



Clark County Commission on Aging
1300 Franklin Street, 6th Floor
Vancouver, Washington

MEETING NOTES

Tuesday, July 17, 2018
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Ali Caley, Chuck Green, Amy Gross, Marjorie Ledell, Temple Lentz, Linda O’Leary, Donna Roberge, Larry Smith

Members Absent: Marian Anderson

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Marjorie Ledell opened the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved by the commission unanimously.

Approval of May 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes

The May 15, 2018 meeting minutes were approved by the commission. Chuck Green and Larry Smith abstained from voting.

New Commission members

Marjorie Ledell introduced two new members of the Commission on Aging (COA), Chuck Green and Larry Smith, and welcomed Linda O’Leary to her second term.

2. Public Health Advisory Committee Update

Amy Gross provided an update that she met with David Hudson, the Clark County Healthy Communities Manager. They are planning to collaborate on next year’s COA focus topic, healthy communities.

3. Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AADSWA) Update

Marjorie Ledell read a report from Pat Janik, COA’s previous AADSWA liaison. The meeting was in Goldendale and focused on services available in Klickitat County. The AADSWA staff are currently working on mental health training and depression screening. The next meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2018.

The commission approved Marjorie Ledell and Linda O’Leary to tag-team as the new AADSWA and ADRN representatives for the commission.



For other formats, contact the Clark County ADA Office
Voice 360.397.2322 Relay 711 or 800.833.6388
Fax 360.397.6165
Email ADA@clark.wa.gov



4. Presentation: Senior Drivers and Safety

The physical and cognitive limitations that occur as we age can make driving a car unsafe or even impossible. But driving can be the only way to remain independent for many older adults who live in areas with limited transportation options.

Tom Wilson discussed the characteristics of older drivers and how you can tell when it is time to no longer drive. He also provided information on how to help seniors stay in the driver's seat longer.

Our Aging Population

- Today, one in 7 Americans is over age 65
 - By 2040, one in five Americans will be over 65
 - By 2040, there will be a 145% increase in Clark County Residents 65 and older from 2010
 - By 2040, there will be a 356% increase in Clark County Residents 85 and older from 2010
- [2017 Profile of Older Americans - Administration for Community Living (ACL) annual report] and <https://ofm.wa.gov>

An Older Driver

- What is an older driver?
- We all sort of know, right? – an older person who is driving, right?
- What is an older person, over 50? 55? 65? 70? 80? How to define?

Profile of the Number of Licensed Drivers by Age in Clark County, WA

- The number of drivers starts to taper off over the age of 90.
- There are people in the county over the age 100 with drivers licenses.

Fatal Crash Rates

- If you look at the profile of fatal crashes as a function of age – you'll notice the number is high for new drivers. In a driver's first year of driving, the probability of having a fatal crash is as high as the rest of their driving career.
- Fatal crashes start to increase again as people get older.

Deaths per 1,000 Crashes

- As people get older, they become more frail. Older drivers have fewer crashes but have a poorer survival rate of those crashes.

As People Age

- Typically have more medical conditions
- Take more medications
- Typical vision issues – 99% of driving information comes in from our eyes. If eyes have trouble, that's a problem.
 - Cataracts
 - Macular Degeneration
 - Decreased Depth Perception
 - Decreased light sensitivity
 - Glaucoma
 - Decreased Contrast Sensitivity
 - Decreased Peripheral Vision
 - Decreased Useful Field of View
- Hearing issues
- Reduced flexibility
- Slower reaction time [with 1X at 20 , 60 is 2X and 85 is 3X].

- A slowing down in cognitive processing
- Decreased ability to concentrate
 - Slower information processing
 - Decreased problem solving skills
 - Poorer memory

Aging and Driving

- The aging process is different for everyone
- There is NO correlation between chronological age and driving ability
- There is NO test to predict at what age someone should no longer drive

Motivations to continue driving

- America is an auto-centric culture
- Driving provides greater flexibility, independence and freedom
- How would you feel if you suddenly found out you would not have your car available for: tomorrow, next week, or had to quit driving all together?

Reasons to Reduce Driving – Physical Capabilities

- Not being able to see or hear what is going on outside the car
- Trouble moving foot from gas pedal to brake pedal
- Difficulty turning head when checking blind spot or backing up
- Delayed responses to unexpected situations

Reasons to Reduce Driving - Cognitive Capabilities

- Decrease in confidence while driving
- Needs someone else to tell him or her how to drive
- Getting lost in familiar places
- Becoming easily distracted while driving
- Getting confused at intersections, entrance or exit ramps, or roundabouts
- Inability to adapt to new situations
- Failing to recognize dangerous situations

Reasons to Reduce Driving - Poor Driving Skills

- Not using turn signals correctly or not using them at all
- Having trouble making turns
- Having difficulty moving into or maintaining the correct lane of traffic
- Having trouble judging the space between vehicles in traffic on highway entrance or exit ramps
- Parking inappropriately – different perceptions depending on who looking at the situation
- Hitting curbs when making right turns or backing up
- Unpredictable stopping in traffic
- Driving too slowly; other drivers often honk horns
- Failing to stop at stop signs or stoplights. Are they even aware?
- Failing to notice important activity on the side of the road

