

Aging Partners Areawide Advisory Council Minutes
January 25, 2018

Present: Linda Heinisch, Gloria Aron, Keith Larsen, Vern Schulte, Ardee Rut, Marsha Ward, Harold Simpson

Audio Conference: Marty Stones, JoAnn Sieck

Absent: Esther Bailey, Sharon Reisdorff, Shari Busch, Steven Egglund, Alan Gissler, Kathy Stokebrand, Jacki Miller, John Wyvill

Staff: Randy Jones, Denise Boyd, Brenda Motis, Susan Keese

Gloria Aron welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

I. Gloria asked for a motion to approve the minutes of October 19, 2017. Ardee Rut made the motion and Harold Simpson seconded. All were in favor and the motion was adopted.

II. Building and Kitchen Tour: led by Randy Jones

Randy lead members on a tour of the Downtown Senior Center including the Nurses Room, dining room, kitchen, and common areas.

Q&A

Gloria asked if there is a lease on the building. Randy replied that Aging Partners leases the property from the Building Commission for roughly \$53,000 yearly. When Aging Partners Downtown Center moves it will not be locked into a committed time frame.

III. Cathy Rauch: led by Gloria Aron

Cathy Rauch has resigned from Areawide Council effective immediately due to scheduling conflicts and family matters. Her resignation leaves an opening for Lancaster County representation on Areawide Advisory Council. Interested candidates may submit name to the Mayor's Office and Lancaster County Board for endorsement. Any council members who have an idea on ideal replacements should pass names for candidates onto Randy Jones. Cathy Rauch will receive a letter thanking her for her service from the Mayor's office and Aging Partners has given Cathy an invitation to come back.

IV. LB1004 ADRC: led by Randy Jones

The Aged and Disabled Resource Center (ADRC) provides Information and Referral for aged and persons of all ages with disabilities as well as care givers. This Pilot Program began 2 years ago with around \$400,000 State funding. It has been very successful at reaching individuals with needs across Nebraska but a greater need still exists. Funding for the program is divided between Beatrice, Hastings and Lincoln program hubs. Aging Partners ADRC receives \$64,000 from funding to run their ADRC program which is barely enough to cover 30 hours per week of staffing, office space, and administrative assistance.

Legislative Bill 1004 (Senator Kate Bolz) seeks to continue ADRC program permanently. LB1004 would require/mandate Aging Partners' ADRC program to add three additional steps to receive funding for the program- 1) Work with other AAAs. 2) Enter into other contractual agreements with other disability providers/disciplinarians (i.e. Munro-Meyer Institute and Center for Independent Living). 3) Monitor these other providers' performance. These extra mandates significantly increase the cost of the program.

Aging Partners and the other AAAs in Nebraska are concerned by LB1004 mandates (as currently written) because it may become a terribly underfunded mandate. To get LB1004 passed with additional funding connected to it is very unlikely. Aging Partners is challenged by the fact there's a need; however, the funding is not provided for increased service and administrative support funding.

Randy added that Federal funding is going down 1% a second year in a row, State funding is stable, and Aging Partners local (Lincoln) budget has been asked by Mayor's Office to come in at 96% of base budget. These reductions is making it very difficult to consider financially supplementing the ADRC program-without an appropriation bill or fiscal note there's no idea on what moneys will be available/left for ADRC program out of Aging Partners budget.

The AAAs is going to ask for simplification of bill and fiscal note. Aging Partners cannot afford to have a mandate from the State that is underfunded.

Q&A

- Vern asked if there is an appropriation bill for LB1004. The appropriation bill was for the original Pilot Program which runs out in June 2018- So they will have to structure a fiscal note and add an appropriations bill onto existing LB1004.
- Vern asked if Aging Partners expects the fiscal note to continue at the same level/amount that it has in the past during the Pilot Program. Randy replied that yes it is the most likely scenario.
- Ardee asked if LB1004 passes with the same appropriations as now, currently funding the Pilot Program, can Aging Partners maintain current service levels of ADRC that they're at now. Aging Partners most likely could sustain service delivery. However there would not be additional funding to pay for LB1004 mandates of contractual obligations, monitoring, and administrative support.
- Ardee asked if Aging Partners has any say or input into potential appropriation bill. The State Unit on Aging is creating the fiscal note to identify costs and adding increased financial components, including staffing and software-these additions may put us at odds because those added financial components may make the Legislator throw out the entire bill. The AAAs will be presenting concerns directly to Senator Bolz and then if there are still existing concerns by the time LB1004 gets to the committee hearing, they will testify what those concerns are.
- Keith asked if cutting staff person from 30 hours a week to 20 hours would aid in funding ADRC. A cut in staff hours would produce waiting lists. The 30 hour staff member is at capacity already.
- Linda asked if ADRC actually saves money in other areas for the State. Randy answered yes and that is a very good argument because it prevents individuals having to go into long-term care which saves the State money. However this agreement is not heard very well by Senators at times, because it's an over-heard argument which causes them to doubt the case.

