

ATTENDEES

ICOA:

Carey Ann Spears

Council Members:

- Jonnie Bradley—Bonner
- Larry Verhei—Bonner
- Joanna Adams—Kootenai
- John Albee—Kootenai
- Colleen Allison - Kootenai
- Linda Beecher—Kootenai
- Lisa Gardom - Kootenai
- Dennie Seymour—Kootenai
- Betty Johnson - Shoshone
- Sophie Larson - Shoshone

Service Provider

Representatives:

- Rosemary Niemier—Benewah
- John Smith—Fernwood
- Nancy Savage - Bonner

Staff:

- Marilyn Anders
- Jeffery Hill
- Fran Hunsaker

The Advisory Council meeting was called to order at 10:32am by the council president, Larry Verhei. Introductions were made all around.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT **Larry Verhei**

Larry reported that the new agency newsletter is completed and has been mailed. It is a great resource for seniors in the community. It is well organized and easy to read. He is beginning to see it out in the community.

Larry shared an article that reports diabetes as a possible contributor to hearing loss. There is no proven link, but studies suggest that people with diabetes are 2-3 times more likely to have at least mild hearing loss in the low-to-mid range frequency tones. This would be equivalent to having trouble hearing words spoken in a normal voice from more than 3 feet away.

Finally, Larry presented the minutes of the October 9th, 2013 Advisory Council meeting for approval. Joanna Adams motioned for the minutes of the previous meeting to be accepted as presented. Linda Beecher seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT **Jeffery Hill**

Jeffery expressed his appreciation to be a part of the Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho. He shared his vision and goals for the agency, which include:

Community **Awareness and Presence** of the agency and the services that we can assist in providing. To have an active presence in all five counties.

Excellence in Customer Service for our clients, partners and community by being attentive and going the extra mile.

Building Partnerships with various organizations and community agencies, to maximize information and services we deliver to people in our communities.

Through the county council meetings, Jeffery has had the opportunity to meet most of the members of the Advisory Council. He reported that currently Advisory Council membership is down, and expressed the importance that every county be fully represented. Enclosed in the meeting handouts was an application for Advisory Council membership. He encouraged those on the council to share the application with likely candidates. Suggestions from those in attendance included approaching attendees in support groups and classes listed in our latest agency newsletter, and including an outline of the responsibilities of advisory council membership. Applications should be returned to the Area Agency, c/o Fran Hunsaker.

Staff updates included the retirement of Betsy Bullard as I&A Options Counselor. Her position is still open as is the position for Community Services Manager. A number of applications have already been received and will be reviewed shortly. Two other positions that were open, Information Specialist and Case/APS Worker, have been filled.

Program updates:

- Nutrition Program: Need to find ways to improve community participation.
- During a meeting in Bonner, Carey made it a point to seek out the governor, who was also in attendance, and personally thank him for our funding.
- The Area Plan was returned from ICOA with a number of changes requested by them. This seems to have been the case with all of the Area Agencies in the state. We have since resubmitted the Area Plan draft. No word back yet.
- ICOA has decided to de-designate the Area III Agency on Aging. ICOA has assured us that this process is directly related to Area III concerns and will have no effect on any of the other areas.

FISCAL REPORT: Marilyn Anders

Endowment Fund: The endowment started the year with a total of \$21,873.19. With contributions and interest added, the ending balance was \$31,858.75. Contributions of note include Jake Plummer’s Denver Foundation, \$2,000, and the Sandpoint Eagles, \$1,461.50. On a related note, A&P, a very active supporter of the Sandpoint Eagles fundraising efforts, suffered a great loss last year when their business burned down. Recently they were happy to announce that they will be able to rebuild! They wanted to thank everyone for their support during this challenging time. They expect to be fully operational within 6 months, and have pledged to continue their support of the Eagles and the Endowment.

The agency will be streamlining the website to make donating easier right from the site.

Budget Updates: We are coming to the end of our fiscal year which runs from July1st - June 30th. Current and expected usage of funds by fiscal year end are:

Case Management: Understaffing this year has affected the budget. As positions are filled again the budget should begin to fall back in line.

I & A: This area has been understaffed; budget will show carry-over.

Transportation: There was little hope of spending these funds until March when an agreement was reached with the City of Dover to provide bus service in Boundary County. All of these funds will be spent.

