



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

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Gary Beagle, Chuck Frayer, Patti Gray, Bob Holdridge, Kathy McLaughlin, Lisa Rasmussen, Randy Scheel, Kiersten Ware, Karen Woll

Community Partner Attendees: Klaus Micheel, David Kelly, Walt Gordon

Staff: Colete Anderson, Jacqui Kamp, Mary Beth O'Donnell

Guest: Gail Haskett, State Council on Aging

Welcome and Call to Order

- Minutes from 12/19/12 were unanimously approved as submitted.
- Chairperson's report:
 - Kiersten and others attended the farewell for Commissioner Boldt on December 19th. Kiersten read a letter from the COA expressing gratitude for the work Commission Boldt did to initiate and develop the planning efforts in Clark County for the aging population.
 - An article appeared in the January 2013 publication of Governing magazine by Jonathan Waters titled "Poverty Among Seniors Getting Harder to Ignore". The COA, Commissioner Boldt and Clark County are cited in the article. It has been circulated to the COA and is available to others by request.
 - Through Bill Barron, Kiersten connected with Pat Le Croix of the Clark County Arts Commission. They are interested in the work of the COA with the possibility of some of their members serving on COA committees.
 - A comment box is now available at the back of the room for those who have to leave early prior to the public comment period.

Work Committee Updates

- Communication:
 - Setting up speaker's bureau and getting presentation ready for trial runs. Will present to COA in February.
 - Events committee preparing for the 50+ Expo. Map of the room indicating location of the COA table was distributed. More information to follow closer to the date.
 - Facebook and County website reconfiguration in process.

- Transportation:
 - Three key issues: neighborhood design; complete streets and trails; older driver safety. Chuck is a member of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and will do a presentation at their meeting next Tuesday regarding sidewalks and what the Transportation committee is working on. Sidewalks are a key point in the Bike and Ped plan and important to the senior community.
- Housing:
 - Focusing on shared housing, a feasible program that could get started soon in Clark County. Bob has contacted agencies in Portland to see what their interest might be in sponsoring an effort here. He's also talked with members of a task force that have worked on this subject as well as a council for the homeless. He'd like to get them together again and begin to work on crafting a model/design for a shared housing program. This option is the least expensive plan that can be developed. They hope to have it ready to turn out in a year's time.
- Healthy Communities:
 - No meeting this past month. First weatherization open house for Burton Ridge, Forest Ridge and Marrion neighborhoods tomorrow night at Ogden Elementary school, 5:00–7:00pm.
- Benchmark:
 - Good meeting this month with reps from SWAAD, PSU and WSUV. Preliminary work in process on template for COA annual report. Looking at demographics and what will be changed by all the work that the commission is doing. Talked about data sources, organization of data, who would house the data, funding sources, etc.
 - Three additional people to be invited to the table in the spring for discussion.
 - Looking at formatting report in 10 year increments with the first report possibly going back to 1990 to start with. Challenge is to find county-specific numbers.
 - Next meeting February 6.
- Supportive Services:
 - Committee initial focus is on TeleHealth. Decided a forum would be a good idea. SWAAD has offered to help. First step will be a professional meeting with major stakeholders including technology vendors, government and local agencies, healthcare providers, and relevant consumer groups. In planning stages right now.
 - Planning to do a vision exercise which will lead to creation of a work plan. Randy is also developing a power point presentation to be used as they go out to various audiences to explain what TeleHealth is and what its relationship is to the commission.
 - Next meeting January 24.
- Community Engagement:
 - Focused on keeping people involved in the community with meaningful relationships. Time banking idea being worked on. People do volunteer work and bank their hours into a system that can be drawn from when they need services in return. Currently looking at communities with established time banking systems as examples.

Open Issues

- January and February calendar distributed indicating COA presence in the community. Blank calendar posted on the wall for any additions, or give Colete updates.
- Healthy Communities maps have been posted to the FTP site.
- Comment box in back of room for those leaving early.
- Policy: 2.0 Communication – Lisa, Colete and Jacqui worked on this. Group will take time to review and make a decision next month.
Action: Group review and be prepared to finalize policy at February meeting.

