

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging Governing Board

Minutes

April 26, 2021

The regular meeting of the Governing Board of Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging via Zoom was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Board members present: Schoenrock, Braun, Gakle, Crownover, Douglass, Ferguson, Hall, Haskell, Krueger, Seitz and Swenson

Absent: Nieveen

Guests: Danny DeLong, SUA Advisory Committee Member

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging staff present: Carla Frase, Executive Director; Beth Williams, Fiscal Officer; Kathy Erickson, Home and Community Options Manager; Carmen McKeever, Nutrition Manager and Clifton Lindell, Transit Manager and Tracie Fossler, Administrative Assistant.

Schoenrock chair, presided over the meeting and Fossler recorded the minutes.

Schoenrock addressed the board about the importance of responding back to the RSVP to the board meetings. Schoenrock discussed how he would like to see the Home & Community Options, Nutrition and Transit Reports on the regular agenda and no longer on the consent agenda. All board members agreed that they would like to see the reports on the agenda so that the reports would be presented to the board in person.

MOTION to accept the agenda and consent agenda by Douglass; second by Ferguson; voice vote; motion carried.

HOME & COMMUNITY OPTIONS REPORT – KATHY ERICKSON, HOME & COMMUNITY OPTIONS MANAGER

Erickson stated that she only puts this report together quarterly so that the board can see the variances, as opposed to a monthly report. The first quarter of this calendar year the Medicaid Waiver numbers have stayed about the same. The Senior Care Option screens for those people going into nursing facilities on Medicaid always go up and down. Erickson stated she has no idea why February numbers were higher since it was a short month. Care Management: (Erickson wanted to mention that at the last meeting Schoenrock signed the application for our two-year recertification for the Care Management Unit which was approved for two more years) seems like some of the client numbers have been going down and we can't put a finger on a huge reason. A couple have gone to nursing facilities. A couple have moved away to be closer to family during the pandemic. So it's hard to tell a determining factor until things settle down. They aren't the lowest they have ever been. We continue to have good use of the Personal Emergency Response Units which are the life line buttons. We pay those for people who are Medicaid eligible but not Medicaid Waiver eligible. It's another tool to help us keep folks in their homes. Also PER is eligible for the IIIIE Caregiver Program as a tool to help the Caregiver have a little more confidence that they can go outside or work in their garden and know that if their loved one fell, then they could push the button and get help right away. Our Senior Companion Programs had not been doing well for the last several years. After visiting with Carla, Beth and the State Unit on Aging, we

have discontinued that program at the end of this fiscal year. We will be adding more legal services to our current services. As far as the ADRC calls, we continue to get those. The numbers have been holding pretty steady. There are a number of Disability partners on board. Easter Seals, League of Human Dignity, Monroe Meyer and The Brain Injury Alliance are also taking calls now. We are doing referrals back and forth. Disability Partners haven't been fully trained to use the software system yet (PeerPlace). We know how to get on and send a referral to them. They don't have the capability to get that and move on, so we are still doing a friendly phone call to them to make referrals. Our In-Home Services are starting to pick up. We did not have any snow removal this winter, but have started the mowing services back up April 1. We did have some special projects that were performed by local providers for chore that were billed through the Cares Act funds. We have some people who didn't want housekeepers coming in their homes during the pandemic and are more comfortable now to start letting them in. Erickson also mentions that we have a long term Service Coordinator Janice Grummert who is retiring on April 30 after working here for 21 years. We have hired her replacement, Jennifer Seibolt, who has been working at BSDC. She will be a good asset for us and Janice has agreed to come back and help train her and take her around and show her the facilities and clients homes. She will be taking over Janice's case load. We are very appreciative that Janice will help set Jennifer up for success.

