

**Minutes of the Commission On Aging Meeting  
Garvey Center – Leonardtown, Maryland  
Monday, June 26, 2006**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Start Time: 12:00 p.m.  
Location: Garvey Senior Center, Leonardtown, MD  
Chaired By: Daniel Hinz, Chairperson

**PRESENT**

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

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mary Ruth Horton made an addition under New Business to add Senior Coalition Status. Motion was made by Pat Myers to approve the agenda with Ms. Horton's addition, and was seconded by Sherrie St. Clair. The board agreed.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made by Mary Ruth Horton to approve the minutes 05-22-2006, and was seconded by Florence Lanham. The board agreed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Senior Tax Credit Status:**

Ms. Horton stated there has been no action since the April Commission on Aging meeting. Ms. Horton and Ms. Myers will be working on setting up an appointment with the new County Attorney, Christy Chesser to bring her up to date on the process and discuss what the next step will be. Ms. Horton and Ms. Myers will be working with Senator Dyson, our Delegates, and our County Commissioners to keep the citizens up to date on any changes.

**Proposed Northern Senior Housing Status:**

Pat Myers stated that they are working on the sewage capability and that will determine the amount of housing that will go on the property. If there is a need for drain fields to be put in it will limit the housing. Pat Myers stated hopefully by the next meeting we will know their decision on the sewage capability and be able to move forward. Recreation & Parks is waiting on the design from the consultants from our last meeting on how it will be laid out. 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 the new Director for Department of Aging is Ms. Lori Jennings-Harris. Ms. Harris will begin her work here on August 1, 2006. She comes from Cambria County, Pennsylvania where she has been the Area Agency on Aging Administrator since 2001. She is a Masters candidate at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and she holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Health Planning and Administration from Pennsylvania State University. We look forward to Ms. Jennings-Harris' arrival.

### **Senior Housing Advocacy Status**

Daniel Hinz stated a discussion was held on senior housing issues and how COA and the Department of Aging can advocate for residents of senior housing at the last meeting. As guests of the COA a group of St. Mary's County Senior Citizen Residents identified certain issues they felt needed to be addressed and were seeking advice from the Department of Aging and the Commission on Aging for guidance. Mr. Hinz questioned whether the guests had contacted anyone from the COA or DoA. Ms. Horton stated that the residents had not contacted either COA or DoA in regards to the guidance that was given to them. Ms. Horton stated that she would try to contact them to see if things had been resolved.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Budget Public Status**

Pat Myers stated that the position for a 30-hour a week Office Specialist at the Northern Senior Center, that was requested had been approved in the budget. It has been advertised and interviews will be conducted shortly.

#### **Southern Maryland Tri-County Joint Meeting**

Ms. Horton stated the first part of the agenda dealt with an update from the national level by Amy Gotwals on where we are with the renewal of Older American's Act. The process takes place so that as things change in the demographics as well as the needs of the older American citizens that Congress can keep up with it. It is a five-year process rather than annual. Ms. Horton and Ms. Page attended Maryland's first meeting to prepare for the first National conference. Ms. Horton testified at the meeting for the need of more affordable housing in St. Mary's County for our senior citizens and transportation in rural areas. A work session was held that afternoon and the appointed Delegates going to the National Convention went through a list of everything that was brought up that morning. This was to narrow them down to what the State priorities were going to be. Ms. Horton was extremely pleased that the two concerns were picked as State priorities.

Ms. Horton stated if we do not get the reauthorization passed, we may not have the funding for the programs that are necessary. The funding comes from the Federal to the State from the State to the County and local entities. Ms. Horton stated there is a version done, but is not a bill yet. Our Southern Maryland representatives are Steny Hoyer, House of Representatives, and Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate. Since the Senate is currently working on their version Ms. Horton requested that the COA members call Dick Myers and Senator Mikulski to let them know that their personal support to get the Older American Act reauthorized is appreciated. Mary Ruth Horton made a motion to authorize a COA member to make decisions and respond to these issues between meetings on behalf of the COA and was seconded by Pat Myers. The board agreed. Jennie Page suggested the COA have a small committee to review matters during this year to present at next years Southern Maryland Tri-County Joint Meeting. Florence Lanham, Kathie Reich, and Sherrie St. Clair will serve on the committee. A date for next year will be discussed at the next COA meeting. Daniel Hinz asked Mary Ruth Horton to serve as chair of the committee to plan the event for next year and she agreed.

#### **September Forum Report**

Pat Myers and Mary Ruth Horton discussed the way they would like the third forum to go. They would like to have one speaker for each topic & issue instead of having a couple speakers like the first and second forums. The third forum will be about the third category topics & issues. The categories will be: Assistance with caring for Grandchildren, Estate Planning, Domestic Violence, Education, Banking & Crediting, Employment, and Volunteer Opportunities. There was a discussion of individuals who would speak for each category. Names of individuals will be provided once they have been selected and agree to join us for our third forum.

### **Senior Coalition Status**

Ms. Horton stated she received an email from Claire Whitback asking how the COA feels about renewing the Senior Coalition membership with the United Seniors of Maryland. Since COA is one of the members of the county Coalition, Ms. Horton requested that the COA make a motion on whether to use some of the Coalition money to renew the Coalition membership for the United Seniors of Maryland. Motion was made by Pat Myers to approve the request, and was seconded by Mary Ann Grusholt. The board agreed.

### **DOA ACTING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Page supplied the COA with the May 2006 Status Report that is provided to the Board of County Commissioners every month. This report provides the following data listed below. Motion was made by Mary Ruth Horton to approve the new format Ms. Page has provided, and was seconded by Pat Myers. The board agreed.

### **Meal Program Monthly Status Report Numbers**

The report for May's meal evaluation stated that 889 congregate meals were served in the centers for the month of May. There were 231 clients that received home delivered meals, 97 clients received hot meals and the other 134 received frozen meals. There were 10 clients taken off for various reasons for the month of May. There is no Meals on Wheels waiting list.

### **Staff Changes**

It was stated the Department of Aging is currently one position away from being fully staffed. The Operations Manager at the Loffler Senior Center has been filled by Mary Ann Thompson. The Senior Program Specialist at the Loffler Senior Center has been filled by Candice O'Brien. The Office Specialist at the Northern Senior Center has been advertised and interviews will be conducted soon. We would like to welcome our new employees to the Department of Aging.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Medical Adult Day Services**

Ms. VanOrden stated we have 53 enrolled in May with an average daily attendance of 35. One new client has been added in May.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- ◆ Daniel Hinz stated the TRIAD is holding a seminar on Identity Theft Preventions at Cedar Lane Apartments on June 30, 2006.
- ◆ Pat Myers stated the Northern Senior Center is holding their first Anniversary on June 14, 2006 from 11:00 to 2:00.
- ◆ Pat Myers stated on July 14, 2006 Northern is holding a picnic. Tickets can be purchased at Northern, Garvey, or Loffler Senior Centers at \$7.00 a piece.
- ◆ There will be a Yard sale at the Northern Senior Center on September 16, 2006.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be on July 24, 2006 at 12:00. Sherrie St. Clair moved to adjourn the meeting and Kitty Turner seconded the motion. The board agreed. The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Prepared by:

Valerie Pilkerton

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