Home Delivered & Congregate Meal Programs: The reimbursement rate for meals has been raised. There had not been a rate increase in quite a while. This increase was retroactive to the beginning of the fiscal year. Additionally, funds were offered to the meal sites to help with larger purchases, however ICOA rejected this use of funds, so they have had to be refunded from the meal sites. This area is expected to be fully expended by June 30th.

Homemaker Services: Changes in the eligibility for this program have slowed the use of funds. However, usage is rising again. By the end of the year most of the funds will be used, but the account will still show a carry-over of around \$20,000.

Family Caregiver Respite: This is another area that was affected by new eligibility. The agency has eliminated the client co-pay, which has helped more clients to be able to utilize the program.

Funding for Legal Assistance will all be expended, while the Ombudsman and Adult Protection programs will have small amounts of carry-over. All funding from Administration will be spent and transitioned to using Program Development funds.

RSVP has had great success this year! They just finished the 2nd year of a 3 year grant. Falling under the management of RSVP is the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program which has just received additional funding, and the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) which had recently been funded as well.

There may be some unspent state dollars. Carry-over of state funding is not allowed. Unexpended state funds are returned to the state, while federal funding is allowed to be carried over. We do not lose future funding by not using all of the funds granted in the previous year. This is because funds are calculated and distributed with the use of the funding formula.

AREA PLAN UPDATES:..... **Marilyn Anders**
Jeffery Hill

ICOA has accepted the Area Plan. It has been posted on our website along with an invitation for public comment. It reflects our goals including a presence throughout the Idaho panhandle, so feedback from all five counties is very important. When asked how to steer people to the Area Plan for comments, it was suggested that word-of-mouth is still the best, and that site managers would be a good source for soliciting comments.

In response to the surveys that were previously sent out, the agency designated the first agency newsletter of the year as a community resource of information most requested. It is hoped that this resource will grow in the future. There has already been a positive community response.

RSVP REPORT: **Jeffery Hill**

Bob Small is currently attending an RSVP conference in San Antonio. The national organization recently learned that the senior corps line item has been eliminated from the 2015 Federal Budget. Apparently the Corporation for National and Community Service has been trying to free up these funds for use in other areas. The conference is an opportunity to address concerns and discuss ways to turn things around.

Recently Bob Small has been working on ways to publicly thank our volunteers. Special events have been held to recognize those who have volunteered at least 500 hours. Each was presented with a presidential pin and a beautifully framed certificate. Events have been held in St. Maries, Kootenai, and Bonners Ferry so far. Additionally, Catherine Owen from Silverton received the Governor’s Senior Volunteer of the Year award. She requested the award be delivered on her 100th birthday.

Volunteer hours submitted currently represent an economic impact of over \$3 million. But many volunteer hours go unreported. It was suggested that some volunteers still don’t know how to submit their own hours, or they don’t understand why it is important to submit them. Others just want to volunteer and not receive any recognition of their contribution.

ICOA REPORT: **Carey Spears**

The commission has spent a lot of time focused on Area III and their budget conflicts. The Commission finally voted to decommission Area III due to long-term conflicts. There is a contingency plan in place to continue services to their clients until a more permanent solution is decided on. This will take time as there is expected to be a court response from Area III. The commission is reaching out to employees of the agency, but as of now their contracts will end June 30th. All other area agencies are fine.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:

- Dennie Seymour complimented Jeffery Hill for getting out into the community so quickly. Education is the key. We cannot expect much community response if they don’t see who the agency is.
- Jonnie Bradley shared that a current issue seniors seem to have with senior centers is that they are filled with “old people”. A discussion followed which included the need to provide a community perception facelift to help draw in more attendees. Many senior centers are aiming toward being more of a community center as a way of inviting more people in. One sure-fired way to get more attendees is to get a Great Chef!
Some of our senior centers have received grants and donations, but our smaller centers still need support.
- Lisa Gardom wanted to thank the agency for including the Fit-n-Fall Proof programming in the agency newsletter. She also asked that the numbers of open Advisory Council positions, per county, be made available along with a description of Advisory Council member responsibilities.

Linda Beecher motioned for the meeting to be adjourned; Colleen Allison seconded. The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

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

Next Meeting: October 15th, 2014