

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging Governing Board

Minutes

March 22, 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, Douglass, Haskell, Haxby, Krueger, Nieveen, Seitz and Swenson

Absent: Crownover, Ferguson and Hall.

Guests: No guests present

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.

MOTION to accept the consent agenda by Braun; second by Gakle; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: REVISED DRIVERS MANUAL – CLIFTON LINDELL, TRANSIT MANAGER

Lindell stated that the Drivers Manual has to be revised every so often due to address, email address changes, etc. The title of the Department of Roads is now known as the Department of Transportation. He also updated the accident reporting and numbers section. Door to door assistance was poorly defined and has been updated. Clarification of the fact that weapons are not allowed on the bus was added. Staff are not allowed to carry a weapon to defend themselves. The inclement weather section was also updated. The last pages include contacts and abbreviations used in the manual. Lindell will be dispersing the revised driver's manual and doing training sessions with all drivers. All drivers will be required to sign the sign off sheet saying they received the manual and were trained for our records.

MOTION to approve the Revised Drivers Manual by Haskell; second by Seitz; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: TRANSPORTATION BUDGET PLAN FOR 2021-2022 AND 2022-2023 – BETH WILLIAMS, FISCAL OFFICER; CARLA FRASE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CLIFTON LINDELL, TRANSIT MANAGER

Williams stated that they took the first year with all of the numbers down and increased it by 1.7% to the budget from this year. The second year is increased a little over 3% more in hopes that our ridership returns to full force. Most of our buses will be new, so we don't estimate as much for repairs.

Lindell stated that we are approved to purchase new buses, but it takes a while to get them. Lindell stated that one of our buses in Syracuse is no longer in use due to expensive repairs needed due to the drive shaft failing, so this bus is now approved to be replaced. We are going to be getting smaller buses, except one will be the larger bus like the ones we currently have.

Schoenrock asked what is the maximum capacity for riders on the bus due to the COVID restrictions.

Lindell stated that the Federal Transportation Administration has issued that everyone who rides on Public Transportation must wear a mask or they cannot ride. Lindell stated that we have not had any problems with that yet. Right now we are restricted to about 5 or 6 passengers on each bus so clients are distanced from each other.

Frase added that this Transit Budget is due by March 31st. There is only one remaining piece to put together, which is the match requirements from counties for the next two years. They normally only do it for one year because counties don't approve budgets for two years. Williams has been sending out the information and asking for it back. We have everything on a working dashboard that will be uploaded by the 31st.

Williams added that our match funds that came in this year did not have to be used because of the CARES money. So we have match money from this year to be used for transportation and other programs coming in this next year. We would like to look into possibly purchasing another meal van for the Otoe County Meals route deliveries with some of those funds.

MOTION to approve the Transportation Budget Plan 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 by Gakle; second by Nieveen; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: TRANSPORTATION RESOLUTION – CLIFTON LINDELL, TRANSIT MANAGER

Schoenrock read the Transportation Resolution to the board members.

MOTION to approve the Transportation Resolution by Braun; second by Douglass; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: CARE MANAGEMENT UNIT RECERTIFICATION – KATHY ERICKSON, HOME AND COMMUNITY OPTIONS MANAGER

Every two years we must recertify our Care Management Unit. This has gone on since 1987 when Care Management was mandated by the state. All members were given it to review prior to the meeting. The Recertification Plan for July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023 follows the regulations. It hasn't changed much since 1987 because the regulations haven't really changed. There is a resolution and application that needs Schoenrock's signature. It is due March 31. Our last item of completion for this certification will be the uploading of the budget into the Sharepoint, when all other Area Plan budgets are complete.

Schoenrock asked Erickson to explain to the new members what those funds are used for.

Erickson stated that Care Management was something the state mandated in 1987, because they were wanting to take care of the elderly in their homes and keep them in their homes. The funds were laid out for professionals such as nurses and social workers to find the people who were needing these services. They would do assessments which is a standardized assessment that we use. We determine what their needs are, if there are resources in their area that could help them with their needs. If not, try to find the resources to help them meet those needs. The Care Managers follow those clients as long as they stay on the program. They see those clients every month or at least talk to them. Many of the clients come to depend on the Care Managers because they don't have any family in the area. They call the Care Managers when they need their help understanding documents they receive. Care Managers help them apply for benefits such as Medicaid, Title XX for meals and transportation, Food

Stamps, energy assistance and etc. and set up that plan. A lot of times they are the go between the clients and their families. Family will call and ask questions because the clients don't understand and have trouble relaying the information to the family.