NUTRITION REPORT – CARMEN MCKEEVER, NUTRITION MANAGER

The report is pretty up to date. McKeever just returned from Unadilla. We will hopefully be starting services for them on Monday, Wednesdays and Friday's. We are looking to start that on May 10. There are volunteers in place for everything. Just need to finish up some logistics on that. McKeever is going to Davenport tomorrow and will hopefully work on what our meals costs will be for the meals to switch over. In Hebron, McKeever is looking at the donut shop to move our services to, and the owner is ready. McKeever just needs to talk with the owner and get on that schedule. On the report McKeever has that she hired someone to cover the Douglas and Palmyra sites. However, two days after she was hired, her current employer offered her an assistant manager job and offered her more pay and more hours. The current site manager retires on Friday. So we will be without a site manager. At Syracuse we just got a resignation from the site manager, due to health issues. She is going to stay on to help us transition. We are still looking for a one hour a day meal delivery route person and an assistant cook. McKeever had a lady hired and by the end of the afternoon she had called back and said something had come up and she wasn't taking the position. McKeever is working on an ad for the Syracuse, Nebraska City, Tecumseh and Penny press in that area's papers. They should be in this week's additions. In Nebraska City they are wanting to combine the Meals on Wheels with our meal program. However, McKeever can't get to that yet. In Beatrice our new site manager is doing an awesome job. Everything seems to be smoothing out there and meal numbers are going up. In Hebron we have not gotten the report back on the mold yet. So we are waiting to see what we are going to do with that. We are pretty sure it is mold. Anything that has cloth surfaces such as the older style recliners that have been given to the center will have to be discarded. We should be able to wipe off anything with a hard surface and use. McKeever has determined which senior centers we will start opening first, when we are ready to start opening up. We will start opening small and work toward larger centers. McKeever wants to be present at each opening to be able to help the managers. People are really wanting to start going into the centers again. McKeever is wanting to start opening the first week in May. The first center to open will be Deshler. They seem to be the site with no problems. Swenson asked if the Davenport Center was moving to the party room at RW's. McKeever stated that they would not be moving to that room yet.

McKeever has some back up plans, such the city office where the board meetings are held and the new fire hall. McKeever stated she would look at the fire hall, possibly one of the churches such as St. Peters that is all handicap assessable. We are not sure how many people will come back in to Davenport because of the numbers that they have had. So we will let that site slide for a bit. We don't want to close the center completely, but at the same time we need to get out from under that \$600-\$700 a month utilities. McKeever stated that we are in the negotiation stage with RW's to contract the meals in that area with the dollar amount and how much they can charge us and what kind of savings we will have. McKeever believes that when the word gets out that RW's will be cooking, then our numbers will go up. Right now Davenport has 10 people and Deshler/Hebron have 60. McKeever also including in her report protocols for reopening.

TRANSIT REPORT – CLIFTON LINDELL – TRANSIT MANAGER

January, February and March the number of passengers have steadily increased. The number of miles driven have slowly gone up also. The Peru State Collage trips are hit and miss. The administrative approval for the new buses has now been granted. The problem is that the State doesn't have a designated dealer for the small busses we have ordered. Since we started the process of getting new buses, we have had bus #22 in Syracuse that is now needing replaced. The drive shaft needs repaired. The Nebraska Department of Transportation has now said that with the age and number of miles on the bus that we can begin the process to get it replaced.

MOTION to approve the Home & Community Options Report, Nutrition Report and Transit report by Hall; second by Fergusson; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: TRANSPORTATION RESOLUTION FOR REPLACEMENT BUS IN SYRACUSE – CLIFTON LINDELL, TRANSIT MANAGER

Schoenrock read the Transportation Resolution to the board.

MOTION to approve the signing of the transportation resolution by Haskell; second by Seitz; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: FINANCIAL REPORT – BETH WILLIAMS, FISCAL OFFICER

The main thing Williams wants to point out is that we are at 75% through the year. When looking at the report, most everything is spent at 40% or so. A few are at 75% because of how funds are budgeted. We are sitting in really good financial shape as we enter the last quarter of the fiscal year. We will be doing all we can to spend the CASA money, because those funds end on June 30. All the other Federal funds will carry over into the next fiscal year. We will talk about how it is going to effect the new budget once we get to that item. We are going to work on spending the CARES Act money, but the CASA will be our priority. One of the ways we would like to do that is with our technology and zoom meetings. In IIID with the evidence Based Programing Erickson would like to do some on line classes. We have found out that we can purchase a better camera and computer for the conference room so we can see meeting participants better and hear people clearly without so much feedback. We are going to use that for the programs Erickson wants to have, such as Stress Buster and Tai Chi. Another purchase we have left this year is one more meal delivery van. Douglass mentions to add closed captioning on zoom.

