

Advisory Council

April 15, 2009

Area 1 Agency on Aging, (208) 667-3179

ATTENDEES

ICOA:
John Albee

Council Members:
Rose Spencer – Benewah
Becky Correll – Bonner
Esther Gilchrist – Bonner
Debra Kellerman - Bonner
Joanna Adams - Kootenai
Marie Fish - Kootenai
Carey Spears – Kootenai
Linda Beecher – Kootenai
Dennie Seymour - Kootenai
Peggy White – Shoshone

Service Providers:
Erma Williams - Kootenai

Staff:
Marilyn Anders
Pearl Bouchard
Betsy Bullard
Fran Hunsaker
Bobbie Sailor
Cherie Saltness
Kaye Wilson
Jan Young

*Our thanks to
Life Care Centers
of Post Falls for
hosting our meeting.*



The Advisory Council meeting was called to order at 9:35 by the council secretary, Carey Spears. Introductions were made all around. Secretary Carey Spears offered excused absences for the council chairman, Tari Yourzek, and co-chair, Rose Spencer, before continuing on with the agenda.

Volunteer Month Recognition Pearl Bouchard

Pearl recognized individuals who have made a significant contribution to the lives of seniors in northern Idaho.

- John Albee was recognized for his service to seniors in northern Idaho. John has worked quietly behind the scenes for years doing what he can to make life better for others. He retired from the US Department of Agriculture. Most recently he has served as a state commissioner for the Idaho Commission on Aging, representing northern Idaho. He was appointed by former Gov. Dirk Kempthorne in 1999. His term has been renewed two times, and will end in June of this year. He had previously also served as a board member and chairman for the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council. John expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to be of service to northern Idaho seniors.
- Also recognized was Joanna Adams, of Panhandle Health District, for her work with the Fit and Fall Proof Program. The program is designed to reduce the risk of falling for seniors, and assist them in living independently longer.
- Finally, Kaye Wilson, who is not a volunteer but a staff member for the Area Agency on Aging and about to retire was honored for her 14 years of service to the agency and the seniors of northern Idaho. She has been an invaluable member of the staff, most recently as the Information and Assistance Technician, providing seniors and their families with important resources to remain safely in their homes longer. We wish her a happy retirement.

Area Plan Update..... Pearl Bouchard

Pearl reviewed the Area Plan 2010-2013, reflecting on common areas of concern for all five northern counties, including:

- Focus on services to low-income, living alone.
- Fund trends of an average of a 1% increase over 5 years.
- The decrease (by intent) of clients but increase of service hours,
- The increase cost per unit for many services like homemaker and legal,
- Wait lists, and
- Fundraising efforts address waiting lists.

The next step in the planning process is creation of strategies toward accomplishing the goals and objectives outlined by ICOA and in tune with our area wide findings. Managers at the AAA will develop draft strategies and seek input from County Councils on Aging members.

Carey Spears, council secretary, presented the minutes of the October, 07 Advisory Council meeting for review. Minutes were excepted by all.

Idaho Commission on Aging Report..... John Albee

- *Idaho State Grocery Credit*. The grocery tax credit was established to offset the sales tax on groceries. Idaho residents who did not make enough income in 2008 to file an income tax return are eligible to receive the Idaho State Tax Credit. Unfortunately 40% of seniors do not file and as such are not aware of this benefit. Funds in the

The fund pays \$50/person for those who meet the income restrictions and requirement of year round Idaho residency. If recipients are over 65 they will receive an additional \$20 each. For a couple that could mean \$140.

This benefit is being offered for a limited time, so those eligible should file as soon as possible. To find out more, go to <http://tax.idaho.gov/2009-grocery-credit.htm>, visit a tax commission office or call the state office in Boise at 800-972-7660.

- The *national stimulus package* has reached the region but not the state. It should reach us quickly but not yet sure how soon, how the funds will sift down to programs, or what restrictions will be attached.
- Adoption of the Federal funding formula, which uses current census data (2000) to determine the distribution of funds to the six regions of the state, has been a long time topic of discussion. In 2002 it was agreed by the commissioners that this formula would be applied to any new funding over the next three years. However since there was no new funding nothing was really accomplished.

With neighboring states applying the federal formula, and current commissioners finding no reason to delay the transition any longer, adoption of the Federal funding formula has been approved. After the commissioners approved the new funding, and calculated adjustments, John reported that Area 1 would receive an additional \$35-40 thousand. These funds will be available in the 2009-10 year.

- Medicaid transferred \$438,000 of ADRC (Aging & Disabled Resource Center) funds to ICOA to implement the statewide call center. The web-based model should be up and running by September 30th, 2009.
- The Governor’s Long-Term Care Symposium will be held in Boise on June 10, 2009. It will bring essential agencies together to share information. Our agency will have a key role in providing information on in-home and community based services provided for traditional aging.
- The governor will be appointing a new commissioner for Region 1. Anyone who is interested in seniors or senior issues is welcome to submit a letter of interest, including background, to the governor’s office.



