

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging Governing Board

Minutes

November 16, 2020

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, Douglass, Nieveen, Seitz, Swenson and Gakle at 1:37 p.m.

Absent: Krueger, Ferguson, Hill, Hall, Hedges and Speth.

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

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

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

HOME & COMMUNITY OPTIONS REPORT – KATHY ERICKSON

Erickson reported that we have only been making calls to clients. Sometimes it is hard to get off the phone with the clients because they are happy to talk with someone and they are lonesome. We have continued to lose clients on our Medicaid Waiver and Care Management programs due to deaths and clients going into long term care facilities for higher levels of care. On our IIIE Caregiver support we received some extra funding through the CARES Act, and have given additional hours to all current clients and are continually adding new clients. Our Senior Volunteer Program hasn't produced many hours due to the fact that our volunteers are seniors. Currently they are mostly making phone calls. Our Care Manager Karen Klover will be working hard at getting more Senior Companions lined up in the Beatrice and Wymore areas when we are able to open up and visit in person. The ADRC numbers have continued to increase. We are not sure if it is due to COVID-19, but we have been seeing 30 – 40 calls a month. Our counselors have also been speaking with some clients more than once a month. Our services for our chore providers for mowing and snow removal were suspended when we had to make cuts due to the shortfall and we suspended the service early in the year and through the summer months. That was one of the services we were going to discontinue to save some funds. However, with our funds we received through LB1008, we will offer snow removal beginning in December. We see the need for snow removal for our clients to stay safe getting in and out of their houses and also any volunteer that may be delivering meals to them. The housekeeping program was suspended for a while due to COVID-19. We sent out guidelines for the housekeepers to sign and follow when we allowed our contractors back into our client's homes. We also sent a letter to the clients to read and sign stating that it was their responsibility to tell the housekeeper if they felt sick and didn't want them in their home at that time. The client numbers have increased since the first part of July. We had one housekeeper who refused to sign the paper and is no longer contracted through Blue Rivers to do housekeeping.

NUTRITION REPORT – CARMEN MCKEEVER

October Meal Numbers have increased by 511 over September meals delivered. Fairbury has had the biggest increase so far. We have several centers seeing an increase in meals due to the COVID. One of the biggest challenges we are having right now is we cannot find volunteers to deliver meals. The biggest concern McKeever has is trying to keep the employees in the centers working. We have had several employees test positive for COVID or some that have been exposed to COVID. We have had to do a lot of juggling and everyday it seems like it affects a different facility. Schoenrock suggested that McKeever reach out to the leaders in communities, the press and anyone who can get the word out to help find volunteers. McKeever feels that for the size of Beatrice we are not serving enough meals. McKeever wants to increase the meal numbers. We started providing meals one day a week in Plymouth and the numbers keep increasing. We will re-evaluate and possibly go to two days a week in the future. The meals are coming out of Beatrice. Plymouth has volunteers to take care of everything. We only have to cook and pack up the food and drive it to Plymouth. There is a huge need for meals. McKeever received a call from Thayer County Health Services wanting to get a meal delivered to Byron, Nebraska. Another call was received from a daughter wanting a meal delivered to her father in Carleton, Nebraska. At this time, we cannot deliver to only one person in one community. McKeever's goal is to expand the program as much as we can. Pawnee City is having an increase in people that need the service. McKeever is going to reach out to SENCA and see if we could work together.

TRANSIT REPORT – CLIFTON LINDELL

Transportation has been pretty steady despite COVID and some cancellations. We have continued to provide transportation for Peru State College. Lindell received an email from them stating that the college moved finals up and are closing next week. We also provide transportation for the students to go to the airport. Lindell will be ordering new buses but not to replace all of them. They have certain criteria they have to meet before qualifying to be replaced. They must be 100,000, 10 years old and their repair status is also taken into consideration. Lindell will be ordering buses for Auburn, Hebron, Beatrice and Syracuse. They are all over 10 years old and over their maximum life. Federal maximum life is 50,000 and State maximum life is 100,000. The buses that will be replaced have an average of 135,000 miles on them. The numbers for vehicle repairs have slowed due to parking the major buses needing repairs. The three new buses (2-Nebraska City; 1-Beatrice) we received in the spring all needed catalytic converters changed on them, covered by warranty. Total new buses we will be purchasing will be eight. The state has broadened their choices of buses to include a smaller bus with a raised ceiling that can seat 12 passengers. They will probably be more comfortable than the current big buses. One advantage of getting the smaller buses will be that they will fit into a car wash in which the bigger buses do not. The possible disposition plan for the old buses is that we could go hold an auction at the parking lot at the Beatrice Senior Center. The buses would be lined up for everyone to drive through the lot to see. There will be pictures of each bus and the interior. Then they would be sold to the highest bidder. We have already sold one of the older meal vans for \$500 because the sliding door was rusted and would not stay on. The disposal of the buses will happen after we receive the new buses in the spring. If we sell them for under \$5,000, Blue Rivers gets to retain those funds, otherwise the funds would go back to NDOT. Schoenrock asked if there were any extra precautions for transportation due to the COVID-19. Lindell stated that each bus has a sneeze guard that was installed. Drivers are required to

