

BLUE RIVERS AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes

Meeting

October 24, 2023

A regular meeting of the Advisory Council of Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging was called to order at 11:45am at the Beatrice Senior Center.

Council members present: Likens, Gerdes, Ossowski, Schell and Wieckhorst.

Absent: Walsh, Richardson and Price

Guests: Danny DeLong

Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging staff members present: Carla Frase, Executive Director and Tracie Fossler, Administrative Assistant.

Likens, Chair, presided over the meeting and Fossler recorded the minutes of the meeting.

MOTION to approve the agenda as printed by Ossowski; second by Schell; voice vote; motion carried.

MOTION to approve the minutes of August 22, 2023 as printed by Schell; second by Ossowski; voice vote; motion carried.

DIRECTORS REPORT

A copy of the Director's Report was distributed to all members via email and the members present. The report included calendars and a list of meetings that Frase attended since the previous meeting. Frase handed out copies of our Financial Reports from August 31, 2023 for FY24. Our Nutrition Manager Carmen McKeever is starting a Nutrition Education Program. She will be distributing nutrition educational materials about "Hidden Sugars". Frase mentioned how we are now having to scan and send every document and receipt to the state to review every month from our transit department. We received a check for \$2,447.76 that we raised during The Big Give Gage fundraiser. We have received a grant from the Beatrice Community Hospital Foundation for \$20,000 to go toward the purchase of a new disability accessible van. We have until September 2024 to purchase, so that we can receive the \$20,000 at that time. We will be starting with a new transportation company called "Ride Safe", similar to our contracts with MTM and ModivCare transportation. We have hired a Grant Writer. He resides in Saipan and we meet with him via zoom. We just applied for the Git R Done Foundation and Pegler, for support for \$10,000 annually. We received our dividend check from NIRMA for \$1,163.00. We currently have nine employees doing time studies right now. These are employees who are in multiple programs. Frase will be in Kansas City on November 14 & 15 for a Region VII meeting with AAA directors in four states. We are wrapping up our first Stepping On classes in Fairbury and Beatrice. Our next areas will be in Cortland, Hebron and Wymore next. We also have had many people call to be put on the list for the next Stepping On class here in Beatrice.

COUNTY UPDATES

GAGE COUNTY: OSSOWSKI

Everyone welcomed Larry Ossowski to the Advisory Council. Ossowski is very familiar with our agency, as he was the director until he retired in 2014. Ossowski did not have anything to report this time, since he is new.

JEFFERSON COUNTY: LANA LIKENS

Likens wishes they could increase the congregate numbers at the senior center. The Sterling Connection visited the center and did a program on Harvesting Cranberries. Their dietitian made cranberry muffins for everyone. There were 36 people present that day. The city is considering a grand opening for the renovations to the building. They are wanting to encourage people to come and use the gym to walk.

JOHNSON COUNTY: JENNIFER SCHELL

The cook in Tecumseh is still wanting to retire. However, they have not been able to get a new cook.

NEMAHA COUNTY: JESSICA GERDES

The meals at the Auburn Senior Center have been increasing, with average of 45-50 home delivered meals going out each day. The transit office is having issues with buses. Bus #1 barely works and is having issues with the lift. They took it to Omaha. The lift worked then. The other bus is not to be driven out of town. Like the rest of our transit, they are waiting on our new bus's that we were to receive in September. However, due to strike issues they are not available. DeLong suggested we call someone at BSDC and ask them if they have available buses in their motor pool. We have been told we can lease some vehicles; however, it would be very expensive and still takes at least 90 days throughout the bidding process. All of the bus's need to be "Buy America Certified". DeLong also added that BSDC have a mechanic that can work on lifts. That information may be helpful.

OTOE COUNTY: TRACY WIEKHORST

Wiekhorst has not made time to visit the Syracuse Senior Center. There are only about four people coming in to the center for lunch and the rest are home delivered. Nebraska City numbers are steady. The transportation is great.

PAWNEE COUNTY: KAREN RICHARDSON

No report. Richardson was absent.

RICHARDSON COUNTY: NO REPRESENTATIVE AT THIS TIME

THAYER COUNTY: CHERYL WALSH

Walsh was absent this meeting. No report.

Danny Delong reported on information on the new Voter ID law that will be in effect on May 14, 2023 and how this will affect our senior population. He will send information to disseminate at our senior centers. He also reported on the Broadband program and the importance of verifying a live address on the map. The State of Nebr. is receiving \$400 Million for the unserved and the underserved population. He is tasking the AAAs to work through their local economic boards (ours is SENDD) and how we can assist seniors with this information, to improve digital equity for all.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

The next Advisory Council meeting will be Tuesday January 23, 2024 at 11:30 am at the Beatrice Senior Center.

MEETING ADJOURNED by Likens at 1:10pm.

Tracie Fossler