

MICHIGAN COMMISSION ON SERVICES TO THE AGING

Office of Services to the Aging
7109 West Saginaw Hwy., Room 2D Lansing
December 14, 2007

Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Kennedy called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and reiterated the role of the Commission, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairperson Kennedy thanked the State Advisory Council for their dedication and perseverance in light of the state's on-going financial difficulties.

ROLL CALL

The roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Owen Bieber, Cheryl Bollinger, Mary Gardner, Rose Gill, Jerutha Kennedy, Chun-Keung Leung, Donald Newport, Anthony Pawelski, Thomas Rau, Amne Talab, Ramesh Verma, William Walters IV, Janice Wilson, and James Wright

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Excused)

None

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Un-excused)

None

OSA STAF PRESENT

Bonnie Graham, Cindy Albrecht, Sharon Gire, Dan Doezema, Sherri King, Cherie Mollison, Sarah Slocum, and Holliace Spencer

VISITORS/GUEST PRESENT

Ginny Wood-Bailey

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Walters made the motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Wright seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commissioner Wright made the motion to approve the minutes from the October 19, 2007, meeting. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

INFORMATION FROM INDIVIDUALS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

None

OSA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Gire welcomed everyone and shared the following:

- Director Gire spoke at the annual Senior Center Association meeting. OSA continues efforts to build a working relationship with the association.

- Updated the Commission on the status of Region 3-B AAA and their efforts to meet the special conditions approved as part of their FY 2008 annual implementation plan.
- Region 8 Senior Advocate group is planning a visit to the Capital in the spring to meet with legislators. More information will follow as the date gets closer.
- Attended meetings with Administration on Aging (AoA) and National Association State Units on Aging. The meetings focused on the “Choices for Independence” initiatives and the growing involvement of the aging network in long term care services.
- Discussed her decision to maintain the State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program within OSA.

Director Gire presented a summary of the proposed legislation on PA 350 regarding Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan (BC/BSM), which will remove the Attorney General and the Insurance Commissioner from the rate setting process for “Other Than Group” Medicare Supplemental Insurance. Director Gire noted the use of health and age will be used to determine rates. Earlier this year, BC/BS filed a rate request seeking a composite 50.3% increase in the “Other Than Group” category. The increase would have affected 218,000 aged and disabled subscribers. Through advocacy efforts of the Attorney General, OSA and other senior advocacy groups, the approved rate increase was help to approximately 20%. Director Gire asked if the Commission would like to take a position on the proposed change in legislation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Newport for OSA to monitor the proposed change and draft a letter for Commission review which opposes the proposed change in PA 350. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wilson. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the decision of the State Ombudsman Program.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Community for a Lifetime (CFL) Review Panel Recommendations (four items)

Dan Doezema, OSA staff, stated that the CFL Review Panel met on November 27, 2007 to review applications submitted by Washtenaw County, Kent County, greater Battle Creek area, and Alpena Community College. The following recommendations resulted from the meeting:

The Blueprint for Aging Application for 2007 Community for a Lifetime Recognition of Conducting a Community Assessment - Washtenaw County

Mr. Doezema stated the CFL assessment was conducted by the Blueprint for Aging Partnership and expanded as part of a national Community Partnerships for Older Adults grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The assessment partners included older adults, non-profit agencies, for-profit businesses and local government officials. Mr. Doezema also noted that it covered access to health care, transportation, health promotion/disease prevention, housing, supportive community systems, senior leadership and enrichment. Mr. Doezema discussed the strengths of the assessment, highlighting how Washtenaw County looked several years ahead in terms of what they wanted for their community.

Mr. Doezema requested the Blueprint for Aging application of Conducting a Community Assessment for Washtenaw County be approved for recognition.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve the recommended recognition of the Washtenaw County Blueprint for Aging Application for conducting an CFL Assessment and seconded by Commissioner Newport. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Creating A Community for a Lifetime Application for 2007 CFL Recognition of Conducting a Community Assessment – Kent County

Mr. Doezema stated the tool used to conduct the assessment was the National AdvantAge model from the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. The assessment partners included older adults, non-profit agencies and local government officials. Mr. Doezema noted it also covered access to health care, transportation, health promotion/disease prevention, safety and security, housing and supportive community systems. Mr. Doezema discussed the strengths of the assessment noting the county completed a comprehensive survey of the needs of older adults in the area as part of the assessment process. Mr. Doezema requested the approval of the recognition from the Commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bieber to approve the Community for a Lifetime recognition recommendation of Conducting a Community Assessment for Kent County and seconded by Commissioner Pawelski. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Aging in Place – Battle Creek Application for 2007 CFL Recognition of Conducting a Community Assessment – Greater Battle Creek area

Mr. Doezema stated the tool used to conduct the assessment was the National Aging in Place model of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the Partners for Livable Communities. Mr. Doezema noted that assessment partners included older adults, non-profit agencies, and local government officials. Mr. Doezema also stated that it covered access to health care, transportation, health promotion/disease prevention, housing, and work after retirement and education. Mr. Doezema discussed the strengths of the assessment in detail focusing on the needs and interests of “Baby Boomers.” Mr. Doezema also noted the partners focused on the economic impact of an aging society and technology.

