



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

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 19, 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, Karin Woll

Community Partners: Dave Kelly, Klaus Micheel

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

Welcome and Call to Order

- Gary Beagle opened the meeting at 4:30. The meeting agenda was approved. Minutes from October 15 were unanimously approved as submitted.
- Chair report: Gary thanked Randy Scheel for a successful Telehealth conference. Gary briefly touched on status of the subcommittees which will be individually reported on by the chairs. At next month's CoA meeting the speaker will be Gail Haskett, chair of Washington Council on Aging, presenting on the Governor's Summit on Aging which she will attend.

Work Committee Updates

- Telehealth: Now is the time to capitalize on the momentum from the conference. Ideas are being developed by the work committee and are welcomed from anyone. NW Telehealth Association and Telehealth Alliance of Oregon, two major players in the conference, will speak at a CoA meeting in the future to add to our understanding of its concept. A roundtable with clinicians and physicians in the area is in the planning stages in order to facilitate dialogue with the CoA, share plans, and discuss collaborative efforts for the future. There will be a significant, national telehealth conference in Portland in March 2014, providing an opportunity to learn more and also bring insights and knowledge back to this community. Randy's organization has started to work on a pilot project with Kaiser Permanente to serve their members that he serves. At the end of the year they will review and evaluate how that's going and he'll report back.
- Timebanking is moving forward, continuing to look at models across the country and in Europe and putting together a plan. They are presenting to small neighborhood and church groups to determine what interest there is in this community and who would support it. Kathy is researching the possibility of getting a person from Vista (Volunteer in Service to America) who could put the program together. There is an application

process and a cost associated for the person, about \$5000 for 40 hours a week for a year. We have commitments within the committee and community members that will probably cover the cost independent of the CoA. Hoping to move forward and get something in place by end of 2014.

- Universal Green Design: work committee is focusing on two elements: communication (aging in place, how to reach out to neighborhoods and others); products (what are the specs, what is UGD). Need to meet with the builders and agencies that provide communication for building with UGB. One issue is to raise awareness of UGD with the younger people and get them to think ahead about what future needs in the home might be such as ramps, bathrooms, kitchens, etc.
- Housing: Shared housing program coming along well. Portland group working on business plan details and will be here in February to speak. Putting ideas on paper for a community awareness/education program. The library has scheduled dates in March for several presentations about shared housing.

Presentation

Leslie Foren, Executive Director of Elders in Action, Portland OR

Organization started in 1968 as a government agency, formerly known as Portland Multnomah Commission on Aging. The mission is to ensure a vibrant community through active involvement of older adults. Their charge in the beginning was to be a federally mandated, advisory committee to the city and county. As things grew, in 1997 they spun off and became a 501c traditional non-profit and changed the name, with a board of directors, executive director, and six full time, two part time staff and an annual budget over \$1.5M. They receive a large portion from city and county contracts and the Dept. of Justice (75%), the rest from small grants, individual and corporate donations, and program fees. There are also 150 volunteers to support the programs. They also serve Clackamas and Washington counties, except for the commission, which only serves Multnomah County and City of Portland.

Four main program areas: **Personal advocate**, one on one advocacy, 80 volunteers work individually with cases. Offer help navigating a system like SSA, help problem solve and find solutions for short term issues. **Speakers bureau**, talk to groups about who they are, healthy and active aging, driven by special grants, work special events like senior expo or health fair at a hospital. **Age-friendly business certification**, started in 1993 by volunteers who wanted to recognize businesses and help educate them on how to better serve the elder population. There are about 250 businesses in the program, renews on an annual basis. This is one program that's being talked about for expansion into Clark County. Details to work out are how to engage volunteers and how can they work with us to engage the community. **Elders in Action Commission**, advisory role to city and county.

Services: To engage older adults in their community, accomplished through four program areas. The Commission is the macro, the main advocates to make sure changes are made whether that be in policy, elected officials, or systematic. Currently they're working with Tri-

Met, giving input on the “honored citizen” fare and the impact to elders if it were raised, or if the number of bus stops were reduced. Most of their work is focused at local level.

The personal advocacy program is heart of organization, the biggest request for service. They are one-on-one advocates, focusing on housing, health care, crime and elder abuse. It’s not a service available in Vancouver. 60% of the calls are referrals from government workers or case managers who have an overburdened case load. Advocates, for example, can help a person problem solve their medical bills or insurance questions. Last year they helped 2,200 people and recouped \$48,000 in scams and fraud.

The speakers’ bureau has many partnerships to make sure information is getting out into the community. Knowledge is power and information helps make better decisions. They also recruit volunteers when out there.

Age-friendly badge for business partners: Was started in ‘93, volunteers work individually with businesses, can be either certified or take a pledge. They offer aging awareness training for staff on how to deal with elders who may have hearing or vision loss for example. Over 200 certifications issued last year and 14 new businesses and is seeing tremendous growth. Being age-friendly speaks to other age groups besides elders, such as people with baby strollers. It’s not an endorsement but helps people make informed decisions. Volunteers go in and look at the establishment’s customer service, telephone reception, websites, etc. to make sure they comply. The certification fee is now annual.

They have a business directory which is available online as printing has become too expensive. For those without web access, a printed copy is available.

The Commission is a citizen advisory group of 31 members (currently 26) appointed by the city (mayor), and county chair. Members serve a 3 year term and represent all quadrants of the city. The majority are older adults, average age 62. A 24-hour help line is one of their successes, offering information about senior services such as abuse, Meals on Wheels, how to apply for Medicaid, etc. They are non-partisan, non-profit, have their own by-laws, and chair. They are able to take a position on a ballot measure but not on politicians. This allows more freedom with advocacy as they can speak out without feeling the restriction of the city or county officials.

Program – Days of Service: Last year saw a 19% increase in volunteerism and 22% increase in need for service. They were able to meet the need with volunteers, many being displaced workers, older adults that still have much to offer. A 3 year commitment to the commission may be too much for some people, so they developed “EAT” (Encore Action Teams). A service learning model was used similar to that used in high schools and colleges which is bringing people together with a formalized learning opportunity followed by days of service. The goal is to get volunteers engaged in using their talent in an organization where they can give back to the community. They try to match the need with the volunteer. It’s not a crisis type of service. Those are referred to the appropriate agency.

Recently they partnered with Portland Institute on Aging, World Health Organization and City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability and Metro. The City Council adopted the Age Friendly Cities Action Plan. It is divided into categories similar to Clark County's Aging Readiness Plan. The city is taking it seriously and made a commitment to work with them to meet milestones and plan for an age-friendly city to meet the needs of this growing demographic. The effort is being led by Institute on Aging and World Health Organization. The council members could relate to the subject on a personal level. Aging is non-partisan, we're all doing it and we all know someone who is doing it.

Open Issues

- Treasurer Policy and Procedures: Kathy made a motion to approve the document as presented. Lisa seconded, all approved.
- Work plan and budget: each subcommittee to give their budget to Kiersten and she will develop the overall budget, effective today through May 2014. A draft will be ready next month.

Public Comment

- Elders in Action is a wonderful and rewarding organization. Hope to see some of the programs incorporated into what is being done in Clark County.

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.