

**Aging Advisory Council Meeting  
October 27, 2015  
Minutes**

Rev. Dees opened the meeting by telling everyone there are packets at the table for all to review. Two jokes were told; Rev. Dees explained that we are going to put together a joke book to raise some money to be used for helping those on the waiting list.

Teresa Townsend, CRC's Administrative Assistant told the council members that there an Advisory Council Member Roster at each place at the table and asked members to make corrections to any items that are not correct or need updating.

Senator Jack Hill spoke for a few minutes. Being a senior citizen himself, he has a particular interest in our issues. He said he would readily admit that on both the State and Federal levels, we have gone through some tough times over the last 10 years or so. He also admitted that our programs were under-funded and he hopes that with every year, we can add new funding back to the most important program that is under-funding. The advisory committee and CRC staff can help them know where the funding is needed most. We can help keep seniors at home as they get older by having programs such as Meals on Wheels. He wants us to know that he is certainly on our side and as time goes by and there is new funding available, they are going to be trying to put the money in the right places. He wants us to help him help us by prioritizing programs.

Senator Hill then allowed council members to ask questions. He distributed pens that had his name and email address on them. He does answer his own emails. One council member asked if the junction as a whole was supportive of multi-year funding. The Senator explained that he is Chairman of the Budget writing committee in the Senate. The Governor presents the budget and the Legislature go by his revenue estimate and have to work with it. There are limited finite resources each year. For the Legislature to add to one program, they have to take away from another. He said 58% of everything they spend is on education, so that puts pressure on the rest of the resources. He feels the Legislature is supportive. The appropriations process goes through a committee process on both sides and the more advocacies you have from the membership up, the better chances there are for funds to be added. There is competition for every dollar and there are limited resources. When Federal funding is cut back on programs, they try to put new State funding to the program(s) to make up for the cut(s).

Mrs. Collier said she had been reading his articles in the newspaper about revenues coming back from the 2007-2008 drop. She asked what percentage he thinks we are back from that time period. The Senator said they just passed revenue last year from pre-recession level. We just came back last year to the point we were before the recession, but we gained 400,000 in population, 100,000 school kids and 350,000 Medicaid recipients. They are actually doing a lot more with the same amount of money as before the recession. We have recovered from the recession and are a little better than we were before the recession began.

Dionne Lovett, Director of Aging Services, AAA, thanked Senator Hill and told him she felt like he had been a friend to the aging population. She explained that she works closely with the Co-Age committee. Dionne and Allen met with Senator Hill last year. She knows that a lot of the Co-Age membership flowed through the Capitol. As tax revenues are up, we are hoping advocates come to the Capitol and advocate for more resources for senior services. Senator Hill said that the number of seniors over the age of 65 doubled in the last ten years. As the population grows, the need grows.

The minutes from last minute were approved. Dionne recognized Dr. Becky Dawson as a new member of our Aging Advisory Council. Dionne discussed the fund raising activities, specifically the golf tournament to be held on November 4, 2015 at the King and Prince Golf Course on St. Simons Island. This will be the second year we have held this event. The proceeds from the golf tournament will go towards the home delivered meals programs. Dionne encouraged those who wanted to play golf to sign up and to mention to friends and family. We are also asking for sponsors; the sponsorship will carry on after the golf tournament. Dionne reminded council members and guests that Rev. Dees has charged us with raising funds of \$50,000 within a year's time to help those on the waiting lists.

Rev. Dees composed a letter regarding the fundraising drive and it was mailed to the Council members prior to this meeting. He asked the members to vote on approval of this letter; members approved the letter. He said he is depending on us to make copies of this letter and mail to friends and "foes."

Dionne addressed the next item on the Agenda which was the food drive. We are concentrating on 4 counties this year: Camden, Glynn, McIntosh and Long. In Camden County, we are partnering with Heartland Hospice. The food drive is to help those individuals who are on our home delivered meals waiting list. We are still working with Glynn County to obtain a partnering agency. In McIntosh County, we are partnering with Pastor Jerome Elzie. In Long County we are partnering with A New Beginning Church. Our role at the AAA is to coordinate the overall coordination; we purchase a frozen turkey for everyone that receives a food basket.

Tori Foisy is heading up the food drive and she spoke for a few minutes. She said that in Camden County we are serving 100 seniors; in Glynn County – 100; McIntosh 25 and Long 34. A New Beginning Church in Long County is not only going to deliver food to those seniors in November but also every month after.

The AAA is serving about 2000 people but we have about 1700 people waiting for services.

The next item on the Agenda was Co-Age meeting. At these meetings advocates come together and discuss the Co-Age issues. The next meeting is 2 days after the Advisory Council meeting. In July we voted on the issues we wanted the Co-Age to advocate for at the state level. We voted on the following issues: the budget issue – wanting more dollars for HCBS services (there are over 16,000 people still on the waiting list in Georgia) and Transition services (money to help keep individuals at home – moving them from nursing homes back to the community). Dionne mentioned that Gavin was at our meeting today. He is a contracted Options Counselor who works with individuals in the nursing home and tells them about the ADRC/AAA and initiates the process to move those individuals out of the nursing home.

