

BLUE RIVERS AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes

Regular Meeting

June 5, 2020

A regular meeting of the Advisory Council of Blue Rivers Agency on Aging was called to order at 10:30 a.m. via conference call at Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging, 103 Eastside Blvd., Beatrice.

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

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 by Richardson to approve the agenda as printed; second by Gerdes; voice vote; motion carried.

MOTION by Richardson to approve the minutes of December 17, 2019 as printed; second by Gerdes; voice vote; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

- Frase introduced herself to the board. Frase was hired as the Director on January 27, 2020. Prior to that she was the Fiscal Officer.
- Beth Williams was hired as the Fiscal Officer.
- Kathy Erickson and two of the Care Managers will conduct the duties of the ADRC Options Counseling while another care manager will spend 25% of her time on the Senior Volunteer Position.
- On February 25 the State Unit on Aging Monitoring Team told Carla and Beth that a funding crisis existed for Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging due in part to an over estimation of carry over funds from SUA in prior years. Frase was directed by SUA to identify and address \$23,000 a month in budget cuts. Frase, the Transit Manager, Nutrition Manager, Community Options Manager and Fiscal Officer met the next day to discuss possible cuts.
- March 12, 2020 The House of Representatives passed the Re-Authorization of Older Americans Act.
- March 12, 2020 Shelf Stable meals that were ordered were dispersed out to clients.
- March 18, 2020 All centers were closed and only home delivered meals were available. Transportation services were suspended and only complex medical issues were transported due to COVID-19. All Care Managers and Service Coordinators started working from home.

- March 25, 2020 Frase received notification of FFCRA funds: \$36,436 for C1 and \$64,932 for C2.
- April 2, 2020 Take & Go meals began being offered at all centers.
- April 4, 2020 Nebraska declares state of emergency funds available for all program and loosening the guidelines with no end date.
- April 4, 2020 the Wymore Senior Center moved out of the Legion building to the Wymore Firehouse. Utility Expenses went from \$800 to \$50.
- April 27, 2020 received notification of CARES Act funds: Title IIIB - \$92,445; Title IIIC2 - \$176,517; Title IIIE, Caregiver: \$38,711.
- Frase attended AAA Directors meetings via conference call in April, a Zoom meeting in May and will be attending a Zoom meeting on June 9, 2020.
- May 13, 2020 there was a Leadership Beatrice meeting via Zoom meeting. Participants included BCH, Mosaic, Good Samaritan Society, Blue Rivers AAA, Asera Care, Home Instead. All attendees presented information on services provided by each entity. It was very interesting and informative.
- May 15, 2020 The budget revision was approved for FY2020, FFCRA funds/portion of CARES ACT funds were integrated into the budgets.
- June 2, 2020 we received a letter from Cynthia Brammeier the Director of Aging that our FY19 Correction Plan had been closed and taken care of by BRAAA staff.
- June 3, 2020 we received notification from NIRMA that our Agency Insurance (workman's comp, liability, property, auto etc) FY2021 premium was reduced by 14% or \$8,108 less than last year. Our partnership is very valuable with their company, as they always attempt to work positively with the Agency.
- Frase stated that many hours were spent on the Area Plan during May, on budgets, goals, strategies, objectives and updating the Agency Disaster plan, in particular the pandemic portion. Managers worked on various areas of the plan. The plan was submitted to the State Unit on Aging on May 28, 2020. After a few revisions the area plan budget was approved on June 3, 2020.
- June 1, 2020 Beatrice and Wymore opened their transportation to medical, groceries and pharmacy trips only. Many guidelines were put in place. One passenger is allowed on the bus at a time. They must be wearing a mask. Drivers will be sanitizing the bus after each trip. A policy and procedures plan was developed.
- June 8, 2020 Fairbury and Hebron transportation opens with the same limitations.
- June 15, 2020 Auburn, Nebraska city and Syracuse transportation will open with limitations also.
- A Policy and Procedure was developed for the re-opening of the Senior Centers. They are based on the Opening Up America Again guidelines developed by the CDC and White House. Frase also reached out to our local Public Health Department in Crete, Kim Showalter for her input. She advised that we wait to see what results of testing across Nebraska shows. Criteria is changing to allow anyone to get the testing done, as past test have shown 20% of people are asymptomatic. The State of Nebraska goal is to test all residents and staff of long term facilities across the state by the end of June, to set a baseline for re-opening of those facilities. Public Health is working with a Data

specialist to determine the perceived risk of community transmissions, but this will take some time to develop. She advised that we wait until the end of June for more test results and she will get back to us.

- The meal counts have maintained at a higher than expected levels, with February total meals prior to Covid-10 at 12,156 and our April meals at 11,883 total meals of Title XX, Home delivered and takeout meals.
- Frase stated they also have a procedure for when we open up the Housekeeping program. Fossler has taken over the Housekeeping program for Gage and Jefferson County.
- Frase stated that we have placed radio ads with KWBE, Old Red 99.5 and B103 offering help to Seniors who are needing handyman things done. This is through the CARES Act. The ads were run 70 times on each station for a total of 210 adds. \$1,800 was spend on the ads and they produced zero calls, which was disappointing.

DISCUSSION AND/OR ACTION: SIGNING OF THE ADVISORY REVIEW STATEMENT FOR THE AREA PLAN

It was brought up by Price that the Advisory Review Statement for the Area Plan would need to be signed by someone on the Advisory Council. She asked all members if they agreed that she should be the one to sign it.

MOTION for Price to sign the Advisory Review Statement by Wieckhorst; second by Richardson; voice vote; motion carried.

COUNTY UPDATES

- **Otoe County:** Wieckhorst reported that she has noted changes in the meal program in Otoe County. The cook at the Nebraska City Senior Center has been helping cover for the cook in Syracuse until they can get a new cook hired. Wieckhorst stated that she is excited to see that the transportation will be starting again soon. She noted that the transportation services were missed.
- **Nemaha County:** Gerdes reported that no patients or staff have had the COVID19 virus at the Good Samaritan Society in Auburn. All staff have been wearing proper PPE when seeing patients.
- **Pawnee County:** Richardson reported that she has retired from the Nursing Home in Humboldt and is now a caregiver for her mother. She reported that there have been no positive cases in the Pawnee County facilities. The Pawnee City nursing home is experiencing low numbers of patients. The Pawnee City Assisted Living have applied for a PPE Grant. Their occupancy numbers are also low at this time. SENCA has closed their meal site and moved the transportation to the housing authority. The transportation is not open at this time. Meals for seniors are being provided by the hospital.
- **Johnson County:** Schell reported that at the Johnson County Hospital things are starting to get back to normal. Clinics and Elective Surgeries have started back up. The hospital has had one COVID19 patient.

- **Gage County:** Meal numbers at the Beatrice Senior Center have increased. Wymore Senior Center has moved to a new location in which will save money per month.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Advisory Council meeting will be Tuesday September 15, 2020 at the Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging offices in Beatrice. The meeting will begin at 12:00 p.m. and lunch will be provided during the meeting

The meeting was adjourned by Price at 11:15 a.m.

Tracie Foster