

**Minutes of the Commission On Aging Meeting
Garvey Center – Leonardtown, Maryland
Monday, April 24, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER

Start Time: 1:30 p.m.
Location: Garvey Senior Center, Leonardtown, MD
Chaired By: Daniel Hinz, Chairperson

PRESENT

COA Members: Daniel Hinz, Mary Ruth Horton, Ardith Young, Mary Ann Grusholt, Pat Myers, Sherrie St. Clair, and Kitty Turner

Department of Aging Staff: Jennie Page, Julie VanOrden and Valerie Pilkerton.

Guest: Levert Queen

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mary Ruth Horton requested under New Business to switch #3 up to #2. Pat Myers requested transportation be added under the Old Business. Motion was made by Pat Myers to approve the agenda with changes, and was seconded by Mary Ruth Horton. The board agreed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mary Ruth Horton to approve the minutes 03-27-2006, and was seconded by Pat Myers.

OLD BUSINESS

Senior Tax Credit Status:

Ms. Horton spoke with someone from Senator Dyson's office today about the status of the amended senior tax credit bill, which increases the sunset provision from 3 years to 5 years. Ms. Horton reported that the bill passed the House and Senate and is now waiting for the Governor to decide to sign the bill or let it become law if he does not veto it. Ms. Horton and Ms. Myers will be working with Senator Dyson, our Delegates, and our County Commissioners to determine the next step and will keep the citizens up to date on the status.

Proposed Northern Senior Housing Status:

Pat Myers stated a meeting was held on April 17, 2006 at 10 a.m. Participants were, Phil Rollins, Director of Recreation & Parks, Jennie Page, Acting Director of Department of Aging, Denis Nicholson, Director of Housing, Mary Ruth Horton, Pat Myers and the consultants. The consultants presented several design layouts that reflected senior housing, a multigenerational building and a swimming pool with changes that were requested from the March meeting. Ms. Myers stated that the means to handle the sewage and how much of the land will perc is a consideration on what can be done and how much can be done. The consultants are estimating 80% of the land will perc. There is no public sewage there. If we do not have a means to handle the sewage needs, much of the land will be used for drain fields for existing and for future sewage. If that happens it would limit the availability of the land for senior housing, a multigenerational building and a swimming pool. Pat mentioned that the Recreation and Parks Board will be presenting the proposal at the Northern Senior Center on May 4 at 5:30 p.m. Once

the Master Plan is prepared and approved, the responsibility for completion of the project will go to Housing and the Department of Aging. Jennie Page will then provide updates on the project.

Status of Director, Department on Aging

Jennie Page stated that interviews were held on April 7, 2006 and that she will keep COA updated.

Second Senior Survey Forum (Lessons Learned)

Mr. Hinz stated that Pat Myers and Mary Ruth Horton did a wonderful job with the Second Senior Survey Forum. It was held on April 11, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Northern Senior Center. The three topics discussed were, Education, Transportation, and Recreation & Leisure Activities. Ms. Horton stated that we had excellent participation from our community experts. The following were the panel members:

Transportation: Alice Allen from the Department of Aging, Mark Kalmus from County STS Transportation, Patti Whorl from the Health Department and Ardith Young from the Sunshine Group.

Education: Janis Jacobs from the LIFE Program, Vicki Grow from CSM, and Kathy Grimes from St. Mary's College.

Recreation & Leisure Activities: Alice Allen from the Department of Aging, Arthur Shepherd from Recreation & Parks, and Kathy Weigel from St. Mary's Library.

Mr. Hinz stated that he was very impressed with the community experts and how they responded to each question. Ms. Horton stated that the third forum should be publicized as a wrap up forum. Jennie Page suggested that they put an article in the DoA newsletter regarding the upcoming third forum. Ms. Horton stated that getting the senior citizens aware of the next forum should be an agenda item for discussion at the next COA meeting in May. The third forum will be held at the Garvey Senior Center on September 19, 2006. Ms. Myers stated all issues from the three senior forums would be outlined in the final report. Ms. Horton made a motion, seconded by Ardith Young that the third forum covers any remaining issues and an update/wrap up of all the issues from the first and second forums. The board agreed.

Transportation

Jennie stated we have been looking for transportation for seniors who want to attend the Northern Center since 1999. In 1999, it was two days a week at Mount Zion, then moved to All Faith, and then when the new Northern Senior Center opened a year ago we were still looking for transportation for our seniors. Jennie stated that the DoA does not provide the transportation, STS does. We have been working with them for years to get the seniors transportation. STS receives grants, and buses mainly through the public transportation grant. When those buses have the amount of years or miles on them where they can be replaced, then those buses are used for other services. The issues STS is facing are, the limited number of buses, drivers that have their CDL license with passenger endorsement, and funding. Last fall, Jackie Fournier from STS and Alice Allen from DoA were working together on a schedule to provide transportation to the seniors at Northern. A schedule was created to provide transportation to Oakley 3 days a week and to Northern 2 days a week. This proposal was not accepted. Alice Allen met with Jackie Fournier to figure out a different way to provide transportation to our seniors. They came up with a schedule and had the drivers drive the routes to see if the time would be a factor as to whether it was possible or not. The only problem that was found is that Oakley being the first stop would be picked up at 7:30 a.m. and they would reach the Northern Senior Center around 10:30 - 10:45 a.m. Jennie stated that this new schedule will begin in May and will be evaluated. Ms. Page will keep COA posted as to the current updates on the status of the new schedule. Ms. Horton reported that a senior asked her and Daniel about how to get to work with the new schedule. A discussion followed and a decision will be made later.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Chair, Commission on Aging

Mr. Hinz stated that Larry Younger has resigned as chairperson of the COA and is moving to Berlin, MD. Mr. Hinz was the Vice Chair and will move up as the chairperson of the COA. The Vice-Chair position is vacant. Mary Ruth Horton motioned that COA nominate Sheri St. Clair as the new Vice-Chair, and was seconded by Mary Ann Grusholt. The board agreed.

