

**Minutes of the Commission On Aging Meeting  
Garvey Center – Leonardtown, Maryland  
Monday, October 23, 2006**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Start Time: 12:00 p.m.  
Location: Garvey Senior Center, Leonardtown, MD  
Chaired By: Sheral St. Clair, Chairperson

**PRESENT**

**COA Members:** Mary Ruth Horton, Sherrie St. Clair, Pat Myers, Florence Lanham, Kitty Turner

**Department of Aging Staff:** Lori Jennings-Harris, Jennie Page, Dana DiGregorio

**Guests:** Sam Brown, Vicki Brown

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion to table September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes by Pat Myers, seconded by Mary Ruth Horton; the board agreed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**COA membership update:**

- No New updates.
- There will be no new commission appointments until January.
- PIO office sent out a news release looking for applicants for all commissions. COA was included in the list of commissions seeking new members.
- Recommendation made to put a boxed message in the New Beginning newsletter for any senior interested in applying to please contact any current COA member or the Department of Aging to find out more.

**Ideas for future committee projects:**

- Follow up with Tim Bennett, Department of Public Safety, regarding radio stations and generators for severe weather conditions. Pat Myers spoke with Mr. Bennett about coming to a COA meeting to speak. He stated that they are looking into establishing a separate radio station that would be for public broadcasting, notices, issues and the like. This will be presented to the county commissioners at some point, and Mr. Bennett will let us know if there is anything the COA can do to help or even for him to come and brief the COA when they get the go ahead.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Transportation**

- Transportation is still a main issue for all counties. This issue needs to be brought to the fore front to see who we can work with as commission members and how we can assist the Department of Aging in trying to keep up with this issue and get this issue worked into the budget for next year to help meet the needs of the seniors. Money could be requested for things such as a new bus, new routes, and/or new drivers to help with

these issues. There is a need for more than just transportation to the senior centers. There is also a need for more personal transportation (i.e. to doctors' offices, grocery stores, etc.). Issues and challenges facing transportation are that STS does not have the employees/drivers to support the routes they need to accommodate the seniors' transportation needs.

- George Erickson from the Department of Public Work and Transportation is considering and is looking into pooling resources and working on making the transportation system work more effectively and efficiently.

Need to get the information out to the senior population as to what transportation services are available. Suggested card, magnet or cut out be put into the New Beginning that will provide seniors with information on schedules, phone numbers, routes and any other important information.

#### **Grandparents Caring for Grandchildren**

- In the last meeting it was suggested that a support group, seminar or lecture be scheduled to present information and resources to Grandparents who are caring for their grandchildren. Information was going to be presented in the Senior Spotlight or the New Beginning to find out what the exact need would be before going forward with this suggestion. If there is a need for this type of group or lecture, Florence Lanham will be happy to obtain more information to present to the commission. It was suggested that the commission look into grants and grant writers to obtain grants to help support the Grandparent support group.

#### **Social Security Administration Letter**

- Social Security Administration comes twice a month to provide assistance to individuals who reside in St. Mary's County. A letter has been drafted to send to Beverly Anderson, District Manager of SSA, from the COA, requesting the placement of a regional Social Security office in the Southern Maryland area to help serve Charles, Calvert and St. Mary's Counties. Sherrie St. Clair requested approval from the commission to send this letter, the commission agreed. The SSA has been looking for space but has not yet found anything suitable for their needs. The Lexington Park Library has been suggested, but the SSA states that it is too far for their employees to drive, and the site was turned down as a potential site. The County is hoping that the SSA will see the need for a facility here in the southern counties and build something closer in the northern end of St. Mary's County.

#### **Letter of Resignation**

- Maureen McCarthy-Alt turned in her letter of resignation from the Commission on Aging.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

#### **Meal Committee Meetings**

- Lori Jennings-Harris suggested developing a meal committee. The meal committee will meet to discuss congregate (and home delivered) meals (i.e. look, taste, complaints and accomplishments) and meal related issues. This committee will consist of one representative from each senior center and medical adult day center (each center will have a representative and alternate), and will meet on a quarterly basis. There will be a dietician and a representative from ARAMARK present at each committee meeting as well. It was suggested that the representative be a person who eats at the center at least twice a week; someone who will get involved in the meal program. The commission agrees. Sam Brown volunteered to be the representative for the Oakley site, and his wife, Vicki Brown, volunteered to be the representative for the Ripple Center. Lori Jennings-Harris will advise the COA when a committee has been put together and the meetings are scheduled to begin. Meals on Wheels clients will be surveyed on an annual basis.
- The Department of Aging is already working on some of the issues that drivers are having with the food containers. Changes are coming and Ms. Jennings-Harris will have more information at the next meeting.

#### **Program Reports and Updates**

- There were no September program updates from Ms. Jennings-Harris
- Mary Ruth Horton and Pat Myers stated that the Golf program at the Northern Senior Center went very well.

#### **Senior Housing**

- The Recreation and Parks Board and the COA will host a meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006 at 5:30 p.m. at the Northern Senior Center. A consultant will be presenting the Senior Housing Master Plan for the Charlotte Hall Property which will then be presented to the Board of County Commissioners.

#### **Governor's visit**

- Governor Erlich made a visit to St. Mary's County on Friday, October 6, 2006, and one of his stops was the northern Senior Center. It was a very busy day but the day went well. Commissioner Jarboe's band played for the crowd. It was suggested, to a member of the Governor's staff, that a sign directing people to the Northern Senior Center is needed for route 5, but the State Highway Administration states that the senior center doesn't have the numbers to meet the requirement for a sign.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- The Annual Health Fair will be this Friday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Loffler Senior Center in Great Mills.
- United Seniors of Maryland, Tuesday January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 at St. John's College in Annapolis. You can buy the tickets in advance for \$11.00 or at the door for \$13.00. Attendees will be able to: meet with Legislative representatives, meet with a delegate from their county, and interact with senators. Affordable housing for seniors, statewide senior transportation issues and computer contact vs. telephone (a human voice on the other end of the phone) contact will be discussed.
- The Older American Act has passed. This 5 year plan gives access for seniors with limited incomes, strengthens Home and Community Based Services (Seniors growing old at Home), strengthens Long Term Care options for Home and Community Based Services, strengthens the purpose of the Senior Nutrition Program, establishes a need for a cabinet level for aging, establishes programs for grants for senior transportation, expands on Elder Abuse and Elder Justice.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be on November 27, 2006 at 12:00. Pat Myers motioned to adjourn the meeting and Florence Lanham seconded the motion. The commission agreed. The meeting adjourned at 1:35p.m.

The commission agreed to cancel December's meeting unless an emergency arises. There will be no meeting in December.

Prepared by:

Dana DiGregorio

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