

MICHIGAN COMMISSION ON SERVICES TO THE AGING
Office of Services to the Aging, Lansing via Phone Conference
February 20, 2009
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.

ROLL CALL

The roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Owen Bieber, Cheryl Bollinger, Mary Gardner, Rose Gill, Kathleen Johnston-Calati, Jerutha Kennedy, Donald Newport, Anthony Pawelski, Thomas Rau, Amne Talab, Ramesh Verma, Janice Wilson, and James Wright

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Excused)

Joan Budden and Chun-Keung Leung

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Un-excused)

None

OSA STAFF PRESENT

Sharon Gire, Cindy Albrecht, Bonnie Graham, Cherie Mollison and Laura Beard

VISITORS/GUEST PRESENT

none

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Pawelski 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 Wilson made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 19, 2008 meeting. Commissioner Bieber 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 to the meeting and updated the Commission on the following:

- Presenting the 2010 budget to the Appropriation Sub-Committee.
- Economic Stimulus Package does have some funds specifically for aging programs. (employment and nutrition).
- Senate and House have energy committees or sub-committees take testimony regarding utility shut offs. Consumers Energy will be working with utility companies regarding their Gatekeeper Program.
- Staff update – Cherie Mollison is retiring after 25 years with OSA and her last day is today. Lynne McCollum is off on maternity leave.

A brief discussion followed with questions regarding the future of the Office of Long Term Care Supports and Services.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Approval of the FY 2009 Grant to Elder Law of Michigan, Inc (ELM)

Cherie Mollison, OSA staff, requested Commission approval of funding from the Administration on Aging for the third-year of the “Model Approaches to Statewide Legal Assistance Systems grant to Elder Law of Michigan, Inc. (ELM) in the amount of \$115,043. Ms. Mollison stated the funding will support the operation of the Legal Hotline for Michigan Seniors (LHMS) from June 1, 2009 through May 31, 2010.

Additionally, OSA requests approval of \$20,000 to ELM for general operation of the LHMS. The LHMS provides free legal advice and information to adults aged 60 and older throughout the state. The funds will also support a state-level Elder Rights Coalition (ERC) and efforts to improve coordination of and access to legal services for older adults throughout the state.

Ms. Mollison noted that LHMS served 5,759 clients with 8,456 individual legal matters during 2008. Case load breakdown shows that 18% of the legal issues addressed focused on wills and probate, 17% on debt and bankruptcy, 14% on housing, 13% on health/healthcare issues and 7% on family law.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gardner to approve the grant allocations for LHMS as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Johnston-Calati. Commission approved with a 13-0-0 vote.

A brief discussion followed.

INFORMATION AND COMMENTS

Other

Commissioner Rau noted that he has been appointed as a Commissioner to the Long Term Care Task Force Commission.

Commissioner Pawelski discussed the State Advisory Council nominations.

Commissioner Bollinger asked if the public hearings scheduled will be affected by the budget. Director Gire stated she will get back to the Commission on that.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Commission on Services to the Aging will be held at 10:00 a.m. on March 20, 2009 at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan in Detroit. A public hearing is scheduled following the Commission meeting from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

The next meeting of the State Advisory Council will be March 12, 2009, with Commissioner Johnston-Calati attending as guest Commissioner.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Wright. Chairperson Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.