MOTION to Approve the Fiscal Report by Haskell; second by Douglass; voice vote; motion passed.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: APPROVAL OF MARCH 2021 BILLS – BETH WILLIAMS, FISCAL OFFICER

MOTION to approve the March 2021 by Ferguson; second by Braun, voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: AREA PLAN BUDGET FOR FY2022 – BETH WILLIAMS, FISCAL OFFICER

Schoenrock asked to be briefed on how the old and the new budget compared, any significant changes or issues that would address and the impact and the timing of the presumed loss of Covid funds. The first thing you will notice is that the current budget is \$1.75 million. That includes \$167,000 in CARES Act funds. What is not showing on that budget but is included is the carryover of federal funds of approximately \$123,000. So the current budget we are in is about \$1.7 million. The new budget is starting at \$2.183 million. This is out of the whole federal funding for both FY2021 and FY2022 because with the CARES Act money the federal funds from FY2021 were not touched. So they are all carrying over into the next cycle. We also have a tiny bit of IIID Programming which is carrying over from FY2019. FY2020 has some funds left and that period got extended. That will carry over until September 30, 2022, both fiscal year 2021, 2022 and now 2020. They have really extended out how long those grants can be spent. That is going to help us immensely over the next two years at least. We also have two additional funding packages that will be coming down in relation to Covid. We have not been told the dollar amounts yet but we do have two sections of additional funding. The other thing they have done this time is that we talked though out the year about how Williams and Frase pushed to put on the carryover of the federal funds so the board would know about the funds we have available to us. This year the SUA actually added that item on the budget which, for us is exciting because we will be able to track them easier. We will determine which funds are being spent and be able to show which years funding we are using on our financials. It will make it more clear of how much money we have left and see the progression of where that's going. Programs IIIB, C1 and C2 which are the Handyman/Housekeeping programs, Congregate and Home Delivery Meal Programs. Each of those programs are going into FY2022 with over \$100,000 or more in the budget than they did last year. Title IIIE, which is our Respite program is going to have an additional \$40,000. The IIID programs that we were talking about regarding Stepping On and Tai Chi have an additional \$30,000. Our goal with this budget is to bring all of the programs back. If you remember back to February 2020, we were in a budget crisis, cut the handyman program completely and reduced the housekeeper program. All of that is coming back full force and we are going to try to grow these programs. McKeever has several places that she is looking at adding food programs. We hope to keep the people who are at home and don't want to come back to the congregate site yet, to stay on with the home delivered meals. We are hiring lawn mowers right now and are looking for housekeepers in all areas. Basically, since we have the funding we don't want to use it all in one year. Our goal is to shore up those programs to where they were and serve as many people as we can. The efforts that McKeever is making with some of our sites reducing the expenses of utilities and rents and utilizing a volunteer based programs model going forward will allow those programs to grow further and allow us to carry some of the federal funds over with us. So going forward as the census comes in and the possibility of our Federal funding reducing we will have some sustainability of programs in having some of those funds carry forward. Williams thinks that Covid has been a huge detriment and a very trying time for a lot of people. For Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging she thinks it has corrected some of the budget short falls we had. It has allowed us to reopen programs and given us a bit of a cushion for moving forward. So for Blue Rivers if we do it right

and build on the things we have talked about doing, Williams thinks it has been a positive experience for us going forward and allowing us to keep serving our elderly community in ways we wouldn't have. Hopefully, we will be able to purchase another vehicle as long as we stay on track. We can get the repair cost down and get something that will last long term. Other than that, we don't have any other big expenses planned. Williams thinks we are going to do one more big CARES Act thing with a fruit basket for clients before the end of this fiscal year. Any federal funds that we don't spend between now and the end of the fiscal year that we have budgeted will move on to the next budget right after the first of the new year. So it is a lot to think about and there is a lot of extra funding that we are trying to be really responsible with. We also want to serve as many people as we can and focus on the services we can provide. Frase added that we will also have the Medicaid Claiming funds. We have been training on that for eight months and went through two quarters. Now the state needs to figure out how to pay us that money. Right now they tell us we are due \$28,000 for September, October and November and \$26,000 for December, January and February. They have also added a line which is the MAC line on the budget. They tell us we can put it where ever we need it, but we know there is going to be guidelines. So we were very thoughtful of where we put that and how much we put there because we have not seen that money yet. We based it on possibly \$100,000 revenue source for us. We did not put all the money into it. We put \$65,000 because we haven't seen those funds yet. So we wanted to be careful what we show for those funds. They based it on time studies that are done by our ADRC, Erickson and our Data Management Clerk based on items they do during their day that help the Medicaid program at the federal level.

