

# COMMISSION ON AGING

## MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 9, 2022

~Via ZOOM video conferencing~

---

### OPENING AND WELCOME

---

- Call to Order 9:02 AM

---

### INTRODUCTIONS, COA CHAIR – PAM SHERNUK

---

- Pam Shernuk informed the board Assistant County Manager Joe Connor would not be in attendance today. He passed on to Pam that the county was not ready to make an announcement on the decision for the new AHS director.

---

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES, COA CHAIR – PAM SHERNUK

---

- John P. Smith moved to approve the February 2022 minutes. Cynthia Schendel seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

---

### BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER LIAISON–SHIRLEY ALLENBRAND

---

- Commissioner Allenbrand stated the BOCC has been busy working on the budget. Pam expressed interest in the opportunity to have a budget presentation given to the COA board. The county has the lowest mill levy in the state and a \$1.5 million dollar budget. Retail sales has increased 17% and the average housing sale in Johnson County is \$450,000. Transit will also be out in Gardner for seniors.
- The option to move the AAA kitchen facilities out to the New Century building in Gardner is no longer being considered.

---

### AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA) – INTERIM DIRECTOR, MEGAN LAHA

---

- Megan Laha, Interim Director updated the board on the AAA budget. A request has been made for an additional Information & Assistance Specialist. This item as well as accepting \$1.5 billion dollars in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds will be brought to the BOCC as well as asking for a contract with Hy-vee for county food distributions. AAA is also working with facilities for the replacement of kitchen ovens for Nutrition.
- Carol Colnar, Operations Manager reported ARPA funds (COVID relief money) have a match attached to it. There hasn't been any match in previous COVID funds. The only department with a match under the ARPA funds was the (OAA) Older Americans Act. It was missed that it was on the bill when it was approved. This means AAA would have to come up with around \$269,000 in match from county funds. This is a large amount of money for AAA to come up with so the State has decided they will come up with this amount for AAA as long as monies are spent by June 30. The amount can only be used supporting nutritional services and creating programs to help with isolation, socialization, and food insecurities among our senior population. Ideas include food distributions and the possibility of a new CHAMPSS site. We are working on getting this approved by the end of March. The \$1.5 million dollar amount will go through September 30, 2024 and is earmarked for different programs including administration, caregiver, health promotion and nutrition.
- AAA has purchased the rights to produce "All About Me" books which would be a valuable and beneficial tool to those responsible for elders. These books could include client's personal, health & emergency information, phone numbers, financial accounts & passwords. The county print shop will be able to print these at a discounted rate (\$13) with an option for download as well. Board member Rob Givens questioned any cost savings by printing in black & white which the AAA is considering. As we move forward with printing and distribution, there will be no charge to AAA's near 3,700 clients. If demand proves to be large in the general population, a fee may have to be assessed in order to cover costs. Cindy Green provided input on taking precautionary measures on privacy issues when including staff and/or others assisting with private information.
- Angela Pelger, Aging Care Manager provided updates on county funded aging care services. After reviewing surveys from seniors there are new program ideas being discussed including companion care that would provide one on one assistance and socialization to individuals. This would be beneficial to clients living alone with already having contracted providers that could support companion services. Next is a home maintenance program. By working with Jewish Family Services Help-at-Home program, we hope to assist in installing grab-bars and support with other maintenance needs.

- Another new program being considered is an assisted transportation option where costs are covered for individuals attending appointments or gatherings. Plans are also in the works in improving handicapped assistance as well. These programs are still in the planning stages and will be brought to AAA leadership team soon. Pam Shernuk questioned the cost of this program and if there was anyone on the wait list. Angela confirmed that there is no additional costs since these services would already be allotted in the clients individual care plan and no wait list.
- Stephanie Ikpe, Nutrition Manager stated congregate sites have remained up and running since February 28th. In April in-person enrollment sessions for CHAMPSS will begin with online sessions still being available. There have been concerns from volunteers with clients having difficulty opening milk cartons so all nutrition clients will receive a universal carton opener that can assist them.
- AAA is also partnering with K-State Extensions and Hy-vee to provide a live virtual recorded cooking class in hopes to combat isolation in elder adults. Sign up forms were sent to homebound and congregate clients if interested. The program would start with microwaveable options with Hy-vee supplying shelf stable ingredients. Carol Colnar added there are also ideas of a pilot book program and art program as well.
- Andrea Leavitt voiced her concern about day programs for people with early to mid-stage dementia. Megan Laha responded by stating that Shawn Sullivan, (Midland Care) is expanding case programs that will include Johnson County. These case programs could likely incorporate day centers for people with dementia. This is a preliminary option that is being explored.

---

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

---

- John P. Smith briefed on the legislative platform. House Bill #2543 including early onset Alzheimer's patients in the Senior Care Act funding is not moving forward. Jarrod Ousley informed everyone that we should have more information regarding the elimination of sales tax on groceries after the legislative meetings being held today.

---

## REPORT FROM THE COA CHAIR, PAM SHERNUK

---

- Pam Shernuk reported that she attended two meetings for the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) through Advent Health. Currently this group has met to assess the health needs of the Wyandotte and Johnson County region. There are 26 percent of seniors that live alone in this service area and 14 percent felt like they had less food than they should have due to cost. Pam requested to know what percentage of those seniors live in Johnson County. Megan responded that the 2022 census has come out and it would be good to find those statistics specific to our county so we could target those individuals and provide them information on AAA services.

---

## OLD BUSINESS

---

- After a vote, the COA board decided there will not be a forum to host potential candidates for BOCC chairman. COA members may still advocate individually without associating themselves with the COA.

---

## NEW BUSINESS

---

- Pam invited board members to the State of the County address if there is interest. Cost is \$45 per seat. This event is an overview of county projects and what is currently taking place in Johnson County. Local county leaders, elected officials and others will be in attendance. The event will take place March 29th at noon at the Overland Park Convention Center.
- Pam reminded everyone that COA meetings will be held in person beginning April 13th. Following meetings are May 11th and July 13th with a break in June. During the July meeting is when new officers are elected and the Area Plan is approved. It is imperative everyone is in attendance. Pam will also be appointing a nominating committee in May.

---

## OPEN FORUM/PUBLIC COMMENTS

---

- None at this time

---

## ADJOURNMENT

---

- Meeting adjourned at 10:19 AM

**Next COA meeting ~IN-PERSON/HYBRID OPTION~**

**11811 S. Sunset Drive, RM 1070/1075**

**Wednesday, April 13, 2022 @ 9:00 AM**

**(Group photo at 8:30AM in lobby)**