Presentation – State Council on Aging by Representative Gail Haskett

- SCOA members are appointed by the Governor and Area Agency on Aging Advisory Councils. Charged with advising the Governor, DSHS Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of ADSA. They represent local communities and reach all corners of the state. Gail represents Clark County. Mission is to educate and advocate on social, health and economic services and potentialities of older adults for current and future generations.
- Clark County is very innovative in terms of what is going on across the state. Some staff and COA members gave a presentation to the Washington State Council on Aging (SCOA) a few months ago on the Aging Readiness Plan. As a result, some of the goals of Clark County are being incorporated at the state level.
- Video shown “Coming of Age in Aging America”.
 - Summary: People are living longer and having fewer babies. There are a larger number of people over the age of 60 than under the age of 15. There is a permanent, major shift in the age of the population that will continue to rise with the baby boomers through the GenX’ers and Millennials. This shift will transform society – how and how long we work, how and where we live, how we organize our families, medical care, economic and political lives. Demographically speaking, people today are very different than those of 1935 when average life expectancy was 65. Today we can expect to live about 15 years beyond average retirement age. Our institutions, economies, policies, social security, Medicare, communities, work – all were designed for the way things were 50 years ago. Change is required in the way we design and legislate. The first step is to begin to envision new models, new ways of being, new lives.
- Legislative priorities 2013:
 - Support balanced approach that includes strategies to increase revenue
 - Support for the Affordable Care Act initiatives that are cost effective and driven by shared core values
 - Protect most vulnerable seniors and citizens with disabilities. Prioritize funding to protect those receiving services.
 - Protect funding that helps seniors remain in their home or community
 - No more cuts to State Senior Citizens Services Act
 - Support family caregiver programs
 - Protect WA’s investment in home and community services by maintaining and protecting current cost effective long-term care infrastructure

- Gail hopes to bring forward to the State Council all issues and challenges related to aging that citizens think need to be addressed at the state level. It's time to take the intergenerational approach and think outside the box.
- Gail will attend COA meetings as much as possible to gather ideas and also attend forums across Western Washington. She will send meeting summaries to anyone interested and offered her email to contact her.
- Gail will have periodic coffee klatches in the community (advertised ahead of time) to discuss ideas on how to solve some of the problems.
- Comments/Questions:
 - Gail is available to speak to support groups in the community.
 - Revenue situation bleak now, but will be worse in 5-10 years. Important for public to be aware of what's coming, set the groundwork now. New tax initiative in the state requiring 2/3 vote on any tax increase complicates things. Discussion now on cutting tax breaks for corporations or not allowing sales tax break for Oregon residents. These can hurt the economy significantly. It's a multi-faceted problem. We need to pull the generations together and think outside the box.
 - Remember there's nothing wrong with more people getting old. It's a challenge, but also an opportunity to find out and think about how to organize things and live together for the next 20-30 years. We need a positive approach, it's doable and exciting.
 - Not everybody over 65 is poor. Need to consider the aging needs of the entire socio-economic spread. Needs may be more critical for those of less means, but everyone has aging needs regardless.
 - There is a treasure trove of skill and experience in the retired community.
 - Universal design approach is good example of thinking outside the box. Simple things like changing code for doorway openings to 36" would not cost anything. These kinds of things will benefit generations in the future.
 - Coffee klatches are a good idea. Suggest that the COA attend these to talk about what Clark County needs and gain perspective. Gail would like to see these held in grade schools to expose and educate young people about the aging issue. Many don't even know any older people. She would like to see the COA be a part of that.

New Business

- Website configuration: County website being revamped to focus on COA projects. Speaker's bureau will have a page; people will be able to schedule a speaker presentation. Upcoming events will be listed to keep the public informed and allow them to choose what they want to participate in. Preview of website ready to share at the February meeting.
- Website will be a good tool for working groups to follow each other's progress. Gail could provide links to the coffee klatches.
- Planning to have a trial run of Speaker's bureau presentation at SWEAP meeting in the coming weeks. Presentation for COA will be at February's meeting.

Public Comment

- Steve Hamaker commented on the Affordability Care Act and its relationship to the large number of qualified seniors it will impact. He would like to see an effort by the COA to hold forums in a venue like the public library to soft pedal the change that is coming, give the information in a gentler way.
- Based on a survey done at the County fairgrounds, people do not want to relate to aging, they're in denial. The biggest challenge is how to make people aware before it hits them square in the face.
- Charlie Mitchell, Attorney NW Justice Project: Has done work on Washington's interpretation of Federal health reform and could speak to the COA if interested.
- Housing committee is considering an open house program to talk to baby boomers and the young people about what a house will look like when they're 80 years old. Education is what we're all thinking about.
- Question: has the COA done any events to invite the community in to make them aware of what they're doing?
 - Dave Kelly: For the past two years, County staff and the Aging Readiness Task Force held meetings in the community; doing a great job in getting public input. Klaus has had two major forums in 2009–2010 about aging issues. Challenge is to think prospectively; keep the interest level going in the community.
 - Lisa, Communication work group, starting this month to go out to city councils to inform and invite them to the meetings; hope to have a presence at the fair again.
 - The COA is only in its 7th month and working on what the outreach and topic will be for each different work group. Every three years the COA is required to report their progress to the community. Working towards having an informative presentation topic at each COA meeting from now forward.
 - Members have been working with County planners over the past year going through the building codes and have given recommendations in terms of being adaptable, etc. There are specific things that have happened because of this commission and Community Planning. Kudos to Clark County.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.