V. Discuss food service model change (Lancaster): led by Denise Boyd

Aging Partners began the process of a food model change October 30, 2017 with good intention due to future facility moves and not wanting to have the cost to prepare/build a new central kitchen.

The new vendor has not met the Aging Partners expectation over the last 3 months. Three formal meetings have been conducted between Aging Partners and Company Kitchen to voice concerns and desire for changes in the meals they are providing. Aging Partners is taking a very serious approach to Company Kitchen to see changes.

We are determined to make the vendor adhere to specifications outlined in the contract as well as what our patrons are seeking when they dine at our meal sites. These expectations will be monitored via quality assurance checks, interviews with diners, an ongoing plate waste study to identify unpopular items, and constant contact with the vendor. Denise feels that we are making progress. Aging Partners continues to work with the vendor to stick to specification laid out in the contract especially concerning food safety, temperature controls, and delivery time.

One ongoing problem is Aging Partners “Meal to Go” pre-packaged cold meal service which folks can take home. We’re rethinking those menus. Also we are putting together a “Plan B”, including budgetary planning, in case Aging Partners decides that the current contract is not meeting the needs and desires of our patrons.

Q&A

- Vern asked if Aging Partners has had conversations with Omaha (ENOA) to see if they have same problems with Company Kitchen. Denise has reached out to Omaha’s Registered Dietitian who has stressed that any food model change need 6 months to shake out. Randy has spoken with colleague in Omaha who was shocked because their clients are happy and numbers are up since switching to Company Kitchen for their meals. Randy suspects that Omaha’s old vendor may have been less quality than Company Kitchen making the change in vendor a step up or maybe not as close to direct service.
- Vern asked if food is prepared in Omaha then transported to Lincoln. Yes it is.
- Harold asked if Company Kitchen is a new vendor for Omaha senior centers (ENOA) too. Yes but they’ve been on 4 months longer.
- Keith asked if there has been a drop off in meal attendance. Yes, 15% during October then an additional 8% in November. There has been a 5% decrease yearly comparison (Dec 2016 compared to Dec 2017).
- Ardee asked if they have been performing at expected standards. No they have not.
- Harold asked if going to schools and teaming up for meals is an option. Denise Boyd has talked to multiple potential vendors including UNL. UNL in particular never returned Denise’s calls regarding the meal contract. LPS has not been approached or SCC.

VI. Virtual Tour of Fairmont Senior Center: led by Brenda Motis

Brenda presented a photo gallery of the Fairmont Senior Center featuring their recent remodel. The kitchen was completely stripped and refurbished with new equipment, cabinets, island and décor. Also the centers ceilings were lowered, new paint, a coffee corner installed, and updated furnishings.

VII. Fillmore County Senior Services: led by Brenda Motis

Brenda spoke on the multiple services offered through Fillmore County Senior Services for older adults including congregate meals, home delivered meals, care management services, information and referrals, caregiver support, nutrition education, health education, home care and respite services, medical equipment, and evidence-based health promotion classes. Exeter Senior Center is completely ran by volunteers. Geneva just hired a new center manager, Victoria Verhage. While Fairmont can boast their home-cooked meals from scratch served every day.

VIII. Health & Fitness Virtual Tour: led by Randy Jones

Randy has moved the tour to a later date, mostly likely March. The Fitness Center will be moving out of 233 building end of February and into new location on J & 9th St sometime the first part of March 2018. Areawide Council will take a physical tour of the new building this Spring.

IX. Quarterly Service Report: led by Randy Jones

This was skipped and will be presented at the February 20, 2018 meeting.

Updated: 2/20/18 sck

X. Saline Country Update: led by Randy Jones

It was discovered that Saline County Aging Services had overextended revenue which has resulted in staffing changes. They will be rehiring for their program manager and will reassess staffing once on board. No misuse or abuse of funds was found, just expenses crept above revenue that had to be addressed. Marty added that the Saline County Board will meet with Tabitha in Crete on January 26, 2018 to discuss home delivered meal issues and preliminary look at applications for manager. Randy thanked Marty and board for help in transition.

This has served as an important lesson to Aging Service Boards to make sure that they are fulfilling their stewardship rolls on financial update reports and to ask questions when concerns arise.

Other Items

Governance work, State Monitoring Report, Service Unit Report, Work on Areawide Plan Update (submitted end of April) are all coming up.

Adjournment: 3:03 PM

Next Meeting: February 20, 2018, location at Lincoln Downtown Senior Center

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Keese
February 20, 2018
Amended by Randall S. Jones

Handouts: Agenda, October 19 2017 Meeting Minutes, and ADRC NE Q&A handout