Reasons to Reduce Driving - Undesirable Behaviors

- Driving too fast or too slow for road conditions
- Becoming more agitated or irritated when driving. Higher anxiety/nervous.
- Distracted driving

- Impaired driving
- Not following doctor's guidance
- Evidence of warning signs
- Getting scrapes or dents on car, garage or mailbox
- Having frequent close calls
- Being warned or ticketed for moving violations
- Having multiple vehicle crashes. Hard to deny this, indicator of a problem.

Reasons to Reduce Driving - External Advice

- Doctors or pharmacists have advised him or her that certain medications may affect the capacity to drive
- Friends, relatives, doctors or other trusted sources have suggested that driving be limited or that driving ceased
- Friends won't ride with you. The need to drive is so strong that people will discount that kind of input.

Compensation for deficiencies

- Night driving
- Freeway driving
- Driving in congested traffic
- Driving in rain, snow and ice

Self-Evaluation

- The speaker shared a self-evaluation where for each question you can select your answer and then add up your points to see the result.
- The challenges with this type of exercise is that people in denial about their driving don't score very accurately on self-assessment.
- Recommends taking it, setting it aside for 6- or 9- months, then taking it again.
- You could consider having a close friend take it for you.
- If score high enough, it is recommended that you consider having your driving formally assessed.

Costs of Auto Ownership

- Vehicle payment/lease payment
- Fuel
- Insurance
- Routine Maintenance (oil changes, wipers blades, wash)
- Repairs (tune-ups, tires, brakes)
- Vehicle Registration Fees
- Driver License Fees
- Taxes
- Parking
- One suggestion if you are thinking of giving up your car is to take the money from selling the car and a little money each month and put it into an interest gaining account. That account can then be used to pay for transportation when needed in the future.

Helpful New Car Features,

- These features can help with safety, however, they are not a replacement for driving. For instance, a blind spot warning system is a good double-check, but you still need to look. Also, people are often confused by back-up cameras because they don't help you

know what to do when backing up. You lose some depth perception by looking at the camera instead of turning your head

- New car features include:
 - More air bags
 - Adjustable pedals
 - Crash Warning Systems
 - Lane Departure Warning
 - Blind Spot Warning
 - Electronic Stability Control
 - Drowsy driving alerts
 - Tilting steering wheel
 - Back-up Cameras
 - Forward Collision Warning
 - Lane Change Warning
 - Adaptive Cruise Control
 - Navigation Systems

“The Talk” - www.aarp.org/weneedtotalk

- AARP offers a free online seminar called *We Need to Talk* that will help you determine how to assess your loved ones’ driving skills and provides tools to help you have this important conversation.
 - Module 1: The Meaning of Driving – 26 minutes
 - Module 2: Observing Driving Skills - 19 minutes
 - Module 3: Planning Conversations – 30 minutes
- Since no correlation between age and driving, it’s about abilities and capabilities.
- The discussion requires care.

Driving Evaluations - Occupational Therapist Driving Rehabilitation Specialists

- Occupational Therapist Driving Rehabilitation Specialists (OT-DRSs) can provide clinical evaluations
- Cost varies between programs and according to the extent of services provided.
- Typically \$200 to \$400+ for a full assessment, plus \$100 an hour for rehabilitation.
- Varies for adaptive equipment, if required. Examples of adaptive equipment include spinner knobs, left foot accelerators, hand controls, reduced-effort steering systems and wheelchair lifts.

Driving Evaluations - Driving Skills Evaluator (DSE)

- Driving skills evaluators (DSEs) conduct evaluations to help you identify any weaknesses in driving skills and determine if supplemental training can further reduce driving risk.
- DSEs are trained, licensed and certified by states to offer driver training
- Cost varies between programs and according to the extent of services provided.
- Approximately \$100 to \$200.
- Supplemental training sessions cost approximately \$75 to \$150 per hour, and overall costs vary, depending on the amount of training conducted.
- These evaluations typically take place at a driving school. The evaluators do not have to report to the state if individual doesn’t do well, they can work with that person.