wear a mask at all times when they are driving and all passengers are required to wear a mask which must be on before getting on the bus. We are not running at full capacity. We are running at only 50% capacity with sanitizing the inside of the bus after each passenger, at the beginning and end of the day. We also have a contractor service that is sanitizing all the buses in all areas once a week on the weekend. They use what is called UVC Light that kills everything. They do a pre-test and a post-test and send a report to Lindell.

FINANCIAL REPORT – BETH WILLIAMS

Williams began with the October monthly reports. Williams reported that on those reports will be the only place our Federal carryover from last year is reported, which is close to \$160,000. The SUA does not let us enter it into the Budget revision or the monthly reports. They have a different method they account for these funds. However, we want to see it on our records so if we have something catastrophic happen we have the ability to “see” these funds. This year everything is carried over all the way until September 2021 due to COVID-19 Funds. We will have access to more funds through September 2021, so the Fiscal department had to get creative so we could show the board. The approved Budget Revision was sent out for all the board members to review. The top page talks about our service units. The first page is the budget that we currently have approved by the board. The second page displays our portion of the \$1.2 million funds that was approved by the State Legislature through LB1008. These were funds the AAA’s had worked with the Legislature to re-instate. The CARES Act money that we did not spend last year is also reflected on the revision. We have also reworked some of the numbers since we are serving only Home Delivered meals instead of Congregate. We also asked for a new meal route van in the budget revision. We also have the opportunity in the spring to process another budget revision. So if we are not able to open the centers back up and are experiencing a shortage of funds in IIC2, we can transfer some of the IIC1 money into IIC2 to cover the expenses. We are still hoping to be able to open the centers by the first of the year. Through the declaration of Disaster Emergency, we are allowed to use the money in the program that we need it. We are still in a state of emergency where we can cross funds and program funds. There are some program funds that are limited and that we cannot move, such as ADRC and Senior Companion programs. The July 2020 – October 2020 Program Expenses gives an overview of where we stand. We are at 34% of our year right now. In the numbers that we are over on, CASA money cannot carry over into the next year. It is all state money and if we don’t use it by the end of the fiscal year we lose it. Federal money can carry over to the next year. We have been asked by the SUA to spend the CARES Act money first. We are doing well on our budget. Plans are in motion for our portion of the \$1.2 million that we received. We are starting the Snow Removal program back up, lawn mowing in the spring and Handyman Safety projects up to \$500, which is a one-time thing. We are also looking to purchase a couple new meals route vans which are used to deliver meals between sites and not for transit use. We are trying to increase the meal program and also continue the to-go meals after COVID is over. We have also increased our contract service for housekeepers. We increased their rate by \$1 an hour. They have not had an increase in over four years. We are trying hard to retain all of our housekeeping contractors since it has been hard to find new ones as no one is really wanting to go into people’s homes at this time. We are working on pre-paid deliveries for homebound clients, mail deliveries and garbage take-out and well check calls. We have allowed time for our staff to do those things. We are continuing with our consumables project. We have games delivered with the meals, the fire crackers that went out for the

Fourth of July and Halloween fruit and snack bags. We are going to think of something to go out again in December. By sending those out, it puts a smile on our clients faces and is a huge benefit. We have gotten a lot of feedback on it. We are continuing to send out brochures and any new information that comes out in our meals. We are also trying to send out scam information. The COVID has brought out some new scams that people are falling for. We are looking to increase the current and future respite funds to give the people helping out in the home more hours so they can get help brought in. We are going to be purchasing a freezer for Syracuse so they have more freezer space to store all of the home delivered meals that are going out. As our numbers grow, that need might grow. We will work off of that short fall we had last year to be the basic budget and focus on it. Another thing we will look into is the shelf stable meals, that way if we have a center go down we would have one to two weeks of meals to get out to those clients if we couldn't. Our staff has done amazing in shifting gears and helping out at other centers. Some meals have even been packaged and delivered out of our home office. It has been amazing how we have been able to shift things around and keep people fed. That is why we are looking into the shelf stable meals to insure that it happens. So that is where the bulk of that money that was put back into our budget is going to go. Swenson asked if we give a meal to all our volunteers who deliver meals. Williams replied that we give them the option that everyone over 60 that they can contribute the suggested contribution of \$4 per meal if they would like to. They should not be receiving a free meal. They have the option to contribute if they can or if they feel they cannot contribute. If they are not on the grids for receiving a meal and we are not getting count their meals, then we are not getting that 70 cents NSIP for it, in which is part of what helps keep the program going. If all of the volunteers decide to not contribute at all, then it would be a big cost. McKeever stated that there is a big controversy over it, because in the past the volunteers had received a meal. The SUA just sent out an informational sheet telling us what we can and cannot do. It states that we cannot give anyone a free meal. It has to be documented on our grids and that is where we are running into some resistance. McKeever is telling the center managers to make sure everyone is getting put on the grids. Then we will send out a contribution letter. Then if they choose not to contribute, that is their choice.

