October 12 – AAA Director's meeting via zoom
- October 13 – Elder Coalition via web-ex
- October 14 – State Advisory Board Meeting via zoom
- October 20 – Advisory Board meeting at Table Rock Center
- October 21 – 22 – NIRMA Conference in Kearney

Frase also handed out the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter numbers for Cost Per Meals to show everyone where the cost per meal is at all of the Senior Centers. Frase discussed the number of meals that were served at each center and the raw food cost per meal. She also discussed how she would like to promote the take & go meals to some of the business's in the neighborhood. There is not much close to get meals fast. Also discussed was the Friday delivery of weekend meals sent out to people who need them. Meals from other days during the week are saved and frozen for variety. CARES Act funds allowed the Take & Go meals, which will come to an end at some point. Nationwide, the AAA's are trying to get the Federal Government to reconsider adding the Take

& Go Meals in the Older Americans Act guidelines, because there is a great need for it. Frase informed the committee that when she gets back to the office she will be heading to Kearney for the NIRMA Conference for many varieties of topics. Thursday night is a banquet and Friday noon is a big buffet lunch, followed by the business meeting and distribution of dividend checks. Frase also discussed how we used our check last year to help pay for a new meal van that delivers the meals from Fairbury to Wymore, Odell and Diller. We also purchased a meal van last year for meals Thayer County Meal route deliveries. The local dealership has been on the lookout for more meal van for Otoe County. They are having issues finding any with the specifications we want. Frase is specifically looking for Dodge Caravan's as they seem to last longer. Price asked if City of Beatrice is contributing anything to our Agency. Frase answered that Beatrice does not contribute anything except the use of the Senior Center for meals. We could request from the Keno funds, but the city wants to own the van or bus, which is not allowable. We have received funds from the Otoe County Keno funds and we were able to do with it what we wanted. Each community has their own rules and regulations for use of Keno funds. Frase is planning to reach out to them again, with the possibility of attending future City Council Meetings.

## **COUNTY UPDATES**

### **NEMAHA COUNTY: Jessica Gerdes**

Gerdes reported that the head cook at the Auburn Senior Center was fired the previous week due to poor quality meals. The assistant cook has stepped in and the meals are much better. The November menu is done and they will be sending it. Meal numbers are down a bit. Between five and ten people go there for meals every day. The rest are home delivered meals which are between 40 – 50 meals. Auburn Transit reported that the buses are failing. Frase commented that it is because we are unable to get the new buses that we ordered with CARES ACT, due to lack of Chips and are not expected until 2023. Until then we are having to pay the high costs to repair them to keep them running. The number of passengers in for Auburn trips are holding steady. The out of town trips are down due to people not wanting to go out. Longs Creek was closed due to covid. It is now open and transportation is being bombarded with appointments.

### **OTOE COUNTY: Tracy Wieckhorst**

Wieckhorst reported that Syracuse has had some changes. Carla Snyder is the new site manager and has been also doing the cooking Monday through Thursday. Mary Wilson has temporarily stepped back in to cook on Fridays to give Snyder a break. We are still looking for a cook. Nebraska City's numbers have remained steady. The cook had some health issues and the assistant stepped up and did well. Wieckhorst asked if Transportation is considering doing the Christmas Light Tour again this year and Frase will consult with the Transit Manager about it. Danny DeLong mentioned that when he was on a zoom meeting with the board previously, Wieckhorst had mentioned dealing with senior fraud with the residents. He asked if they are still having issues. DeLong state that he works with AARP and is on the State Unit on Aging Advisory Board. They are working on something more affective with digital literacy. Most older people don't know how to get online, don't have equipment, don't have high speed broadband and don't know how to use it. Wieckhorst said she has issues with the phone calls with the residents. DeLong stated that when he gets calls and doesn't know the number, he

doesn't answer the phone. Wieckhorst said she wished she could get that through to the people in her facility. DeLong said they are needing to get an idea of numbers for the amount of people who do not use the internet. Richardson added that the RFD-TV channel has an AARP segment on about all kinds of fraud. Wieckhorst stated that they are doing a survey because they recently did a contract with Spectrum through a grant to work with tenants. They are also working with the local library to do a Digital Inclusion with her residents through a Roth Grant. DeLong said he would like to be invited or if it is a zoom meeting would be great. Wieckhorst said she could make it a zoom meeting. Richardson stated she would also like DeLong's contact information. She stated that they had an active AARP chapter in Pawnee before the pandemic. It has since gone away. She stated that they might be able to get a group back together. DeLong stated that if they get a group together, they will send someone down to the meeting. DeLong stated that he is a State Lead and State Volunteer with AARP and works with Advocacy and is one of our Registered Lobbyists. DeLong is also a Vietnam Vet and works on Veterans activities. That is also something we could try to arrange for our senior centers that could be counted as education. Frase commented that at one time we had Ryan Sothan from the Attorney General's office come speak at the senior center and hand out material related to fraud.

**PAWNEE COUNTY: Karen Richardson**

Pawnee City meals on wheels comes out of the hospital in Pawnee City for Title XX clients only. There were only four meals a day. There are now volunteers that are taking meals from Table Rock to Pawnee City and Humboldt. Richardson mentioned that the transportation in Pawnee County is through SENCA. It can take people to Lincoln for appointments if they can't find transportation. Frase mentioned that if they could get the passenger to Auburn, they could ride the bus from there on days they go to Lincoln. The nursing home is desperately short of help. The assisted living is now within one or two people of being full. DeLong asked if nursing homes are under the mandate for vaccines. No they are not yet, but DeLong said it will be coming and then facilities will have personnel problems. Frase added that Senator Julie Slama is fighting vaccine mandates.

Frase also mentioned the upcoming Elder Justice Training that is being held at our office on Friday November 5 via Zoom. It was asked if it was going to be recorded so others who cannot be on zoom that day can see it. Frase said she would check into it and let them know.

**JOHNSON COUNTY: Jennifer Schell**

Schell stated that Johnson County has SENCA for meals and transportation. Schell takes some of the Table Talks to the senior center in Tecumseh every month. The hospital is still sending out meals for long holiday weekends. Frase commented that since Tecumseh is in our area, they might be able to send out weekend meals as well, which could be considered an expansion project. Frase stated that she would have to check the contract first. We are looking at expansion projects when we get more ARPA Funds. The hospital gives the people a hot plate, a cold plate and a bag of snacks and doesn't charge them. They are providing a great service.

**GAGE COUNTY: Janice Price**

Price stated that she was visiting with a Beatrice Senior Inc. board member at the senior center, who reported that the Board doesn't have a director, doing more of their own work and discovering how much work it is. They previously expected our staff to do all of that for them. The number of meals at the Beatrice Senior Center has been improving. The Wymore Senior Center is opening for congregate meals today. A question about SHIIP was brought up, if there are still SHIIP strained Care Managers in the office and could some of them come to some of the sites to help people with the open enrollment. Frase sent a message to Kathy Erickson asking her if the SHIIP trained Care Managers could do that. Erickson replied that there are two Care Managers that are SHIIP trained. It was also mentioned to try calling SHIIP to see if someone can come out to help with the open enrollment at various facilities.

**NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Advisory Council meeting will be Tuesday January 11, 2022 at the Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, 103 Eastside Blvd, Beatrice at 10:00 am via Zoom.

**MOTION** to adjourn the meeting by Richardson; second by Wiekhorst; voice vote; motion carried.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** by Price at 1:43 p.m.

*Tracie Fossler*