

COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 10, 2021

→ via ZOOM video conferencing ←

INTRODUCTIONS

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

MINUTES

- Pam Shernuk, Chair, asked if there were any corrections needed to the January 2021 minutes; there were none.

**John P. Smith made a motion to approve the January 13, 2021 minutes as written.
Cynthia Schendel seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.**

DIRECTOR OF AGING & HUMAN SERVICES (AHS) – DEBBIE COLLINS

- On March 1st the second phase of the Kansas Rental Assistance Program will roll out. The County's portion will be \$18.6m federal dollars. The Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) will administer the program partnering with United Way. We will partner with them and their affiliates as well.
 - ◆ This program is only for people who have been directly affected by the virus. The only requirements are income must be at no more than 80% of the area median income; you must prove that your situation is a direct result from pandemic. There is no age limit. This is a homelessness prevention stop gap.

There are other county/city programs that help those who are currently homeless. Johnson County Mental Health has created an outreach team that is checking parking lots; there are also warming stations available, and some hotels.

Shawnee has created a "safe parking lot," well-lit with porta-potties available. The Sheriff's Department patrols the parking lot.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS LIAISON COMMISSIONER ALLENBRAND

- The Commissioner shared her extensive background in the health care industry, working for both public and private communities. Developed the first memory care facility in Kansas. Was invited to the Mayo Clinic to work with their programs.
- Actively working with Joe Conner, Deputy County Manager and Dr. Areola, Director of Health & Environment.

DIRECTOR OF AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA) – DAN GOODMAN

- We finally received our final output numbers for 2020.
- Reported on year-end total of AAA programs and projects:
 - ◆ Received the highest contact numbers for the **Information & Referral Assistance (I&RA)** program in 2020 with 11,218; with a 74% diversion rate (clients remaining in their home instead of a nursing facility). previous annual high was 63%. It should be noted that this is a clear change in human behavior as a result of the pandemic and our ability to provide a service option that keeps them safely in their own home.
 - ◆ Non-Medicaid assessments, Senior Care Act and Older Americans Act reached 1,011 in CY 2020.
 - ◆ **CARE** assessments hit an all-time low of 892; previous low was 12,081 again demonstrating a change in human behavior triggered by the pandemic.
 - ◆ **Explore Your Options**, a resource tool, was updated. We printed 86,000 using Older Americans Act funding. We mailed one booklet to everyone on “The Best Times” mailing list, 82,500, using Covid-19 Crisis funding.

The remainder (3,500) will be used throughout the year. Distributed to libraries, city and county departments. We plan to give one to every client that the AAA assesses.

DTI (Department of Technology and Innovation) will post a version, for the visually impaired on the Aging website.
 - ◆ **On-line intake form**, people can use this application on their own time, after business hours, on weekends, whenever they are ready. It is being internally tested now and will be ready for external testing soon.
 - ◆ **Aging Services webpage** is being updated, with new content and will be ready for internal testing perhaps as early as next week. Soon after the internal testing is completed, we will be looking to do some external testing as well which will include the COA. We will be looking for further input on enhancements before rolling out the webpage to general public.
- As part of the Governors state budget cut there may be a cut in the \$850,000 Kansas Nutrition budget. Johnson County’s portion of this is approximated at around 11% or \$93,500?

We use all of our nutrition funding each year and still require additional County financial support to deliver Nutrition services to older residents of the County. Several years ago, we had to ask the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for funds to backfill a cut to the budget. So, a reduction of \$93,500 would place a hole in our annual budget and would create a waiting list for Nutrition services or a need for further County intervention.

This is being discussed by the House Social Services Budget committee. There are several of our local Representatives on that committee: Megan Lynn, Vice Chair. Members include Representatives Owen Donohoe, Susan Ruiz and Lindsay Vaughan. Also being discussed in the Senate Ways and Means sub-committee. There is one local Senator on this committee: Pat Pettey.
- ◆ Advocacy is appropriate. We are also working through the County’s legislative advocate.
- ◆ At this point, we don’t have a home-delivered meal wait list as client participation has declined during the pandemic. We do expect a post pandemic surge, when service demand will return to normal and our wait list will return for home-delivered meals.

