



Area Agency on Aging of North Idaho

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Advisory Council *on Aging*

October 12, 2011

The Advisory Council meeting was called to order at 9:34am by the council president, Carey Spears.

President's Report..... **Carey Spears**

The loss of funding has opened a lot of discussion about change over the summer. More agencies are drawing from a dwindling number of resources. Especially hard hit are the senior and community centers. Carey spoke to the need for centers to become more self reliant, doing more to draw in events that will help them rely less on non-profit funding and donations. They should also be open to requesting support from the cities and counties, communicating in a way that expresses need without begging or demanding.

Discussion contributed that it is not a time to allow individual pride to get in the way of progress. It is important to work together to accomplish common goals and help to assure that services are not duplicated. Pearl added that there are many examples of how cities and communities are contributing to their senior centers. Recently she and Marilyn visited Blanchard — a wonderful example of just such a group. They are the perfect example of the kind of groups that we really want to support.

Approval of Minutes, April 13th, 2011 **Peggy White**

Peggy asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the previous Advisory Council meeting as submitted. Julie Robbins so motioned; Jonnie Bradley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Director's Report, Update on Area Plan Goal Activity **Pearl Bouchard**

Goal 1: Empower older Idahoans, their families, and other consumers to make informed decisions about, and to be able to easily access, existing health and long-term care options.

UPDATE: AAA is partnering with Kootenai County to assist riders in completing the 8-page para-transit applications. We currently have 4 staff testing for AIRS certification. One area of disappointment is the inability to connect our 800+ resource database to our website.

Goal 2: Enable older Idahoans to remain in their own homes with high quality of life for as long as possible through the provision of home and community-based services, including supports for family caregivers.

UPDATE: •..... AAA has explored other sources of funding to address gaps in service delivery.

July 2010 waiting list: Case Management: 123 Respite: 34 Homemaker: 100

July 2011 waiting list: Case management: 80 Respite: 48 Homemaker: 40

Waiting lists help us to see progress. One area of concern is respite, where the waiting list shows an increase over the last year. Services are provided on "greatest need", and not 1st come, 1st served basis.

- Updating agency public relations plan. Through Bob Small the agency's exposure in the community has been expanded.
- Prepared a comprehensive listing of available modes of public transportation within the five counties. This list is available on our website.

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- Supported employed caregivers by providing relevant materials and other resources for distribution through large employers in each of the five counties. Contacting 2 large employers in each county who agree to distribute agency materials to their employees. Need to get information out to adult children.
- Prepared materials for family, neighbors and friends to enlighten them on practical ways they can support elders in their sphere of influence. These tips are also available on our website.
- Disseminating information on the maturing of America to assist communities in their planning efforts.
- Disappointments included: Partnerships to expand home maintenance and repair in rural counties: the loss of the Bonner County Elderhelp program was disappointing. Equitable distribution of Senior Companion services: the agency has focused recruitment in rural counties but is having a hard time finding qualified people willing to work for the small stipend. Consult with food banks on ways to reduce hunger and food insecurity experienced by elders.

Goal 3: *Empower older people to stay active and healthy through Older Americans Act and Idaho Senior Services Act services.*

- UPDATE:**
- Promoted and supported chronic disease/health promotion activities. This program has had a good response.
 - Partner with SHIBA to expand outreach and enrollments in Medicare plans. This year Medicare enrollment is earlier—October 15th. We will be helping with enrollment in our office. Everyone needs to review their coverage every year because it changes every year.
 - Informed agency staff and individuals regarding prevention benefits under Medicare. AAA is helping to get the word out.
 - Monitoring trends of a changing volunteer environment and incorporating relevant practices into agency operations. AAA sponsors the Volunteer Ombudsman and the Friendship Corp. programs. The agency has discovered that bringing them together regularly to share experiences has helped to retain volunteers.
 - Disappointment: Partner with United Way's on-line recruitment system to follow up with personal interviews for older adults.

Goal 4: *Ensure the rights of older people and prevent their abuse, neglect and exploitation.*

- UPDATE:**
- Presentations (66) to 1,079 individuals. (Oct. 2010 – Sept. 2011)
 - Multi-disciplinary team expanded into Bonner County.
 - 66% of volunteers trained as ombudsmen were retained after one year. The agency's goal is to retain 80%. Most loss of volunteers was found to be due to illness or moving.
 - Disappointment included: Yet to achieve certification program for volunteer ombudsmen. This certification must come through ICOA.

Goal 5: *Maintain effective and responsive oversight of Older Americans Act and Idaho Senior Services Act-funded programs.*

- UPDATE:**
- Completed quality review of contract management function. This is the 3rd self evaluation the agency has done. The agency is doing this once a year.
 - Completed review by Office of Performance Evaluations, Legislative Office.

Presentation **Julie Griffiths**, Regional Director
Money Management International, 866-515-2227

Money Management International is a national non-profit agency offering services to help senior and others gain control of their finances through credit counseling, debt management planning, housing counseling and education. Most of their services are free.

Credit counseling is offered for those who need help with budgeting, and basic money management skill and credit problems. **Debt management** is offered for those needing more than just advice. It is a way for the client to resolve credit problems and repay debt, such as with a structured repayment plan. **Housing counseling** entails loss *mitigation counseling* to those who have fallen behind in their mortgage, *reverse mortgage counseling* educating senior on the benefits and consequences of this kind of program, and *first-time homebuyer counseling* teaching about the costs and responsibilities associated with home ownership.

