

## **MICHIGAN COMMISSION ON SERVICES TO THE AGING**

Tri-County Office On Aging  
5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing

January 19, 2007

### **Minutes**

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Kennedy called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. and reiterated the role of the Commission, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Kennedy welcomed new Commissioner Amne Talab from Dearborn, Wayne County. Commissioner Talab is the Director of Social Services at Access. Commissioner Kennedy also extended appreciation and best wishes to Commissioner Harb who has completed her term of service on the Commission.

Commissioner Kennedy extended her appreciation to Tri-County Office on Aging for hosting the Commission meeting today and noted that the Commission will be traveling more in 2007, to have a better understanding of programs and services in Michigan.

#### **ROLL CALL**

The roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

#### **COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Owen Bieber, Cheryl Bollinger, Jerutha Kennedy, Chun-Keung Leung, Donald Newport, Thomas Rau, Amne Talab, Ramesh Verma, William Walters IV, and Janice Wilson

#### **COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Excused)**

Rose Gill, Annette Guilfoyle, Albert Lewis, Anthony Pawelski, and James Wright

#### **COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT (Un-excused)**

None

#### **OSA STAF PRESENT**

Bonnie Graham, Cindy Albrecht, Peggy Brey, David Dekker, Sharon Gire, Laura McMurtry, Wendi Middleton, Neelam Puri, Sally Steiner, Holliace Spencer, Scott Wamsley

#### **VISITORS/GUEST PRESENT**

Jane Church, Donna Hobart, Linda Pivarnik, Michele White, Angela Willis, and Stacey Wright

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Verma 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 Bollinger made the motion to approve the minutes from the November 17, 2006, 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 shared the following:

### **Updates**

- Continuing outreach with retirees
- Attended "Own Your Future" press conference
- Attended a National Association on State Units on Aging meeting in December
- Attended Administration on Aging "Choices for Independence" summit on long-term care
- Attended a winter retreat with OSA and Area Agency Directors for strategic planning from the area agencies point of view
- Attended a revenue conference

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Reprogramming Policy**

Laura McMurtry, OSA staff, requested Commission approval of the revised SCSEP Reprogramming Policy. Ms. McMurtry stated that OSA has experienced issues of under spending in the SCSEP program over the last two program years as a consequence of significant program changes initiated at the federal level. As a result, the unexpended funds were returned to the U.S. Department of Labor and could not be used to support older workers in Michigan.

SCSEP expenditures have improved this program year given the rate increase in the minimum wage. However, to address future under spending, as well as additional performance requirements, revisions to the SCSEP reprogramming policy are necessary. Ms. McMurtry detailed the proposed reprogramming policy as provided to the Commission and state the revisions will allow OSA to redistribute funds to sub grantees who are able to use projected unspent funds for the for the purpose of enrolling temporary participants in the program during the current program year. A motion was made by Commissioner Bieber to approve the SCSEP Reprogramming Policy and seconded by Commissioner Verma.

Discussion followed with Commissioner Verma asking for more information on the timeframe of the program under-spending and for clarification as to the meaning of "qualified older adults" and "temporary enrollees" as stated in the proposed policy.

Ms. McMurtry stated that under-spending in SCSEP has been problematic during the past two program years and offered clarification of “qualified older adults” as individuals who meet the eligibility criteria established for participation in SCSEP. The criteria includes the provision that all participants must be at least 55 years of age and have income below established income guidelines. A “temporary enrollee” is a SCSEP participant that is enrolled in the program with reprogrammed funds for the purpose of expending the funds at the end of the program year. A temporary enrolled is not guaranteed continued participation in the program once the program year ends and signs a statement acknowledging that fact.

Commissioner Verma expressed concern that the reprogramming policy as presented was not detailed enough or specific in what entity was accountable for specific actions such as program monitoring. Commissioner Verma requested OSA staff to review and modify the proposed policy to include more detail and specificity prior to commission approval.

After further discussion regarding programmatic issues that could result if the reprogramming policy was not adopted this month, a motion was made by Commissioner Bieber to withdraw the previous motion to approve the SCSEP Reprogramming Policy and seconded by Commissioner Verma. Motion was withdrawn unanimously by voice vote.

A motion was then made by Commissioner Verma to conditionally approve the SCSEP Reprogramming Policy with the understanding the policy language will be strengthened and brought back to the Commission for final approval in February. Commissioner Walters seconded the motion. Commission approved with a 10-0-0 vote.