MOTION to approve the Care Management Unit Recertification by Douglass; second by Haskell; voice vote; motion carried.

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

Williams stated we are trying something different this time. We wanted to show the board the report with and without the COVID CARES money to give the board members a truer picture of where we stand financially. We are doing pretty well but must take into consideration that we are providing less meals, transit riders and less clients receiving housekeeping and handyman services. That will be a big focus as we push towards the end of the year, to spend those funds designated for our housekeeping/handyman program and some other services. We also want to serve more meals. We have the CARES money just about spent. We will see funding sources switch to CASA funds because CASA cannot carry from year to year and we will lose it if we don't spend those funds by June 30, 2021. The Federal funds will carry over until at least September if not beyond. At this point basically between C1 and C2 with the extra funding from the CARES money and the Family First we are at 52% for meals of our budget. We will focus on increasing meals and services out there. McKeever is looking at changing place venues and adding a couple of cities for service. That means we may have to add more drivers to get those meals out there.

Schoenrock requested that Williams explain categories so the new board members can understand what they are.

Williams stated that Title IIIB is the in home services, information and assistance, Care Management, Housekeeping and Handyman. These are the services we are trying to increase and advertising for more housekeepers and handyman for lawn mowing. Title IIIC1 are congregate meals being eaten at the centers and Nutrition education. Neither of those are happening right now. We have to split the funds between C1 and C2 because we still have to maintain the buildings where we are preparing those meals. Title IIIC2 is the home delivered meal program. Typically, we would see the numbers flip flopped with more meals in C1. C2 also includes COVID meals and to-go meals and those will continue into the immediate future. Title IIIE is self-directed care, respite services and life line services. Respite is a service we received extra CARES funds and have added additional clients and have more funds available to qualifying clients during this time of COVID. Either a family member had the COVID and they needed extra assistance with people coming in as they try to get through it. Then we have had people who can't get out to get services and Care Managers have asked to increase those as well. Title IIID is Health Promotion for when Erickson goes out and teaches Tai Chi Classes or some of the caregiver support programs. The Senior volunteer grant is for that program directly. That program will be ending June 30, 2021 and is being replaced with a legal services program, utilizing a local attorney to specialize in assisting seniors. In the Senior Volunteer grant, people would volunteer to take people to the doctor or sit and have lunch with them, etc. We have not had much of that happening during this time of COVID. It's a Neighborhood Outreach Program that we can monitor. They can go through us and get mileage reimbursement. We have community members who are already doing this without being a part of this program. We have found that people do not like doing a background check when they are already taking their neighbors to appointments or getting groceries and that was one of the set-backs of the

program. ADRC is its own separate program, also posed as “No Wrong Door” with a lot of information going out to clients as they call in for resources. We try to answer as many questions as we can or refer on to other entities for further assistance. Care Management is another program. Right now everything we get reimbursed on is based on the units the Care Managers are providing to clients. This year they have been finding ways to keep those units up by staying in phone contact with all their clients. We are ahead of last year. They have done a great job with their units. LOC and AdWaiver Programs were explained by Erickson, who stated that they are going strong. The In-Kind reported is SENCA, who we team up with and contract for meals in Tecumseh. That is their In-Kind version. We have a computer program that donated software, which is also in-kind match. We also have an attorney who donates his time, and newspapers will print our menus for no cost to us, which is also in-kind match. Next year you will see a major jump in-kind as we are going to utilize the volunteers time count as In-Kind. We use that as match funds. Title XX is a grant that pays for meals or housekeeper services for low income clients. Contributions are a little bit down because we have less people and those that do have experienced financial restraints this year. NSIP is the money the state reimburses for each eligible meal at 70 cents per meal on clients 60 and over and who are not on Title XX.

