

MICHIGAN COMMISSION ON SERVICES TO THE AGING
Conference Call Meeting

Michigan Office of Services to the Aging
300 E. Michigan Avenue, 3rd Floor; Lansing, MI 48933
February 18, 2011

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Pawelski chaired this meeting in Chairperson Jerutha Kennedy's absence. Commissioner Pawelski called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The Commission roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Owen Bieber, Joan Budden, Mary P. Gardner, Kathleen Johnston-Calati, Valerie Lafferty, Donald Newport, Anthony Pawelski, Thomas Rau, Michael Sheehan, Janice Wilson and James Wright.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Excused)

Cheryl Bollinger, Jerutha Kennedy, Amne Talab and Ramesh Verma.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Un-excused)

None.

OFFICE OF SERVICES TO THE AGING (OSA) STAFF PRESENT

Peggy Brey, Bonnie Graham, Carol Dye, Sherri King, Wendi Middleton, Sarah Slocum, and Andrea Mayes Krueger, student.

VISITORS/GUEST PRESENT

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Pawelski asked to amend the agenda and add an update on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Nutrition grants to the Information and Comment section of the agenda. Commissioner Wilson made a motion to accept the amendment. Commissioner Wright seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously with a voice vote.

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

APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MINUTES

Commissioner Wright made the motion to approve the January 21, 2011 meeting minutes. Commissioner Wilson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

INFORMATION FROM INDIVIDUALS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

OSA ACTING DIRECTOR, OLGA DAZZO MEET AND GREET

Commissioner Pawelski introduced Olga Dazzo, appointed by Governor Rick Snyder as OSA's Acting Director. Commissioner Pawelski provided information and a detailed background of her work history.

Ms. Dazzo thanked the Commission and added personal dialogue and details of her early career in the aging field, running the financial area of a Medicare/Medicaid home health care agency.

Commissioner Sheehan asked if any part of the senior budget might be untouched.

Ms. Dazzo stated there's an overall reduction in the budget and OSA will be responsible for the implementation of any approved reduction.

Commissioner Wright asked if there would be any cuts to OSA personnel.

Ms. Dazzo stated there has been no indication of reduction in staff at this time, only a reduction in percentage of dollars.

Commissioner Bieber asked for the amount of proposed reduction to OSA's budget.

Ms. Dazzo deferred to Peggy Brey, OSA Deputy Director, who stated the proposed reduction is \$2.2 million, or approximately 8-9 percent of the General Fund/General Purpose funding in the OSA budget.

Ms. Dazzo stated the difficulties in approaching this budget, but hopes that it will change Michigan's economy so we can look forward to a better future. Ms. Dazzo stated the new administration started off with a one and one half billion dollar deficit.

Commissioner Gardner asked why the State is not looking for ways of raising revenue instead of cutting services, given the deficit is so great.

Ms. Dazzo stated HMO's used to be taxed six percent with the Federal Government providing matching dollars. Those dollars were used to pay for healthcare, but the Federal Government did not like that approach, so they are now taxing healthcare claims, which will be used to receive matching funds with the Federal Government

providing 60 cents for every dollar taxed and Michigan will use those dollars to pay for healthcare, so there won't have to be as severe a reduction in that area.

Ms Dazzo stated if taxes are raised even more, it could impact employers, as there's many moving parts. She noted tax restructuring is going on, but taxes can not be raised to the degree that all of Michigan's budget problems will be fixed.

Commissioner Budden asked if the tax on healthcare claims would be on all claims or just Medicaid claims.

Ms. Dazzo answered all commercial healthcare claims, except Medicare dental, will be taxed.

Ms. Dazzo noted a statistic, that Michigan has 180,000 people with Alzheimer's Disease and stated the number will continue to grow as the population ages and life expectancy increases. Ms. Dazzo asked what the State's position was regarding the impact of this disease, noting other states have undertaken a strategic planning process to determine an approach for addressing this need. She'd like to explore the opportunity to conduct a similar process in Michigan and would welcome any ideas the Commission has for addressing dementia now and in the future.

There was additional discussion on the budget and issues concerning the Commission. Commissioner Bieber stated he does not agree with the taxing of pensions.

Ms. Dazzo stated she would like to better understand key aging issues and looked forward to meeting the Commissioners in person.

Commissioner Pawelski thanked Director Dazzo.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Approval of Grant Agreement with Michigan Disability Rights Coalition

Sarah Slocum, OSA staff, requested approval of a grant to the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC).

Ms. Slocum stated the project this grant will support is one in partnership with the Michigan Department of Community Health Medical Services Administration, Michigan's Medicaid agency. The project will pay local LTC ombudsman and highly trained ombudsman volunteers to conduct a questionnaires, as established through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMMS). Interviews will be conducted with 1500 residents of nursing facilities who are part of the nursing facility transition program. This \$180,000 grant agreement is partially operated through MDRC to process payment vouchers and for other administrative expenses.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bieber to approve the grant agreement with MDRC as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gardner.

Additional discussion followed and the Commission approved with a 9-0-2 vote.

INFORMATION AND COMMENTS

ARRA Nutrition Funds No Cost Extension and Reprogramming update was made by Sherri King, OSA Staff.

Sherri King, OSA staff, stated OSA was awarded \$3.3 Million for ARRA nutrition funds for congregate and home delivered meals in 2009. The grant officially ended December 31, 2010, with 99.3 percent of the total grant funds expended. The Administration on Aging (AoA) notified OSA in January of the opportunity to seek a no-cost grant extension for this grant, which would allow the balance of funds to be expended. OSA requested and received approval of the no-cost grant extension through March 31, 2011. As a result, revised Statement of Grant Awards will be issued to three area agencies on aging that did not expend 100 percent of the ARRA funds. A fourth AAA notified OSA that it be unable to expend the available funds within the revised grant period. The funds available as a result of this decision will be re-allocated to the other participating AAAs. No action is required by the Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Pawelski stated the next meeting of the Commission on Services to the Aging will be held at 10:00 A.M. on Friday, March 18, 2011, at the Ramada Lansing Hotel and Conference Center, Michigan Room, 7501 W. Saginaw in Lansing, noting these meetings are open to the public and anyone wishing to attend can do so at the Ramada Lansing Hotel and Conference Center.

Commissioner Pawelski stated the next meeting of the State Advisory Council is yet to be determined.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Sheehan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bieber.

The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Commissioner Pawelski adjourned the meeting at 10:36 A.M.