MOTION to approve the Financial Report by Nieveen; second by Braun; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2020 EXPENDITURES

MOTION to approve the September and October 2020 Expenditures by Nieveen; second by Gakle; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: COVID-19 RETURN TO WORK POLICY AND EMPLOYEE COVID SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE – CARLA FRASE

Frase worked with another area director and she shared this policy with her. Frase and Williams tweaked it a little bit. This has been very helpful. We have had staff that have tested positive for the virus or have been exposed. There has to be some guidelines so we can put them in our Pandemic Plan.

MOTION to approve putting the COVID-19 Return to Work Policy and Employee COVID Self-Assessment Questionnaire in the Pandemic Plan by Seitz second by Douglass; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION; NIRMA RECOMMITMENT – BETH WILLIAMS

The letter is a recommitment to using the NIRMA insurance for the next three years. It will give us an additional dividend of approximately \$1,842 and that will supplement the prior dividend of \$3,685. This

will bring our total to \$5,500 this year in dividends received at our Agency. It is the same blanket policy we have that insures all of the buses and the building contents, workman's comp and liability. We just need to commit that we are going to continue to use that insurance program. NIRMA is easy to work with and they give us a lot of free webinars for learning things. They have also done programs before at our all staff trainings.

MOTION to Recommit with NIRMA by Douglass; second by Nieveen; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: LINE OF CREDIT RENEWAL – HEATH STEWART, FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF OMAHA

We are in the process of renewing our annual line of credit with First National Bank of Omaha. The documents are not ready to sign yet, but will be ready in the next week or two. When they are ready, Heath will email them to Schoenrock for his signature. We are renewing the annual renewal of the operating line of credit. We are renewing it at the same limit of \$150,000. The interest rate will stay the same. It is a variable rate tied to prime. The rate is 1.25% over prime. Prime is currently 3.25%, so that makes the interest rate 4.5%. The origination fee is the same as last year of \$100 for the operating line. Normally when a line isn't used the prior year, there is a non-usage fee of 1% which on this line is approximately \$1,500. But since we also have our checking account with them they are going to waive that fee. The line of credit has not been used since 2016. Everything is staying the same. Heath will send the completed documents to Mark Schoenrock, via email for signature when they are completed.

MOTION to approve the Credit Renewal by Douglass; second by Gakle; voice vote; motion carried.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: AUDIT PRESENTATION BY HBE – PAT MEYER, CPA, CFE

HBE's role is to audit the financial statements and express an opinion. The audit process is a plan to gain an understanding of the internal controls, risk assessments, confirmations, fieldwork, analytical procedures, inquiries, testing and financial statement preparation. FY2020 revenue was up a bit due to Federal and State grants for some new buses. They only had to audit the nutrition program because the transit program was below \$750,000. The expenses were comparable to the prior year. Expenses by Function is a breakdown by programs and is comparable to the prior year. Expenses by Natural Classification such as Salary and Benefits, Program Materials, Occupancy and Depreciation were comparable to the prior year. The summary of Statements of Revenue and Expenses was up from the prior year due to the grants for the buses. Assets are up because of the new buses. Liabilities are consistent. Cash Flow is up this year. Cash came in and right back out, so there was a little decrease in cash. Reporting on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and Compliance in accordance with government auditing standards had two deficiencies. Internal controls over preparation of financial statements and segregation of duties. Reporting on Compliance and Internal Control over Compliance for Major Federal Programs Required by Uniform Guidance (Single Audit) had four deficiencies. Internal Control over preparation of financial statements, Segregation of duties, Internal controls over volunteer services time and Internal controls over sub recipient monitoring. These were due to Frase taking over as Executive Director and is still in the process of training Williams on Fiscal duties. A noteworthy item for the board is Upcoming Standards Changes related to Accounting for Leases which has been delayed due to the COVID. So it will be a couple more years before we see the new accounting for leases. General recommendations were Bank Signors, which has been rectified. Band Statement Reconciliation and Review that has also been rectified. They recommend that we record the Grants Receivable and

then reverse it back out, but we have chosen not to do that. Schoenrock asked if the last four findings gave HBE any concerns as our auditor. They have no concerns as long as we follow up and get the deficiencies corrected.

