

BLUE RIVERS AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes

Regular Meeting

January 31, 2023

A regular meeting of the Advisory Council of Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging was called to order at 10:30am at Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging via Zoom.

Council members present: Janice Price, Lana Likens, Jessica Gerdes, Karen Richardson and Tracy Wieckhorst

Absent: Rhonda Dettmer, Jennifer Schell and Cheryl Walsh

Guests: Danny DeLong

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging staff members present: 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 Wieckhorst; second by Richardson; voice vote; motion carried.

MOTION to approve the minutes of October 27, 2022 as printed by Gerdes; second by Richardson; voice vote; motion carried.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Frase reported that we are working on getting ready for our Monitoring Visit with the State Unit on Aging and the Auditor of Public Accounts on February 16, 2023. Kathy Erickson had always done the monitoring for the Respite Care Program, ADRC Program, Care Management Program and Title IIIB Services. Frase and Noojin worked on all of them together. New policies needed to be created and approved. A copy of all Board Approved Policies was emailed to all members before the meeting. Frase and Noojin are working on the Care Management Recertification Four Year Area Planning Training was held in Kearney in December, and attended by Frase, Williams, McKeever and Noojin. The staff is also working on a Two-Year Transportation grant application. The two-year Budget was presented at our Board meeting for approval. The rest of application is due March 31, 2023. A new Title VI Certification was created in conjunction with UNO for the transit program and approved at January's Governing Board meeting. The AAA Directors are all hosting a Senator Legislature Reception in Lincoln at Nowka & Edwards on February 22, 2023 from 5-8pm. Our agency audit was approved by the board in January. A training on Nebraska Elder Legal Risk Detector was presented yesterday. We have a consulting attorney who we have a \$25,000 contract with, who also does presentations at our Senior Centers. Price asked if we could we have the Transit Manager, Choices Manager or Nutrition Manager in a meeting to explain their programs. We also updated the Home Delivered Meal Eligibility Policy. We have redefined the criteria of who can get the home delivered meals. Everyone who currently receive a home delivered meal will have to fill out the form and meet the criteria to be eligible to receive home delivered meals. Danny

DeLong asked who is handling the request for buses at the state level. Frase replied that we work with Wayne Masec and Kari Ruse. DeLong asked what they are saying about not being able to get the new buses. Frase stated that they had gotten bids on the contracts. When they couldn't get the bus's, those contracts are not longer good, because they are up to a new level of the next year bus's. So, they have to find another contract. DeLong stated that we should consider speaking with our senators about this issue and they should make a phone call because we need those bus's. Frase said she will speak with them the day of the Senator Reception. DeLong suggested possibly having local mayors contact the state also. He also suggested if we don't get a good response, we go to their supervisors.

COUNTY UPDATES

GAGE COUNTY: JANICE PRICE

Nothing new to report.

JEFFERSON COUNTY: LANA LIKENS

Likens continues to help find ways to try and increase meals at the Fairbury Senior Center. They have various organizations who have started helping serve the Birthday dinners. Likens continues to send out fliers to help increase attendance. The Sterling Connection group through the hospital have had special programs at the Senior Center and the attendance was up those days. The city has been getting donations to do renovations to the Community Building. They are going to replace the floors, ceiling and put in a walking track in the gym by July.

JOHNSON COUNTY: JENNIFER SCHELL

No report

NEMAHA COUNTY: JESSICA GERDES

The Auburn Senior Center has two new cooks. The food has improved and everything is going well.

OTOE COUNTY: TRACY WIEKHORST

Wieckhorst mentioned that it had been brought to her attention that we will be receiving a call about an option to relocate the Senior Center to the Veterans Memorial Building. Wieckhorst also mentioned the reason we quite sending home delivered meals out to Title XX under 60 clients. This was a decision made due to Title XX not funding the full price of a meal and Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging having to supplement the cost through limited local funds. Wieckhorst also mentioned that it was nice that we are no longer having to manage the ADRC phone line. We still receive calls; however, they call our direct line.

PAWNEE COUNTY: KAREN RICHARDSON

The Pawnee City nursing home cannot find enough staff to accept more residents. The assisted living continues to have 20-21 beds filled and staff turnover has slowed down.

RICHARDSON COUNTY: RHONDA DETTMER

No Report

THAYER COUNTY: CHERYL WALSH

The Hebron Senior Center manager Connie Drohman noted that they are averaging between 76-94 meals daily in Thayer County. The congregate meals are steady at 5. People continue to ask if there is room for more diners. Connie continues to plan several activities per month at the center to attract more to the center. A new activity to start sometime in February is Tai Chi lead by Connie. Connie commented that there is much confusion and extra work with the required paperwork that is sent out to each home meal recipient. The Deshler site manager Keri Wright reported that the food arrives around 10:25am daily and they don't eat until 11:45am. She would like to implement some activities.

DANNY DELONG

DeLong wanted to talk about the Legislature. DeLong volunteered to review all 800 bills. He does it because it gives him an overview of what's going on. There are at least 10 bills or more that are devoted to allocating funds for housing all across the state, rural and urban. The reason it effects senior citizens is that sometimes they are stuck in a home that is too large for them because they can't find a smaller home in the community they live in. There are steps going to be taken to make smaller units for people that are stuck that way or single people who need housing. The second major area of interest is that we are seeing in legislature put in bills that will re-base the Health and Human Services funding level. What several of the bills will do is require the state to re-base their funding and bring it up to speed. Then to report to the legislature each year, the effect of that. We are having trouble with rural hospitals that are having to close because they can't generate funding. And emphasis this year on healthcare. There are two bills that will reduce the cost of insulin in the state. One is for if you have regular employer care, insulin cost can be no more than \$100 per month. There is a separate bill that would cap insulin at the national capped rate at \$35 a month. There are bills to give pharmacy tech's the ability to give injections to people who come in, because the pharmacists are too busy to have to give injections such as flue and covid injections. Another bill is to give notification to seniors such as if they are about to lose the equity in their home because they forgot to pay their property taxes or they ran out of funds to pay the property taxes. Another notice is for when seniors stop paying or forget to pay their insurance policy premiums that need paid every month or they lose all of the monthly they paid in on the policy. So that would make insurance agents and companies to send a notice to people who are a certain age to let them know if they have missed a payment or if they are about to forget a payment. There are three main bills for voter engagement. There is one bill that would require all voting to be at the poles. There are also voter ID bills putting real restrictions on the type of identification required for people to be able to vote. If someone has an ID that is over 30 days expired, that ID is not excepted. So older people who no longer drive, count on their drivers license to be used as ID. If you issue identification, when do older people know when to get new identification or that they don't have adequate identification.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Advisory Council meeting will be Thursday April 13, 2023 at 12:00 pm at the Beatrice Senior Center.

MOTION to adjourn by Richardson.

MEETING ADJOURNED by Price at 11:55 am.

Tracie Fossler