

**Minutes of the Commission On Aging Meeting
Garvey Center – Leonardtown, Maryland
Monday, February 27, 2006**

CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT

COA Members: Larry Younger, Mary Ruth Horton, Daniel Hinz, Florence Lanham, Ardith Young, Mary Ann Grusholt, Kathie Reich, Pat Myers, Sherrie St. Clair, and Kitty Turner

Department of Aging Staff: Jennie Page, Alice Allen, and Valerie Pilkerton.

Others in Attendance: Stephanie Waikart

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Mary Ruth Horton to approve the agenda, and was seconded by Pat Myers.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mary Ruth Horton to approve the minutes 1-23-2006 with 2 changes, and was seconded by Kitty Turner.

OLD BUSINESS

Senior Tax Credit Status (HB 623 and Extending Application Deadline):

Larry Younger stated that his current position as Assistant Administrator at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home keeps him extremely busy and that he may not be able to attend all meetings and Legislative Hearings. For this reason he has asked Mary Ruth Horton and Pat Myers to continue their efforts with regard to Legislative Advocacy. Mr. Younger asked for a motion from the members to allow both Ms. Horton and Ms. Myers to officially continue their efforts in this regard. The commission agreed.

Larry Younger presented a letter written by the St. Mary's County Attorney, John B. Norris, III and sent to the Chief Counsel of the Office of the Attorney General in Baltimore. The letter was in regards to the House Bill 623. The letter states that the opinion appears to be based upon incorrect information regarding the local ordinance, and Mr. Norris would like to schedule a meeting to discuss the opinion of the County's local ordinance. Mr. Younger asked Ms. Horton, and Ms. Myers to briefly discuss the House Bill 623. Ms. Myers stated that she and Ms. Horton were scheduled to testify in Annapolis on the removal of the sunset clause, which the Delegates and our Board of Commissioners have approved. The day before the hearing Ms. Horton got word that the hearing on the bill was being cancelled. Delegate John Bohanan reviewed the bill and saw that a fiscal note regarding constitutionality had been added and needed attention before the hearing. Ms. Horton stated that Delegate Bohanan would keep them informed as new information is received. The hearing has been rescheduled for March 7, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. Ardith Young made the motion to have Ms. Horton and Ms. Myers continue to represent the COA. The motion was seconded by Kitty Turner and passed unanimously.

Proposed St. Mary's Senior Housing Status (Committee Appointment)

A meeting was held on Wednesday, February 22, 2006 at the Garvey Senior Center. Participants were; Dennis Nicholson, Phil Rollins, Jennie Page, Daniel Hinz, Mary Ruth Horton, Pat Myers, Mary Ann Grusholt, Sandy Hormuth, and Mollie Baker. Mr. Hinz stated that the next meeting will be Thursday, March 16, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. Dennis Nicholson, Phil Rollins, Jennie Page, the consultants, the officers of COA, and representatives from the housing group will be attending. After these meetings and other discussions 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 in this meeting. The BOCC has requested that Recreation & Parks Director, Phil Rollins examine the Charlotte Hall site analysis. Some information obtained from the analysis is; 35 acres of original 40-acre parcel is available, the need for housing, a community center with a gym, a pool on this site, and a recreational fields on other sites in the northern part of the county. A public meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 6, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. at the Northern Senior Center. We are recommending 100 units for independent living and 50 for assisted living in the initial proposal. Sewage disposal options that are being looked at are the lagoon system, and the stand-alone sewage system. Once the Master Plan is reviewed and approved, Recreation & Parks will step back and let Housing and the Department of Aging work continue. Ms. Page will keep the COA up to date on the status.

Status of Director, Department on Aging

Ms. Page stated there are no current updates at this time on the status. She may have more information at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

United Seniors of Maryland: State Rally

Mary Ruth Horton, Daniel Hinz, and Larry Younger attended the State Rally on January 24, 2006 at the St. Johns College in Annapolis. Mr. Hinz announced that the United Seniors of Maryland has a stated legislative priority.