Mr. Doezema requested the approval of Aging in Place for Battle Creek be approved for recognition of their community assessment.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wright to approve the Community for a Lifetime Recognition of Aging in Place for Battle Creek and seconded by Commissioner Bollinger. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

A brief discussion followed with Commissioner Wright requesting information on what happens next in communities that have been recognized for conducting an CFL assessment. Mr. Doezema stated that hopefully, communities continue to be active in improving their community following the assessment. Communities that do continue to

make improvements are eligible to apply again for recognition by the Commission. Commissioner Wilson asked if there were financial rewards available for communities conducting CFL assessments. Mr. Doezema stated that no financial rewards were available, but communities are recognized in a number of ways including a letter and certificate of recognition.

Alpena Community College's Association of Lifelong Learners Application for 2007
Community of a Lifetime Recognition of Conducting a Community Assessment - Alpena

Mr. Doezema requested approval for Alpena Community College's Association of Lifelong Learners application for recognition of the elder friendly community assessment conducted for the City of Alpena. Mr. Doezema stated the tool used to conduct the assessment was the Michigan Community for a Lifetime Assessment. Assessment partners included older adults, non-profit agencies and local government officials and covered the areas of walkability/bikeability, access to health care, transportation, health promotion/disease prevention, safety and security, housing, supportive community systems, commerce, enrichment and inclusion. Mr. Doezema discussed the recommendations of the CFL Review Panel on the strengths of the assessment. Mr. Doezema noted that local code requirements for new construction also supported accessibility and visitability.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson to approve recognition for the Alpena Community College's Association of Lifelong Learners assessment application for Alpena and seconded by Commissioner Rau. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

A brief discussion followed with the Commission thanking the four communities for their work in developing a "Community for a Lifetime" environment. Commissioner Newport encouraged Commissioners who lived near the communities recognized to be part of the activities scheduled to present the recognition letter and CFL certificate.

Revised Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Grant to Region 2

Sherri King, OSA staff, requested approval from the Commission for the allocation of an additional \$13,200 in funds from the Administration on Aging's (AoA) Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Grant to Region 2 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for FY 2008.

Ms. King stated that Region 2 AAA will be acting as the intermediary to fund an annual Evidence-Based Disease Prevention conference and travel expenses for staff to attend related training conferences. Both activities are as conditions of the approved grant from AoA. Ms. King also noted that Region 2 will be paid a 10% administrative fee for acting in this capacity.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bollinger to approve the revised Evidence Based Disease Prevention Grant to Region 2 AAA and seconded by Commissioner Walters. Commission approved with a 14-0-0 vote.

A brief discussion followed with the Commission asking what diseases the grant is trying to prevent. Ms. King stated that programs currently include the "Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management Program" that addresses any type of chronic disease and a "Matter of Balance" that focuses on fall prevention. Other efforts include programs that enhance fitness and include strength training, balance, aerobics, and flexibility. Director

Gire mentioned that arthritis, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease are examples of chronic diseases that can be positively impacted by such programs. Ms. King noted that although OSA is working with four AAAs as part of the AoA grant, the other area agencies are also developing evidenced-based disease prevention programs as required by the FY 2008 annual implementation plan process and will be invited to participate in trainings offered through the grant.

Lansing Area Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) Sponsorship Change

Bonnie Graham, OSA staff, requested Commission approval in the selection of the Retired and Senior Volunteer program (RSVP) of Ingham, Eaton, and Clinton counties as the new grantee of the Foster Grandparent Program serving Ingham, Eaton and Livingston counties.

Ms. Graham stated the current sponsor of the FGP, St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities, notified OSA on September 25, 2007 of their decision to relinquish sponsorship of the program effective January 1, 2008. Ms. Graham stated that OSA, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS) initiated a competitive request for proposal process to select a new grantee. Ms. Graham noted that an informational meeting for potential sponsors was conducted on October 29, 2007, and applications submitted as part of the process were due November 30, 2007.

Ms. Graham stated that RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties was the only agency submitting an application. A review of the grant application was conducted against the established review criteria and it was determined the RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties met all requirements of an FGP grantee.

If approved, Ms. Graham also requested Commission approval to award the balance of the FY 2008 state grant to St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities for the Lansing Area FGP to RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties as the new grantee. The approved state grant is \$16,114. Ms. Graham advised the Commission that the actual amount of the 2008 grant award will be determined upon submission of a final financial status report by St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities.

A motion was made by Commissioner Newport to approve the selection of RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties as the new grantee for the FGP serving Ingham, Eaton and Livingston Counties and seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Commission approved with a 14-0-0 vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walters to approve the transfer of the balance of the FY 2008 state grant of \$16,114 to RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties upon submission of a final financial status report from St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Wright. Commission approved with a 14-0-0 vote.

