

**Minutes of the Commission On Aging Meeting
Garvey Center – Leonardtown, Maryland
Monday, January 23, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER

Start Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: Garvey Senior Center, Leonardtown, MD
Chaired By: Mary Ruth Horton, Chairperson

PRESENT

COA Members: Mary Ruth Horton, Daniel Hinz, Florence Lanham, Ardith Young, Larry Younger, Mary Ann Grusholt, Kathie Reich, and Pat Myers

Department of Aging Staff: Jennie Page, Alice Allen, Peggy Maio, Julie VanOrden, and Clancy Lyall.

Others in Attendance: Dr. Ted Grant

INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW COA MEMBER

Kathie Reich was introduced as the newest member of the Commission on Aging

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda accepted with one addition added below.

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Horton requested that a discussion of the White House Conference on Aging be added. The White House Conference on Aging was held in December. The delegates to the Conference choose 10 of 50 senior issues to be considered as priorities over the next 10 years.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Ardith Young to approve the minutes 11-28-2005, and was seconded by Mary Ann Grusholt.

OLD BUSINESS

Senior Tax Credit Status:

Ms. Horton stated that we have the backing and support of our Board of County Commissioners to have the Sunset Clause removed. Commissioner Raley has written a letter to our legislative delegation in Annapolis, stating that he unanimously is in support of the removal of the sunset clause. The County Commissioners adopted an amendment to their local ordinance, and that amendment set up a committee that is appointed every three years. The Committee will consist of five citizens. The Board of County Commissioners will each appoint one citizen. Senator Dyson, Delegate Bohanan, Delegate Wood, and Delegate O'Donnell are in support of the removal of the sunset clause.

Senior Survey Results Forum Report to Commissioners

Ms. Horton and Ms. Myers made a presentation to the BOCC on behalf of the Commission on Aging. Mr. Hinz attended the meeting and Mr. Younger could not be there due to

prior commitments. The Senior Survey Results Forum report will be attached to these (January) minutes when they are posted to the webpage. Ms. Horton discussed with the BOCC the three areas of discussion at the forum. COA will hold 2 more forums over the next few months. The next forum will be at our new Northern Senior Center, on April 11, 2006. The proposed topics to be discussed at the forum will be transportation, recreation, education, and possibly financial. The COA will be making decisions in regards to the topics at the next few meetings before the forums. Ms. Horton discussed the need to adequately advertise the forum. Ms. Horton requested having a write up done in the next newsletter that the Department of Aging sends out. Ms. Allen stated that the Department sends information on upcoming events to the local newspapers on a weekly basis and the forum can be included.

The Commission on Aging discussed the current news article that was released in the St. Mary's Today. Ms. Horton stated that one of the headlines on the front page reads "Ghastly Grub for Geezers". Everyone is in concurrence that respect should be shown to our senior citizens when articles are written. The media have a right to report on whatever they wish to; however, they should not be disrespectful toward our senior citizens. The written report listed all questions asked by the attendees in all three-forum categories. There were only two questions asked about the food by the attendees in the entire Health section of the forum. A staff person said that one question was based on that senior's dissatisfaction with one meal. The article was not based on all the positive feedback that came from the Senior Survey Results Forum. The COA concurs with Ms. Horton's statement regarding the article. The Department of Aging will keep the COA informed about the meal program.

Proposed New County Senior Housing Status

Ms. Page stated she met with Phil Rollins, Dennis Nicholson, and three consultants that Mr. Rollins works with. The BOCC have directed Mr. Rollins to work with the consultants on a master plan for the northern part of the county particularly the area, where the Northern Senior Center is. The County is considering building senior housing, a community center with a gym, and a pool. Soccer fields are being considered for another location in the northern part of the county. The consultants will be looking at the placement of these. The major issues will be sewer treatment and a second road. The consultants are going back to look at the viability of getting all this on that piece of property as well as the issues with the water, sewage, and a second road. The consultants will bring back a first version of the master plan. Once this is completed, Mr. Rollins, Mr. Nicholson, and Ms. Page will meet again to review the recommendations, and then meet with the COA Officers, and the representatives of the Northern Senior Housing group. After these meetings and other discussion with the consultants, a presentation by the consultants will be given at a Recreation & Parks Board meeting. The Commission on Aging will be invited to participate with them in this meeting. It will be held at the Northern Center and the public will be invited. Recreation & Parks Board meets the 1st Thursday of the month at 5:30 p.m. We are looking at a possible March meeting. Once the Master Plan is looked at and approved, then Recreation & Parks will be stepping back and Housing and the Department of Aging will then work on it from there. Ms. Page will keep the COA up to date on the status.