Julie reported that 1/3 of their clients are seniors. The average debt owed was \$29,000; \$38,000 for homeowners. Having adult children in the home often leads to additional debt. Adult children have a 12-year-old expectation that mom and dad will pay for everything and parents are not strong enough to tell them “no”. The top three reasons for debt are: #1. decrease in income, #2. poor choices, and #3. medical expenses.

County Council Updates

Benewah **Marilyn Anders**

Previously contracted through Fernwood Bible Church the Worley Senior Center has chosen to contract through the city of Worley directly with the Agency adding them to the Kootenai County program. Also reported was the progress Fernwood Senior Center is making toward their new building. Currently the foundation is in with utilities in place, with assistance from County Commissioners.

Bonner..... **Larry Verhei**

The Sandpoint Senior Center has a new director, Joyce Drush. She is busy updating the center. Sandpoint will be hosting a Health Fair Saturday, October 15th. Also the Bonner County Eagles have given permission for their club to be used for Bonner County events.

Boundary **Jan Klopfenstein**

Jan reported that the medical records connection is now up and running.

Kootenai..... **Joanna Adams**

Sam Haws, the new ICOA director, visited last month. She seems to be very cooperative. The endowment fund has received \$14,000. Also, visibility with the county commissioners appears to have helped reverse a negative funding ruling for the meals program. Referring to the sustainability of the senior centers, commissioners still question the viability of these programs to receive county funds.

Shoshone..... **Bill Langer**

Topics at the Shoshone County council meeting included resource connections, the endowment, and senior center revitalization. Attendance has been dropping at the sites. We are using the states mandated 25+ attendance to start/maintain a program as a guide. Transportation was also addressed with the commissioners.

Area Plan Report **Pearl Bouchard**

Pearl reported that the Agency would not be holding any annual conferences in the foreseeable future. Instead they will be holding a series of open houses related to topics vital to local seniors, including: pain management, medicine management, preparing for winter, assistive equipment and hearing loss.

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Updates to the Area Plan included adding the Communications and Public Relations position to the organizational chart; updating the Advisory Council membership—outgoing members are Marie Fish, Dorothy Zakrajsek, Paul Graves, and Cindy Mottern; and an update to Addendum E reporting actual units of service for 2010. Due to the change in our contract year there will be no Fiscal Year 2011; the Disaster Plan contacts were also updated. FYI: The process to develop the next Area Plan will begin at the end of 2012.

Fiscal Year 2010 Budget Update **Bobbie Sailor**

The case management budget reflects a temporary reduction in staff. Jennifer G. is recruiting to fill this spot. Also, AAA providers in Benewah and Boundary counties received funding to provide rural transportation. These were not new funds but unutilized funds from NICE redirected. Also shown on the report was the federal funding reduction to RSVP, and a reduction in expenses for the discontinued annual conference expense. Purchases of new equipment were budgeted with carry over dollars. This will be a one time expense. Because of the fiscal year change, AAA was allowed to retain all of their unspent federal dollars, \$124,610, when they are normally only allowed to keep 10%. This carryover will be used to address waiting lists, keeping services at 2010 levels and to make one-time equipment and software purchases.

ACTION ITEM ► Joanna Adams proposed that the council accept the updates to the Area Plan including the budget as presented. Dorothy Zakrajsek seconded the motion. Voting was unanimously in favor and the motion carried.

Idaho Commission on Aging Report.....**Jackie McAvoy**

Jackie reported her disappointment as communication between the regional representatives and ICOA is lacking. She feels that the commissioners are under utilized. Currently commissioners are allowed 5 minutes to report on their regions giving them less input to state agencies. Discussion prompted the invitation to be more assertive, and also, if need be, to circumvent ICOA and report directly to the Governor. Jackie solicited subject of importance to include in her report.

For the Good of the Order

- Larry Verhei reported that SPOT transport is up and running. So far they have above-expected ridership. They also make on-demand stops.
- John Albee asked what tools are being used to encourage an increase of endowment funds. Pearl stated that brochures have been printed and presentations have been done with more planned in the future. She also restated the agency’s goals to partner with bigger businesses in each county as a way to get the word out.
- Joanna Adams shared her experience meeting with the Governor when he came to visit recently. She encourages all who have these kinds of opportunities to take advantage of them.

The meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

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

Next Meeting: April 11th, 2012

ATTENDEES
<u>ICOA:</u> Jackie McAvoy
<u>Council Members:</u> Jonnie Bradley—Bonner Carey Spears—Bonner Larry Verhei—Bonner Jan Klopfenstein—Boundary Joanna Adams - Kootenai John Albee— Kootenai Dennie Seymour—Kootenai Zak Zakrajsek—Kootenai Judy Dinger—Shoshone* Julie Robbins—Shoshone Donna Silva—Shoshone Peggy White—Shoshone
<u>Staff:</u> Marilyn Anders Pearl Bouchard Jennifer Giesbrecht Fran Hunsaker Bill Langer Bobbie Sailor
<u>Guest:</u> Julie Griffith
<i>* new council members</i>

Our thanks to Post Fall Senior Center for hosting our meeting.