The other issue is the Elder Abuse State Registry. The way the issue was written up in the past, a person could get on this registry but the abuse accusation not be substantiated. As the bill is processed, the wording may be changed. We want to protect our seniors, but also protect those who may be falsely accused. The oral health bill would allow dental hygienists to serve elders (without the presence of a Dentist) with routine dental care, which will save money. Many seniors now are not getting the dental care they need, particularly in nursing home settings. A carry-over issue from last year is the Family Care Act. For those companies that provide their employees sick leave, this issue is asking that sick leave be expanded to including parents.

Public Hearings – in the distributed handouts, there is a flyer that lists the 4 public hearings that have been scheduled across the region. This is the beginning of our 4 year planning cycle. Every year, the AAA holds public hearings/information forums. These public hearings have been advertised in all local newspapers and have been sent to our contacts via Constant Contact. The AAA completes a region-wide needs assessment each year. Dionne invited council members to attend these hearings and invite others. The hearings only last a couple of hours and the feedback is what we want. We would like to know whether the community feels that we are doing enough or not enough, or if we should do something differently. We need to check when we get back to the office that our Senior Centers received information about our public hearings. The public hearings are open to the public – individuals, caregivers and providers. Public hearings have been announced via newspapers, Constant Contact and word of mouth.

Seniors Day in Atlanta – some of the Advisory Council would like to take a bus like they did 5 or 6 years ago. The coordination of the project is the biggest problem – not having the resources to coordinate it due to shortness of staff. This would be a 6-month process for the senior centers to coordinate the trip for their seniors. We no longer have a staff position to coordinate this trip. Reduced budgets and staff make this kind of trip hard to coordinate unless we had a volunteer. Dionne asked for a show of hands for those that would like to go to Seniors Day, make a point, and meet with your representative(s). She said she will do everything she can to reimburse participants and make sure they get there, but she is making no promises. There were 6 people that raised their hands who agreed they would not only go to Seniors Day, but actually make a point and meet with representatives. The **Be There for Seniors Rally** is on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Request for Proposals (RFP) – these were released on October 26, 2015 via Constant Contact and newspapers. Handouts for Aging Advisory Council members were distributed prior to the meeting. Every 4 years we put out RFPs for bids. When the RFPs come in, the AAA Review Team reviews them. Dionne explained that if anyone was interested in helping to review these, there is a scoring system that is explained in the distributed paperwork. Reviewers are not required to meet as a team and can review individually. As a reviewer, each one will receive a copy of the RFPs that come in. There are RFPs for the following services: Meals, Adult Day Care, In-home Services, GA Cares, Community Care Services Program, Elderly Legal Assistance, and Money Follows the Person. We are seeking qualified service providers for each of those 7 services. A Bidders' Conference is scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and will be held at the CRC office in Darien. A Schedule of Events is included in the RFPs so every bidder knows when RFPs were released, when the Bidders' Conference is, and other important dates and

deadlines. Proposals are due December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Those interested in reviewing proposals will hear from Dionne 1-2 weeks after the deadline and she will deliver the proposals to them to review.

Rev. Dees stressed to Advisory Council members that each of them were chosen by County Commissioners or Mayors and they should call their office and get scheduled to be on an Agenda for a Commission meeting(s) or City Council meeting. When you go to a meeting, let them know who you are and what you are about, take a copy/copies of the letter from him regarding the \$50,000 fund raising and impress upon them that you are there representing the City/County and you need their support to provide these important services in our area. At the previous Council meeting, Rev. Dees gave everyone a copy of the Elders Abuse Act. He asked that council members take a copy of this to the City/County meetings also and impress upon them that a law is no better than the enforcement of a law. Laws on paper need to be enforced. There are too many senior citizens getting beaten up, having money stolen from them, and people taking advantage of them (often members of their family).

Rev. Dees asked Allen Burns, CRC's Executive Director, when he expected the Annual Reports to be ready. Allen explained that we were waiting to receive one component/section of the report and then it should be finished by the end of November or before. Printing of the reports usually takes less than 30 days (approximately 10-15 business days). Allen takes some of these annual reports and meets with each of the Commissioners in December. Rev. Dees requested that each council member not only receive a personal copy of the Annual Report (as they usually do), but also obtain about 5 extra copies per council member to be distributed to friends/acquaintances. The CRC ordered 650 last year and had about 100 extras that were not distributed. Dionne suggested that we not sell the report/calendars but ask for a donation to go toward the cost (\$5.00 - \$10.00 each).

Rev. Dees mentioned that if anyone had jokes they wanted to include in the joke book, mail them to Dionne Lovett at the AAA and she will give to Pam Rogers, AAA's Contracts Administrator. Pam will be using volunteers/students to put a joke book together in an effort to raise money to help those on the waiting lists.

Allen mentioned that the next scheduled CRC Council meeting is on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015. One of the primary topics will be finance. This is a good time of the year to individually talk to members of your delegation at the State level. He also stressed that if anyone plans to go to Atlanta for Senior Day to wear comfortable shoes because there is a lot of required walking between building and many steps/stairs.

The meeting was adjourned and a blessing of the food was offered.