MOTION to approve the Area Plan Budget for FY222 by Krueger; second by Haskell; roll call vote; 12 yeas; 0 nays; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

- March 23 Older Adults, Climate Change and Environmental Equity zoom webinar
- March 23 Nutrition Coordinators Meeting
- March 24 Traveled to Davenport, Deshler and Hebron with McKeever, delivered new meals van, observed work methods, equipment identification, met Haley at Deshler, investigated the Hebron site, and checked out two possible new sites there.
- March 30 Submitted the completed Transit Application
- March 31 Transit Application Approved
- April 1 Disability Education Series, ADRC zoom webinar
- April 8 State Unit on Aging Advisory Committee Meeting
- April 9 Various interviews for Service Coordinator/Resource Developer for retiring Janice Grummert.
- April 13 AAA Directors Zoom meeting
- April 14 Elder Rights Coalition Meeting via conference call
- April 14 April RMTS Workgroup meeting via zoom
- April 20 April Nutrition Coordinators Call
- April 20-22 Work with Beth on Area Plan Budget when not on call
- April 22 Data Users Conference
- April 23 ADRC Leadership Team meeting
- Our Care Management Unit has been recertified

- Continued work on the Area Plan which is due May 3 and day to day operations, training on-going in all area of the Agency.

This report is a little shorter due to a smaller time frame than usual between meetings. Frase wanted to mention that we added to our legal services. She signed a contract with Chuck Bentjen in Beatrice who is an Elder Rights Lawyer. He will take over that \$25,000 CASA grant that was formally for the Senior Volunteer Program. He also works with Kearney right now in the same capacity. He is going to have an annual staff training so we can identify issues on how to identify our clients that may need legal services, but don't know how to get them. Then if they have some legal issues we can point them in the right direction. He will do us a great service. We will be hosting a UNL Law Clinic between March 2022 and April 15, 2022. It will be in house with the law students. Frase has signed the papers. It will be \$3377.00 from a grant initiative that is in the budget. We received a list of what they will be helping people with. We will be in charge of getting the word out. We have an additional \$687 to do the PR for that outside of the grant. We also have a Transit Technology project through NDOT that they will want to have more zoom meetings and training with our drivers, so our drivers don't always have to go to Kearney and Omaha so much for training. These funds will allow for the purchase of special equipment for our transit offices. We are purchasing 7 laptops locally. They wanted specific items that we had to get approved through our local vendor. Our server is through NCS here in Beatrice and those are on a big order. They are very specific as to what they all wanted them to have. So they are going to have really nice computers in all of our transit offices for those trainings and also for their day to day. June 15 is World Elder Abuse day. Frase has been given some screwdrivers, lights, notepad and pens to give out. They would like us to have some sort of event to help to get the word out to let people know to be more aware. We are always putting information in our newsletter about it. Frase and Erickson have thought maybe we could do something in our parking lot and do some kind of PR about it. Schoenrock added that he wanted to commend everyone who works on the Table Talk newsletter. He feels that it is an excellent tool to communicate. One thing that stood out to him was some ways to share and connect for Older Americans Month. Schoenrock also noticed that there was more advertising in there this month.

MOTION to accept the Executive Directors report by Haskell; second by Douglass voice vote; motion carried.

NEXT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING will be on Monday June 14, 2021 at 1:00 p.m. at Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, 103 Eastside Blvd., Beatrice.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 2:23 p.m. by Schoenrock.

RECORDING SECRETARY

Tracie Foster