Status of Transportation for Northern Senior Center

Ms. Page stated that Mr. George Jarboe in charge of St. Mary's County transportation has retired, and Ms. Jackie Fournier has been promoted to his position. Friday afternoon, Ms. Allen had a meeting with Ms. Fournier to discuss the transportation status and to come up with some solutions. Ms. Page stated she hopes at the next CoA meeting she will be able to tell the board that it is in place, but that will depend on what the Transportation Department can do for us.

Oakley Nutrition Center Status

Ms. Page stated that she is still tracking information, and information will be provided to the BOCC during the budget process. Ms. Allen is providing the attendance for Oakley every week. We have continued to ask them what programs they would like. If the Commissioners decide to keep Oakley open for another year, Ms. Page will request that a program specialist be hired for 30 hours a week. Ms. Page will keep the COA posted on the updates.

NEW BUSINESS

Status of Hiring a DOA Director

Ms. Horton stated that the posting of the position of the Director of the Department of Aging opened on 1-12-2006 and will close on 2-1-2006. We may have more information at the next meeting.

Plans for Second Senior Forum: April 11, 2006 at Northern Senior Center

Ms. Horton stated that the plans for the second senior forum have already been discussed. At the February meeting, there will be more details and we will have our article written for the newsletter.

Budget Status for FY2007

Ms. Page stated that she and Ms. Maio are working on the budget. There was an announcement by Governor Erlich announcing his seniors initiative. Included are increases in the Aging Services Budget including: \$2 million for the Older Adults Waiver in the Medicaid budget, 1.3 million in the Senior Assisted Living Group Subsidy Program to serve an additional 331 seniors currently on the waiting list. The Governor is recommended \$750,000 of new funding for Senior Care for an additional 285 more seniors. Another initiative is \$400,000 for the Nutrition support targeted to home-bound seniors to serve an additional 400 seniors. They are looking at also increasing the homeowner's tax credit by raising the maximum assessment against the credit from \$150,000 to \$300,000. Ms. Page will keep the COA updated on the legislative decisions. In the County portion of our budget, Finance has already taken some of the line items and increased them. Ms. Page stated she would like to meet with the officer's of CoA in the next week or two regarding the Commissioners request for 5% reduction in the budget to get some direction from the CoA on what to cut.

DOA ACTING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Meal Program Monthly Status Report

Ms. VanOrden stated for December the home delivered meals were provided to 239 clients. One hundred clients receive hot meals and the other 139 receive frozen meals. A newsletter, called "Hot Wheels" has been created for the Meals on Wheels clients. It is a one page newsletter providing health tips and announcements. The backside contains the menu for the month. On December 2nd we had our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon for our Meals on Wheels volunteers and there were 63 people who attended. There are no Meals on Wheels waiting list.

Program Updates

Ms. Page stated that Northern Senior Center had an Open House on January 6, 2006. It was a big turn out and over 200 people were there. Several new seniors came and have come back since then. Last week there was a L.I.F.E appreciation luncheon. The Department of Aging webpage is almost finished, and will be up and running soon. Our Senior Program Specialist, Wrenn Williams has been transferred to our Northern Senior Center. Joyce Raum will be filling her spot at Garvey and will start next Monday.

Medical Adult Day Services

Ms. VanOrden stated we have 47 enrolled in December. There is an average daily attendance of 28 and 1 new client has been added.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion was made by Pat Myers and seconded by Florence Lanham to accept the slate of nominees for new officers for 2006 as follows: Larry Younger, Chairman, Daniel Hinz, Vice

Chairman, and Mary Ann Grusholt, Corresponding Secretary. Everyone thanked Mary Ruth Horton for all her dedication and hard work that she has done for the Commission as Chairperson.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Wooldridge & Ms. Allen wrote a grant to the Arthritis Foundation for an aquatic exercise program and it was approved for an amount of \$1,400. There will be two aquatic instructors and Ms. Wooldridge is one of them. It will start on January 31, 2006 and the cost will be \$24.00 for 12 classes per student. Classes will be held on Tuesday and Thursday from 3:45 to 4:30 p.m. at the Lexington Park Senior Apartments on Pegg Road.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on February 27, 2006. Pat Myers motioned and Daniel Hinz seconded the motion. The board agreed. The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Prepared by:

Valerie Pilkerton

Senior Administrative Coordinator, St. Mary's County Department of Aging