Schoenrock added that the previous week Williams, Frase and himself had discussed showing the two reports with and without the COVID funds to show the board what the budget will look like when we don't have the extra funds from the pandemic.

Williams added that we are also receiving funding called HCD5 in the amount of \$68,464, which is allocated to home delivered meals. It is available now but we have opted to not put it on the budget and save it for next year, as long as this is approved with the SUA. These funds would then show on the new area plan budget that starts July 1.

MOTION to approve the Financial Report by Krueger; second by Douglass; voice vote; motion carried.

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

MOTION to approve the January and February 2021 Bills by Braun; second by Douglass; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: IN-KIND VOLUNTEER HOURS VALUATION PROCEDURE – BETH WILLIAMS, FISCAL OFFICER

MOTION to approve the In-Kind Volunteer Hours Valuation Procedure by Nieveen; second by Haskell; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFIT POLICY – BETH WILLIAMS, FISCAL OFFICER

MOTION to approve the Health Insurance Benefit Policy by Haskell; second by Seitz; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: NUTRITION REPORT – CARMEN MCKEEVER, NUTRITION MANAGER

McKeever has put a call out to Kim Showalter, Director of Public Health Solutions last Friday, but she was out of the office. McKeever wanted to discuss concerns we have about opening the centers and guidelines that would have to be followed if opened. McKeever also has a phone call into the Southeast Nebraska Health Department, but he was also out of the office Friday. The manager at the Fairbury Senior Center called and discussed with McKeever about all staff and volunteers at that site have been vaccinated and questioned when they could open back up. McKeever informed her that she is waiting to hear back from Public Health Solutions in our area. McKeever has a meeting tomorrow with the Nutrition Coordinators and the State Unit on Aging and will discuss when they can open up. In Nebraska some centers have already opened, however they are all contracted sites. We have no say so in how they run the contract sites other than monitor their meals of what they are serving and that they meet guidelines. McKeever then discussed what is going on in Davenport. Davenport is charging us a tremendous amount of money for our rent. We use the kitchen and a very small room and our rent there is usually between \$600 - \$700 a month. McKeever went to a Village of Davenport meeting to talk with them. McKeever was very disappointed with the outcome. They didn't seem interested in trying to figure out some different avenues to keep their services going. McKeever is going to Davenport again tonight to meet with the Achievement Board. McKeever was also in contact with Pat Kinner who is with the Thayer County Development Association, and will be meeting with her on Wednesday. There are three options in Hebron to take a look at if we move the meal prep out of Davenport and move it to Hebron, since it is centrally located. That would make it easier for delivering meals to Deshler and Chester. We have had inquiries from Carlton and Bruning about starting meal programs. That would centralize things better. We have located a commercial kitchen in Hebron that is sitting idle right now. We believe that this would be more economical for us to move to Hebron than stay in Davenport and pay the high rent. McKeever has also considered contracting with RW's in Davenport to do the contract cooking. That is still being looked into. We are having issues in Otoe County with staff retiring. We have a cook, cook assistant and the Douglas/Palmyra site manager who will be retiring soon. We also have a meal route driver who is wanting to slow down and go traveling, but would still fill in once in a while. McKeever is working with the Department of Labor to set up in-house interviews in Syracuse only to get those positions filled. We are still going full force at Plymouth. It was mentioned that possibly Pickrell might want to start a meal program with us. We will look into it. We also have added a meal delivery driver for meals being delivered to Plymouth on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There are between 10 – 15 meals per day being served there. We can possibly use him on other days to other locations. Unadilla contacted McKeever and she will be going there on Friday to meet with the Pastor. They have eight to 10 people who would be interested in receiving meals. Pawnee City and Humboldt numbers have increased. McKeever added that she had been told that some people from Dewitt are wanting to get meals from Plymouth. So those numbers may be going up.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

- February 3 Frase and McKeever met with Davenport business owners of the café regarding meal preparation for Thayer County Meal Route.
- February 9 AAA Directors meeting
- February 9 Frase met with SUA on External Sharepoint introduction – message/information sharing website.