Those priorities are:

1. To increase the levels of funding for aging programs.
2. At a minimum, fund the 2002 level adjusted for population growth.
3. To fund 5,135 slots in the medicaid waiver.
4. To improve the quality, coverage and funding of long term care options.
5. Support efforts to provide more affordable prescription drugs, and to oppose cuts in medicaid funding.

Mr. Hinz stated that Ms. Horton presented a position paper to request support of our State Legislators. It included increased funding for senior citizens, programs, long-term care options, and prescription funding. State Legislators spoke at the State Rally to address these issues:

1. Medicaid & public health issues.
2. What can the state do for senior medical cost?
3. Senior Health Insurance Policies.

Current budget Status (Including proposed Staffing)

Jennie Page stated that the budget was turned in last Friday. We have requested:

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

One of the additions to this year's budget is an extra \$24,000 for food. The mileage and postage increased automatically this year due to inflation.

Jennie introduced Stephanie Waikart who joined the COA meeting. She is representing Jack Russell who is running for President of the County Commissioners.

COA Legislative Advocacy

Mr. Younger wanted to discuss how active and extensive should our advocacy be as Commission on Aging. Mary Ruth Horton stated that issues should be discussed at the COA meeting. The Chair may need to write a letter or have a COA member attend a meeting. We need to be careful when it comes to policy and state budgetary items so that we are not in conflict with our local positions and are in line with our county. Ms. Horton stated that one reason we are having the public forums, is to find out what our senior citizen's greatest concerns are regarding legislative issues.

Second Senior Forum:

Larry Younger stated that the forum will be held on April 11, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Northern Senior Center. Three topics that will be discussed are; Education, Transportation, and Recreation & Leisure Activities. Ms. Myers stated that the results from the first forum would be discussed briefly. Citizens are requested to call Valerie Pilkerton, Senior Administrative Coordinator to RSVP no later than April 3, 2006. Ms. Horton stated that there would be a committee meeting held soon to assign COA members and DoA staff to certain areas. Ms. Horton stated that the plans for the third senior forum have already been discussed to be held in September at the Garvey Senior Center. The topics for the third forum will be Volunteer Opportunities, Employment, Domestic Violence, Financial Matters, Banking & Credit, Estate Planning and Grandchildren. COA has decided that the way the first forum was set up worked so nicely that the second and third will be set up the same way.

DOA ACTING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Meal Program Monthly Status Report

March for Meals will be held March 22, 2006. Alice Allen handed out the report for January's meal evaluation and explained the process. She stated that 907 meals were served in the centers for the month of January. Ms. Page stated that 248 clients received home delivered meals, 107 clients receive hot meals and the other 141 received frozen meals. A total of 258 clients were receiving meals at sometime during the month. There were 4,559 meals delivered in the month of January. There are no Meals on Wheels waiting list.

Program Updates

Ms. Page stated Legacy Leadership Training was held in January at the Northern Senior Center. The LIFE program statistics are in for the fall semester, 2005. We hosted 61 classes through the Learning is Forever Program that runs from September through December. The instructors volunteered 902 hours and the total class participation was 424. On March 1, 2006 the Spring LIFE Program classes will start. Jennie stated the average participants for each senior center in the month of January was 961 for Garvey, 804 for Loffler, 1,170 for Northern, 9 for Oakley, and 14 to 15 people on Wednesday for Ridge. The Department of Aging webpage is almost finished, and will be up and running soon. Our updated Resource Guide is at the printers and should be done by the end of March to distribute.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Medical Adult Day Services

Ms. Page stated we have 47 enrolled in January with an average daily attendance of 42. One new client has been added and two are ready to start in February.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board of Commissioners will appoint a new member, Maureen McCarthy Ault to the COA on February 28, 2006 at the Commissioners meeting. The March for Meals will hold a march around the Governmental Center complex on March 22, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. On March 15, 2006, there will be a St. Patrick's Day party at the Northern Senior Center from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Cost will be \$11.00.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on March 27, 2006. Sherrie St. Clair motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ardith Young seconded the motion. The board agreed. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Prepared by:

Valerie Pilkerton

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