MOTION to approve the Audit Presentation by HBE by Douglass; second by Gakle; voice vote; motion carried.

OVERVIEW OF DE-SEGREGATION OF FINANCIAL DUTIES – CARLA FRASE AND BETH WILLIAMS

Frase reported that they are working on training every day. Back in February when Williams was hired as the Fiscal Officer and we had a monitoring visit were told by the SUA that there was a funding crisis. So we didn't replace Williams position as Fiscal Assistant-Receiveables, which was a six hour a day position that Frase and Williams had to absorb and this has made it more challenging to segregate duties. We have to find someone else in the office to do those duties. We have limited staff and are now looking at one to be the third person to segregate the duties. The Pandemic has thrown a curve in it. Williams added that with the CARES Act funds and the additional Federal funds has brought an immense amount of extra reporting. So now we no longer have just the monthly reports, but we have the COVID version of that. We have all the regular expenses and the COVID expenses because we have to keep track of where that money is going in all of our programs and transit as well. It is more time consuming and we run out of hours in the day. We are also dealing with all of our entities being unavailable to talk to. The State Unit on Aging is mostly working from home. Then we have to wait for answers from all three sources since they cannot just get together and collaborate to give us an answer. One of them is actually in another state dealing with personal issues. So that puts a time restraint on things. The Department of Roads are all working from home. We also are working on the Medicaid Administrative Claiming with SUA, taking up more hours of time. We had three different auditors this year and one never stepped foot in the office. The other two came in on two different days and then spent approximately the next two months asking questions and asking for additional information. We are also working on new lease agreements for the facilities. We have two contracts finished. Having McKeever on board as Nutrition Manager will help because she can go do site visits and help facilitate the lease agreements. That will be a huge help.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT – CARLA FRASE

- September 22 Zoom meeting for the Nebraska Medicaid Expansion.
- September 23 Nutrition Coordinators meeting
- September 28 webinar with SUA-Ben Stromberg, Aging Partners/Care Management about reimbursement rates.
- September 29 Sysco Meeting with Dean Schwartz, Carmen McKeever and Chris Davis regarding purchases.
- September 29 ADRC leadership meeting.
- September 29 Frase and Erickson attended a Let's Talk Tour at the Beatrice Public Library with Tony Green the Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities at DHHS
- September 30 State Program Report webinar with Amy at SUA
- October 1 meeting with Danny Delong the State Advisory Board member
- October 2 NIRMA Membership meeting

- October 6 AAA/LHD Quarterly WebEx meeting
- October 8 Advisory Meeting WebEx
- October 9 Flu shots were given to staff in the admin office
- October 13 AAA Director's Meeting
- October 13 Nutrition Coordinators Meeting
- October 14 Elder Rights Coalition Meeting teleconference
- October 15 Senior Volunteer Program conference call
- October 20 Big Give Gage at the BHS Admin building parking lot, received a check in drive-thru event for \$1,445.98
- October 21 Cynthia Brammeier check in call
- October 22 MAC Cost Reporting Guidance
- October 22 Managing the Work Environment after Coronavirus presented free by NIRMA, Frase and Williams attended.
- October 22 met with Jill Hilkman re: Nebraska Strong Recovery Unit Partnership
- October 22 Frase, Williams and McKeever attended the Village of Palmyra regarding the new contract to use the facility.
- October 28 Ryan Sothan from the Attorney General's office, along with Nebraska Strong Recovery Unit and Blue Rivers staff were in house building Protection Kits for our clients.
- October 30 Frase and McKeever met with Larry & Linda Mitchell regarding the repairs, agreements at the Hebron Center. We are awaiting the Structural Engineer's report on water damage/liability/responsible party.
- November 9 ADRC Operations Manual Feedback webinar
- November 10 AAA Directors meeting
- November 10 Frase and Williams met with NACO rep Judd Allen to discuss options for insurance change back to BCBS, employee census info/other requested info, waiting to hear back
- November 12 Nutrition Coordinators Meeting
- November 17 November NE Time Study Workgroup meeting
- November 18 ADRC Referral Process Session
- November 19 Hot Topics Currently Confronting NIRMA members, free webinar

NEXT GOVERNING BOARD MEETING will be on Monday January 25, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. at Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, 103 Eastside Blvd., Beatrice via Zoom.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 3:07 p.m. by Schoenrock

RECORDING SECRETARY

Tracie Foster