- February 17 Zoom monitoring with the State Unit on Aging, had sent all of the paperwork prior to the meeting. Approximately 450 pages to SUA and same to the Auditor of Public Accounts, this included the Disaster Plan/Review.
- February 18 Zoom meeting, Impact of COVID on Workers Compensation, free through NIRMA, Frase and Williams attended.
- February 23 presentation on ATP resources
- February 23 Nutrition Coordinators Meeting
- March 4 Zoom meeting with Casey Muzic, Director of Midlands AAA, regarding Cost Allocation Plan/Admin Cost Pool, was very helpful.
- March 8 ADRC Leadership Team Meeting
- March 9 AAA Directors Meeting
- March 9 Check-in call with Cynthia Brammeier, SUA
- March 10 Advisory Council Board meeting
- March 15 Aging with Passion/Purpose Conference
- March 16-19 12-3 each day, Grant Management Boot Camp, Williams and Frase attended, due to Cost Allocation issues with APA
- March 17 Frase was a panelist on Leadership Beatrice
- March 17 Received an email from Amy, SUA, regarding our State SPR report, with glowing comments from the ACL (Administration for Community Living).
- March 18 Disaster Emergency Response Plan updated by Kathy Erickson and approved by Frase. This will be uploaded in our Area Plan 2022 packet upon completion of the document.
- Our Area Plan to SUA is due May 3. We will be utilizing our same Goals, Strategies and Objectives as in prior years due to Pandemic.
- Our PeerPlace Champions, Kathy and Michelle completed a request from our partners at UNO for additional data to complement our surveys that we completed for them late last summer as they work to complete articles on findings that could have positive impacts on funding/additional service for our Agencies statewide.
- Our Nutrition Manager Carmen McKeever was hired to replace Glenda, has been here six months and has had her review. She passed with flying colors! She is pursuing Hebron center changes, possible Davenport changes, meal vouchers in remote areas not yet served, among other items. She has been a valuable asset.
- Frase updated the 2-1-1 information data for our agency and programs as a valuable resource center to Nebraska residents.
- Training continues every day in all areas of cost accounting, fiscal, NIRMA applications, data, AdWaiver, ADRC etc. Every day is a busy one here and Blue Rivers Staff continue to meet every challenge as we serve our S.E. Nebraska citizens. Frase is very proud of each and every one of them!
- Frase stated that McKeever has really jumped into her role here and our meals have definitely expanded. On the same note we have to be ever mindful that as we follow the models of meal expansion like in Cortland and Plymouth we must continue to be fiscally diligent with our funds. Expansion is a lovely thing but we still have to watch the bottom line dollars as we are expanding. We are still going to be in a budget of financial crisis once the COVID funds run out. So we need to still do our due diligence of what we are paying at the centers. At Palmyra we are

paying \$50 a month rent, Wymore we are paying \$50 a month rent and the Plymouth and Cortland sites we have no rent or personnel expenses as we utilize all volunteers for meal distribution. So as we expand we need those same things happening.

- Frase has had two AAA Directors meetings since the last board meeting. A lot of topics revolve around opening the centers. None of the directors are ready to open the centers yet. We don't want hotspots. That may change with the April meeting as vaccinations rollout. Up to now we are all relying on the Public Health Solutions and the State Unit on Aging, which tomorrow we have the Nutrition Coordinators meeting. Frase is sure there will be plenty of discussion because Eric White eluded to the fact he was going to give us some guidance. Eric White is the Nutrition Coordinator at the State Unit on Aging. Frase is looking forward to hearing his guidance.
- The State Unit on Aging External SharePoint which is going to be the new process of how we share data and how we upload info for the Area Plan. We are hopefully going to be able to upload our Area Plan. Frase has been able to get into the program a few time, but then the information would not save. Now she is not able to get into the program and will have to work with the program coordinator at the state level.
- On Thursday Frase and Erickson will be listening in on a National Conference call regarding Addressing the Challenge of Nebraska Fair Assistance and Raising Awareness of the Supplemental Social Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance Programs. They are interested in establishing local level partnerships with our organization to assist with making referrals to our local office. Frase and Erickson are excited about participating. Frase has registered but has not received the link yet. Frase is interested to see what that is all about.

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

NEXT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING will be on Monday April 26, 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