A brief discussion followed regarding St. Vincent Catholic Charities decision to relinquish sponsorship.

Lansing Area Senior Companion Program (SCP) Sponsorship Change

Bonnie Graham, OSA staff, requested Commission approval for the selection of RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties as the new grantee for the Senior Companion Program serving Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties.

Ms. Graham stated the current sponsor of the SCP, St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities, notified OSA on September 25, 2007 of their decision to relinquish sponsorship of the program effective January 1, 2008. On October 29, 2007, OSA in cooperation with the Corporation for National and Community Services (CNCS) initiated the process to select a new grantee. An informational meeting for potential sponsors was conducted on October 29, 2007, with a deadline for submission of grant applications due on November 30, 2007.

Ms. Graham stated two applications were received and evaluated against the established review criteria. As a result of the review, the review panel determined that RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties meets all requirements of an SCP grantee.

If approved, Ms. Graham also requested Commission approval to award the balance of the FY 2008 state grant to St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities for the Lansing Area SCP to RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties as the new grantee. The approved state grant is \$256,441. Ms. Graham advised the Commission that the actual amount of the 2008 grant award will be determined upon submission of a final financial status report by St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wilson to approve the selection of RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties as the new grantee for the SCP serving Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties and seconded by Commissioner Bollinger. Commission approved with a 14-0-0 vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Newport to approve the transfer of the balance of the FY 2008 state grant of \$256,441 to RSVP of Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties upon submission of a final financial status report from St. Vincent's/Catholic Charities. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Verma. Commission approved with a 14-0-0 vote.

A brief discussion followed with Ms. Graham explaining in more detail on how the program works.

INFORMATION AND COMMENTS

Commissioner Walters updated the Commission regarding the State Advisory Council (SAC) meetings and the up-coming application process for reappointments or appointments of new members. Commissioner Walters stated the Commission approved a new process last year in which all SAC members were appointed to a one-year term to accommodate a change in the SAC by-laws. As a result, appointments made this year will need to reflect a combination of one, two and three-year terms to stagger membership. The Commission reaffirmed the process previously approved by the Commission and instructed staff to initiate the application process. A review panel was formed consisting of Commissioner Bollinger, Commissioner Walters, and Chairperson Kennedy.

Commissioner Verma noted that while visiting India he noticed that India does not have an established aging network. Commissioner Verma did a comparison between the availability of services and supports for older adults in the United States and India and reminded everyone that we are fortunate to have such an established system.

Commissioner Verma also stated that India is starting to get programs in place for their older adults.

Commissioner Newport talked about proposed legislative bills #5520- #5525, concerning the possibility of discontinuing senior discounts on utility bills. A motion was made by Commissioner Newport to ask that the Commission monitor the proposed legislation and oppose if necessary to protect older adults. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pawelski and approved unanimously by voice vote.

Commissioner Wilson stated that she learned at a recent meeting that Michigan residents over the age of 65 years will represent 24% of the Michigan population as compared to 12% of the current population. To help prepare for this dramatic increase, Commissioner Wilson encouraged Commissioners to read the book, "Another Country", which helps us learn to navigate the emotional terrain of our elders.

Commissioner Walters noted that Legislative Bills #410 and #411 were recently passed to allow county commissions to add a surcharge on cell phones for the purposes of supporting local 911 systems.

Chairperson Kennedy stated the Commission received a letter from the Michigan Directors of Services to the Aging regarding nutrition and carry-out meals. Director Gire and other OSA staff have attended meetings regarding this issue but no decision has been made. Chairperson Kennedy tabled this discussion for the January Commission meeting.

Chairperson Kennedy discussed the State's continuing financial difficulties and questioned if it would be beneficial for Commissioners to forgo lunch at their regular meetings to save additional state funds. Ms. Graham explained that OSA is bound by the Older Michiganians Act to either provide a lunch or reimburse Commissioners for lunch. A discussion followed without resolution.

Commissioner Wright announced the Burnham Brook Senior Center closed their pool due to high operating and maintenance costs. Commissioner Wright notes that many older adults who use the pool for exercise and cardiac rehabilitation will need to seek exercise somewhere else.

Commissioner Newport acknowledged the State's budget situation, but requested that strategic planning and visioning be included again as part of the Commission's agenda for the coming year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Commission on Services to the Aging will be held at 10:00 a.m. on January 18, 2008, via conference call. Anyone wishing to attend may come to the Office of Services to the Aging at 7109 W. Saginaw Hwy, Lansing to participate.

The next meeting of the State Advisory Council will be held at 9:30 a.m. on January 17, 2008, via conference call. Anyone wishing to attend may come to the Office of Services to the Aging at 7109 W. Saginaw Hwy, Lansing to participate.

A holiday reception for Commission members and OSA staff will immediately follow lunch.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Pawelski and seconded by Commissioner Walters. Chairperson Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.