Discussion Items John Albee

Call to Action Meeting—Boise Carey Spears

Carey reported on the “Call to Action” meeting that she, Rose and Pearl attended last November. Directors of the area agencies and members of their advisory council boards were invited to discuss advocacy topics including:

- 2020 Project designed to meet the long-term services and support needs of older Americans and their caregivers. One way is by keeping seniors at home and stretching the individuals own resources by utilizing the resources of area agencies rather than Medicaid. During the first 5 years, the savings to state and federal governments is estimated to be more than \$5 million, with even greater savings over the long term.

Update: This project is expected to fall under the jurisdiction of the House Energy and Commerce committee. All sub-committee meetings have been held and they are receptive to the three components: 1) a person-centered access to information, 2) disease prevention, health promotion and nursing home diversion, and 3) building on the proven strategies that the aging network has piloted in recent years.

Discussion at the “Call to Action” meeting centered on strategies for area agencies to become more self supporting. The participants agreed on the importance of keeping seniors in their homes, and acknowledging the mobile society in which we live, recognized the growing need to support caregivers. The question is how will this happen when state and federal funding cannot be relied on?

One suggestion was to set up a trust fund like education has done. These trusts would draw funding from class-action law suits like those against pharmaceutical or tobacco companies, or from donations to ease the shortfalls on budgeting. An individual is being recruited to undertake the time-consuming job of researching this possibility.

Another topic included the need for advocates to raise public awareness in order to support the proposed legislation. Any suggestions are appreciated.

Fiscal Year 2009 Budget *Update* Bobbie Sailor

Bobbie reported that as of this date we have not received word of our 2009 funding allocation. However, we have been advised that The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 signed into law on February 17, 2009 does include funding \$100 million for meals and nutrition services nation wide under the Older Americans Act:

- \$65 million for congregate nutrition services under Title III
- \$32 million for home-delivered nutrition services under Title III
- \$3 million for Native American nutrition services under Title VI

The funds will provide meals to seniors in need of food, restore services that have been cut, and restore positions which may have been eliminated or reduced.

Awards will be available once the Governor’s certification of ARRA funds usage is signed and returned. The awards are for a two-year period and must be expended by December 30, 2010. There will be reporting and matching requirements.

Once we receive notice of our ARRA funds and further guidance from ICOA, we’ll work towards expediting the distribution of funds to providers as efficiently as possible.

2008 Annual Report Highlights & Other Updates Pearl Bouchard

- ADRC—This program had a big influence on our agency in 2008, and Area Agencies will continue to have a key role in it’s statewide development.
- Jerry Spreen—nominated for an award through the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging for his work in mentoring.
- Ombudsman—4 new volunteers have completed their training and will cover the Bonner and Boundary County areas.
- VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) - 1-3 year commitment. Great influence in program development.
- Lease Expiration—The AAA lease will expire June 30, 2009. Pearl reported that the agency is currently in negotiations for a possible new sight. Once the details are clear the council will be informed.

Elections: Carey Spears

Terms for the elected officers of the Area 1 Advisory Council have expired. A slate of officers was presented. Carey opened the floor for the nomination of candidates. When none were proposed, Erma Williams moved to accept the slate of officers as presented; Johanna Adams seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

For the Good of the Order

- Marie Fish announced that they will be continuing the *55 Alive* classes, but are looking for two teachers, 8 hrs a month, one in Hayden and the other Post Falls, or one teacher to cover the 16 hours over the two locations. Please contact Marie at the Post Falls Senior Center if you are interested. Her number is 773-9582.
- Joanna Adams of Panhandle Health District spoke about the *Living Well in Idaho* class currently being offered. Classes are available at the Post Falls, Sandpoint and Spirit Lake Senior Centers. There is no cost for the class.
- Bobbie Sailor introduced Betsy Bullard, Options Counselor, who will be handling I&A after Kaye retires.

She also reminded everyone of the upcoming workshop series classes. The next, “Losses in Your Life”, is a panel discussion that includes any losses in life associated with the aging process. It will be held on April 23 from 1-4:30p at the Lake City Senior Center.

The final workshop will be held on June 4 from 1-4:30 at the new Kroc Center. Alzheimer’s Care—Best Friends Approach will help define person centered care, discuss challenges and successful activities for persons with dementia. For information on registration go to the agency website at ww.aaani.com or call 1-800-786-5536.

An additional workshop is offered on June 4th from 9-12noon with separate registration, entitled Dementia Caregiving Challenges: Looking for Solutions!

- Linda Beecher reminded attendees that the food stamp asset limit has been temporarily removed. This does not apply to income, just assets.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 p.m.

Approved By: _____ (Via E-mail). *Respectively submitted by Fran Hunsaker*

Next Meeting: October 14, 2009