Senior Transportation Information

- www.thehartford.com/lifetime -
- www.aarp.org/drc [Driving Resource Center] – includes videos with new types of equipment available in cars and show what it does and how it works
- www.SeniorDriving.aaa.com
- C-Tran – resource for helping in area
- There are other resources in the area that help with transportation if you do not ride

What Can be Done

- Driving Refresher Classes – AARP 6-hour defensive class
- Driving Evaluations
 - Driver Training Schools
 - AOTA Driver Rehabilitation Specialists
 - Bureau of Licensing – can retake test, but if don't do well, will lose license
- Non-Freeway Routes
- Convenient Van/Bus Service
- Shopping Clubs
- VillagesNW Volunteers
- Uber/Lyft Training
- Bus Use Training
- Ride Sharing
- Opportunities to Exercise
- Walking Paths
- Walking Opportunities, i.e. Senior Strolls, a City of Portland neighborhood walking initiative where seniors can take 1-2.5 mile walk with a guide.
- Bike Paths
- Social Opportunities

Clark County AARP Smart Driver™ - Class Sites

VANCOUVER

- Clark County Administration Building, 1308 Franklin
- Evergreen Community School, 13501 NE 28th Street [9/128]
- Clark County Auto License Department, 1408 Franklin
- Fairway Village, 15509 SE Fernwood Drive
- Legacy Salmon Creek Hospital, 2211 NE 139th Street
- The Quarry at Columbia Teck Center, 415 SE 177th Ave [4/60]
- Forty & Eight Chateau, 7607 NE 26th Ave
- Van Mall Retirement Center, 7808 NE 5^{1st} Street

RIDGEFIELD

- Clark County Public Safety Complex, 505 NW 179th St [3/20]

Website to find an AARP driver class - www.aarp.org/findacourse

Conclusion

- Men tend to drive 6 years longer than they should.
- Women tend to drive 10 years longer than they should.
- We need to find ways to encourage appropriate driving retirement time.

Questions and comments from COA members with speaker's responses:

Comment: how much does clear signage and lane striping play? **Response:** it's a mixed bag. If there are a lot of signs, you need to read a lot and can lose your ability to pay attention. It is important to have signs, especially with new ways of driving, i.e. roundabout. Small signs are hard to navigate. Signage is important.

Comment: I appreciated the list of how cars are being made more safe, but there are so many things that are now available. Are there any new safety features that are critically important or most important to have in a new car? **Response:** AARP launched a 90-minute workshop called

smart driver tech focused on 9 options. All the driving features are good news and bad news. For instance, in the case of the Uber driver in Phoenix who hit the bicyclist crossing the street, the driver was bored because the car was doing most of the work and was not paying attention to the road. The new features are aids to driving, but are not yet fully autonomous. The best feature for an individual depends on the individual's challenges. When shopping for a car, seniors need to look for features that will help them when they're driving. With that said, all cars should have: back-up cameras, the auto emergency stopping function, and lane-centering technology.

Comment: I like that my Subaru talks to me while I'm driving.

Comment: regarding the number of licensed drivers by age, I imagine there are a lot of older drivers who may not be licensed and still drive. **Response:** I haven't seen that info. The Washington state patrol may have numbers on the people they stop and how many don't have valid licenses. I think this happens across ages due to the costs and requirements associated with having a license.

Comment: regarding the driving evaluation, are any of them covered by Medicare? **Response:** I believe they are out of pocket. I know that Providence has a program if you lose your license and need to participate in a program to get it back. However, a doctor's note is required to participate.

Comment: do other countries put restrictions on the senior population when it comes to driving? **Response:** I'm not sure but I know England has different restrictions for younger driving. There have been discussions on requiring seniors to retake tests at a certain age, but that has been considered discriminatory since people's challenges occur at different ages. So, to avoid this challenge, nobody is retested.

Comment: could you talk about driving too slowly? **Response:** as people get older, their reactions slow down, and they may get nervous when they get onto a road and have to go above a certain speed. Driving too slow on a highway can create a hazard. This is especially challenging when a highway is the only way to get from point A to point B. On a highway, you need to get up to speed as quickly as possible. The Oregon DMV has an option where if you see someone who does something that indicates they shouldn't be driving, the DMV will have them come in for a test. A lot of people find a way to get their license back, such as going through driver training, etc. However, we also know that not having a license doesn't mean a person won't drive. Law enforcement is also able to provide a ticket if someone is driving too slow.

Comment: are there standards for size and visibility of road size signage and indicators?

Response: The national highway safety people have a compendium of recommendations, but each state does their own thing. For example, in Oregon, you can't make a U-turn unless there's a sign that says a U-turn is ok. In CA, you can make a U-turn unless there is a sign that says "No U-Turn." For the most part, seniors drive in local area where they know the rules.

Other COA member comment: every state has adopted what is essentially the traffic engineer's bible, and each state has some nuances. Overall, there has been an increase in the size of lettering on signs and the walk/don't walk time at intersections has increased. There are no national standard regulations for street name signs. Some jurisdictions, however, do have street name size standards. These vary a lot by jurisdiction, and it is something we could weigh in on in Clark County.

Questions and comments from the audience with speaker's responses: none.

5. New Business, Updates and Announcements:

- The August speaker will be Jennifer Dill who will be talking about active transportation.
- 2019 Focus – the commission adopted healthy communities as its focus topic for next year.
- Chair and Vice Chair elections - Temple Lentz was elected as Chair. Ali Caley was elected as Vice Chair.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 pm.

The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership and creates community engagement in addressing the needs and opportunities of aging.

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