Program Emphasis Spotlight: (Home and Community Based Services)

Julie VanOrden gave a presentation to explain to COA what the Home and Community Based Services Division's responsibilities are:

MADS/Sr. Center Plus - MADS is a structured, comprehensive program that provides a variety of health, social, and related support services in a protective, caring setting. Services include medical supervision, a daily activity program, counseling, transportation to and from the center, and a mid-day meal. An important benefit of the program is life enrichment and self-image enhancement for the participant.

Meals on Wheels - The St. Mary's County Department of Aging offers and delivers Home Delivered Meal services (Meals On Wheels/MOW) to the citizens of St. Mary's County in accordance with Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA) Program directives. Residents are determined eligible for home delivered meal (HDM) services based on the requirement set-forth in the Directives which states, (in part), "Home delivered nutrition services shall be available to any person age 60 or older who is homebound by reason of illness or incapacitation..."

Medicaid Waiver - This health service program was designed for consumers who would normally need nursing home placement. The program enables consumers to live safely in the community and receive appropriate services.

Senior Care - The Senior Care Program is available to qualified seniors through the cooperative efforts of the St. Mary's County Department of Aging, the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services (DSS), and the St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD). Representatives from each of these agencies form a joint care plan team known as the Senior Care Steering Committee, which provides screening, assessment, case management and gap-filling services for persons who are at high risk of nursing home placement.

Ombudsman – The Maryland Long Term Care Ombudsman Program helps residents in long-term care facilities maintain their legal rights, control over their own lives, and personal dignity. Long-term care facilities include nursing homes and assisted living communities.

Guardianship - The Department of Aging serves as the court appointed guardian for persons aged 65 and over who have no family member or other interested party available to assume this responsibility. As the Guardian of Person, the Department's representative continues to monitor the individual's living conditions; health, safety, and well-being; and reports regularly to the court on the person's condition and circumstances.

Respite - Respite services are offered in the form of "mini-grants" to families who are caring for an elderly loved one. The grant can be used to hire a caregiver of the family's choosing to provide a short break (called respite) in caring for the consumer. The grant can also be used to purchase needed supplies; make a minor home modification that creates more accessibility for the senior; or assist in the payment of an emergency response system such as Lifeline, Direct Link and [Project Lifesaver](#). Grants are also available for seniors caring for a grandchild who is under 18 years of age. Please note: Grants are one-time-only awards, rather than monthly or yearly awards, and the amount of the award is contingent upon availability of funds.

Current Budget Status

Jennie Page stated that the Budget Hearing is being held at Great Mills High School on April 25, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. It is open to all citizens. Ms. Page is requesting Commission on Aging's support for the current budget request. What has been requested by DoA:

1. 1.5 million this year, and last year was 1.2 million.
2. The manager for Home & Community Based Services that is now being paid out of MADS and the Medicaid waiver grant be County funded.
3. Fiscal Specialist funded 100% from County, currently funded 50% County, 50% MADS.
4. Add a 30-hour week, Senior Program Specialist at the Oakley Site
5. Add a 30-hour week Office Specialist at the Northern Senior Center

The Board of Commissioners are in approval of the addition to this year's budget for an extra \$24,000 for food. They are not in approval of numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 listed above. Ms. Horton asked Ms. Page to prioritize the requested positions. Some COA members plan to attend the budget hearing. A motion was made by Ardith Young, and seconded by Sheral St. Clair to support DOA with the requested budget proposal. Ms. Horton will testify representing COA at the public hearing.

DOA ACTING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Meal Program Monthly Status Report Numbers

Jennie Page explained the report for March's meal evaluation and explained the process. She stated that 865 congregant meals were served in the centers for the month of March. There were 250 clients that received home delivered meals, 99 clients received hot meals and the other 151 received frozen meals. There were 6 new clients and 7 clients taken off for various reasons for the month of March. There is no Meals on Wheels waiting list. We had \$5,968.50 for the March for Meals campaign.

Program Updates

Jennie Page thanked the Northern Council for all the items they contributed to the Northern Senior Center such as the picnic tables, birdhouses, curtains, and display case. The Department of Aging website is up and running. Julie VanOrden stated that we have a new Social Worker that started today at the Ripple Center.

Lunch with Commissioners Status:

Ms. Page stated that Lunch with your Commissioners would be on Tuesday, May 9, 2006 at the Northern Senior Center.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Medical Adult Day Services

Ms. VanOrden stated we have 51 enrolled in March with an average daily attendance of 36. Two new clients have been added in April.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ Daniel Hinz stated the TRIAD is holding a seminar on Identity Theft Preventions at Cedar Lane Apartments on June 30, 2006.
- ◆ Law Enforcement Appreciation Day is May 16, 2006 on the Governmental Center lawn beginning at 11:30 a.m.
- ◆ Jennie Page stated May 9, 2006 is Lunch with your County Commissioners at the Northern Senior Center from 10:30 until 1 p.m.
- ◆ The House Bill 313 and Senate Bill 315 are for the Homeowner's Tax Program. This program will benefit our senior citizens. It is based on the amount of income and the value of your property.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on May 22, 2006. Mary Ruth Horton motioned to adjourn the meeting and Pat Myers seconded the motion. The board agreed. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Prepared by:

Valerie Pilkerton

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