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Meeting Notes

Tues., Jan. 16, 2018

4:30 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

**Members Present:** Marjorie Ledell, Ali Caley, Donna Roberge, Linda O’Leary, Temple Lentz, Pat Janik, and Amy Gross

**Members Absent:** Marian Anderson and Chuck Frayer

**BOCC Present:** Marc Boldt, Jeanne Stewart, Eileen Quiring, Julie Olson, and John Blom

**1. Welcome and Call to Order:**

Marjorie Ledell welcomed the Clark County Council and introductions were made. The agenda was unanimously approved by the commission. The Nov 14, 2017 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

**2. Presentation: 2017 Annual Report**

Marjorie Ledell presented the Annual Report of the Commission on Aging including the commission’s 2017 focus on Supportive Services, and their major findings and recommendations for policy direction.

**Discussion focused around the following topics:**

**Depression and suicide:** One of the objectives of Early Adopter program is how to get primary care involved in mental health. The statistics in the COA Annual Report on high suicide rates among seniors is a concern.

COA would like to discuss a possible collaboration with the Public Health Advisory Council to develop a campaign to raise awareness of the suicide problem among the elderly and youth.

**Caregiver Support:** The Area Agency on Aging and Disability of Southwest Washington (AAADSW) assesses the caregiver to determine their needs and build a program of support, respite, and education around each caregiver. Washington State has a transformation program which expands support to caregivers. To get the word out about this program, AADSWA holds community events, partnerships with health organizations and the COA, and an aging disability resource network.

The Executive Director of AAADSW thanked the COA and commented that the existence of the COA challenges AAADSW to provide better services to the community.

**Elder Justice:** How can laws be enhanced to prevent elder abuse? Some of the elder abuse that takes place doesn’t meet the threshold of legal definitions of abuse. These cases are difficult to prosecute because it can often be between family members and there can be grey areas.

The council recommends the COA to contact the Sheriff, who has the authority to hire 3 more deputies than are currently budgeted. Councilor Quiring who sits on the Elder Justice Team Board volunteered to bring the recommendation to the board and sheriff.

Judge Wollert, retired, who currently sits on the Friends of the Elder Justice Center stated that abuse and neglect also occurs to vulnerable adults, not just seniors. Only one in 44 cases of elder financial abuse was reported. How can we do better about educating our community about this issue?

**Smaller Facilities for Senior Living:** A council member commented that tangible results that came out of the COA Housing Summit were the code changes that are being made to Clark County Code on cottage housing and accessory dwelling units. What are specific changes that Clark County can make to respond to the Supportive Services recommendations? The chair of the COA replied that smaller facilities for senior living are essential. Support to developers to respond to this recommendation is important. To provide for the needs of seniors, there is an economy of scale in larger facilities, but it is not as comfortable for individuals. Providing smaller facilities for senior living is recommended and the county needs to find ways to make it more affordable and encourage developers and providers to pursue this. Also, for the council to be aware of the issues and having the opportunity to advocate for these recommendations can be impactful.

**3. Announcements:**

The Commission on Aging plans to focus on Transportation in 2018 with the first speaker of that series scheduled for February 20, 2018.

**4. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm**

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