AAA Information Pam Shernuk:

There are 11 Area Agencies On Aging in Kansas, we are number 11. JoCo AAA receives 11% of the Federal funding the State receives from Washington. The amount received for Senior Care Act (SCA) had not been increased for several years. Due to the increase of older adults in the County the Board of County Commissioners allocated \$250,000 for this year and a promise of \$250,000 for 2022 to support a local Johnson County SCA type of program. We appreciate the County's support.

The County is working on updating their website to make it more user friendly for older adults. The AAA has been working almost 2 years on the AAA pages to improve them as well.

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER – JOE CONNER

- Pam Shernuk thanked Joe for having Jodi Miller, CMO Assistant, send an update on the Covid-19 process to the COA.
- As part of the County's communication plan, we will be working with groups like the COA, Chambers of Commerce, Mayor's offices to help get word out to seniors. If you find any information confusing, or you don't understand something, please contact the CMO (County Manager's Office).
- We are continuing the 1st vaccination for the 80 plus population. We are continuing to work with law enforcement and healthcare workers. Have not yet started with food service personnel or teachers. Next week we will be giving the 2nd dose to Seniors. Hospitals need more vaccine. Weather concerns might create the need to reschedule.
- We are now getting more vaccinations than anyone in the county.
- It has been reported that some independent living centers are having breakouts. Most facilities are getting the vaccine. There are some who did not make early plans. The County is partnering with Hy-Vee to use their mobile centers to reach those centers. The County is also working to arrange transportation for those who need it.
We are still working out how to best serve those home-delivered meals clients.
- The County has created a team to answer the many phone calls being received and respond to any messages left.
- Defined the different living facilities:
 - ◆ Independent Living (IL) is not licensed, is basically apartment living; does not have skilled nursing and is run by property managers.
 - ◆ Assisted Living (AL) is not licensed, some contract medical staff; does have congregate meals and activities; run by property managers.
 - ◆ Long-Term Care (LTC) is licensed, has skilled nursing staff, maybe a 3-tiered facility.
- What happens to the left-over vaccine? That is managed very carefully. We keep a continual count of the number of people waiting in line. We will also vaccinate the companion if there is one.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **Legislative Committee:** John P. Smith, Chair
 - ◆ Concerning the cut in the Nutrition budget – we should wait before we advocate for this.
 - ◆ HB 2114 Amended: Establishing the Kansas senior care task force to study provision of care for those with Alzheimer's, dementia or other age-related mental health conditions. This bill has very broad issues. It is sponsored by the Committee on Children and Seniors report. John suggested the COA monitor this bill.

- ◆ HB 2024: Providing immunity from civil liability for adult care homes for COVID-19 claims. There is a clause to protect facilities for gross neglect. Nursing homes were not included in this. The liability cap has been removed in KS. This is an important bill to follow. The COA, by a show of hands, agree to monitor this.

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- **By-Laws Committee:** Rob Givens will join Karen Weber and Paula Hurt on the committee. They will meet by phone tomorrow.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – PAM SHERNUK

March 10 2020 Tim DeWesse, Director of Johnson County Public Health will be our guest.

NEW BUSINESS

- Pam Shernuk would like to post a picture and a brief profile of COA members on Facebook, if you are willing. This would be an opportunity to highlight the COA and what we do. Facebook: @jocoaging
- Follow-up on Nutrition advocacy. Taken up by a subcommittee of the Ways and Means committee. Senator Pat Petty is with this committee.

OLD BUSINESS

- None at this time

OPEN FORUM/PUBLIC COMMENTS

- To follow-up on nutrition advocacy. This issue will be taken on by a subcommittee of the Ways and Means committee. The only legislator from Johnson County is Senator Pat Petty.
- Type of volunteers? All volunteers are vetted. Lakeview Village will be used as vaccination site.
- Red Cross has a volunteer phone program.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned 10:45 AM

Next COA Meeting via ZOOM

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 @ 9:00 AM