### **Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAP) Transfer of Sponsors**

Neelam Puri, OSA staff, stated MMAP has operated successfully and experienced significant growth under the auspices of the Area Agencies on Aging Association of Michigan (AAAAM) for many years. During the past year a work group, consisting of representatives of OSA, the MMAP Steering Committee and the area agencies on aging have been working to address potential conflicts of interest that exist within the current sponsorship arrangement. As a result, a new organization has been established to separate MMAP from AAAAM. The new entity, MMAP, Inc., became effective January 1, 2007. MMAP, Inc. has a new Board of Directors consisting of current MMAP Steering Committee members, area agency on aging directors or their designees, and the general public. To ensure continued operation of MMAP, the commission is asked to terminate sponsorship of the MAAP grant to AAAAM and recognize MMAP, Inc., as the new sponsor.

Discussion followed with Chairperson Kennedy asking if the change in sponsorship would result in a reduction of funds contracted to the AAAs for MMAP activities. Ms. Puri responded the change in sponsorship would result in very few changes to how the program operates given MMAP will continue to purchase administrative services from

AAAAM. The contracts to the AAAs will not be reduced given all MMAP funds are allocated by the approved intrastate funding formula.

A motion was made by Commissioner Newport to approve the MMAP transfer of sponsors and seconded by Commissioner Bollinger. The Commission approved with a 10-0-0 vote.

Following approval of MMAP, Inc. as the new sponsor, Ms. Puri requested Commission approval to transfer the balance of the 2006 SHIP grant awarded from CMS to OSA, from AAAM to MMAP, Inc. A motion was made by Commission Wilson to approve the transfer of the current federal grant and seconded by Commissioner Bieber. The Commission approved with a 10-0-0 vote.

### **Community for a Lifetime Recognition Process**

Sally Steiner, OSA staff, requested the Commission approve the process as presented for recognizing communities that engage in the “Community for a Lifetime” assessment and planning process. The “Community for a Lifetime” recognition process stems from the State Advisory Councils (SAC) 2004 Annual Report on “Elder Friendly Communities”. The process will recognize communities that assess their community attributes and work to make their communities more elder friendly. Applications from communities seeking recognition will be processed through a review panel with representation from OSA, SAC, Commission, and Michigan State University Extension Office. Ms. Steiner stated OSA has received two applications for consideration from Otsego County and North Ottawa County that served as pilot communities in the development of the M.S.U. Extension’s “Community for a Lifetime” toolkit.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bollinger to approve the “Community for a Lifetime” recognition process and seconded by Commissioner Newport. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Ms. Steiner stated with approval of the “Community for a Lifetime” recognition process a Commissioner would need to be named for a one-year commitment to the review panel. Commissioner Newport volunteered to serve on the review panel. Chairperson Kennedy accepted Commissioner Newport’s offer and appointed him to serve as a member of the panel.

Ms. Steiner also requested Commission recognition of the two communities, Otsego County and North Ottawa County, which served as pilots for the “Community for a Lifetime” development process.

A motion was made by Commissioner Walters to recognize the two “Community for a Lifetime” pilot communities by sending a letter as such from the Commission and SAC. Commissioner Rau seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Commissioner Verma asked for a definition of community and sought clarification as to whether or not an ethnic community could seek recognition. Ms. Steiner stated that “community” would be defined by whatever group is conducting the assessment and is not limited by geographic boundaries. To further clarify, Commissioner Walters read the minutes from the previous SAC meeting to help Commissioners understand the SAC’s intent regarding this broad definition of “community.”

## **INFORMATION AND COMMENTS**

### **State Advisory Council (SAC) Report**

Commissioner Walters presented the SAC Report to the Commission stating that they reviewed and commented on the “Community for a Lifetime” toolkit submitted by MSU Extension. Mr. Holliace Spencer, OSA Staff, also updated the SAC on senior centers in Michigan. Commissioner Walters asked for a Commissioner to volunteer to attend the next SAC meeting in February and Commissioner Rau volunteered.

Commissioner Walters also requested that an ad hoc committee of the Commission be appointed to review the current SAC By-Laws as it has been several years since the last review and some members have expressed concern that current terms of office are not sufficient. Chairperson Kennedy stated that she will serve as a member and asked for volunteers to serve on this committee. Chairperson Kennedy accepted the responses of Commissioner Walters and Bollinger.

Discussion followed with Commissioner Verma expressing concern that a SAC member should also be appointed to the committee as any changes in the By-Laws directly affect SAC members. Chairperson Kennedy acknowledged that while the Commission appoints the committee, the Commission can extend membership to anyone it feels is necessary to accomplish the work and as a result, a SAC representative will also be included.

Commissioner Walters also is requesting that a four-person committee be appointed to review applications for membership on the SAC. Commissioner Wilson, Kennedy, Walters, and Bollinger volunteered.

### **Cultural Presentations**

Commissioner Verma presented to the Commission a presentation concerning cultural differences. Commissioner Verma read an editorial from the Detroit Free Press, which discussed immigrants as a potent, growing force for entrepreneurship in Michigan and the United States and how Michigan should capitalize on this fact to help its own economic revitalization. Commissioner Verma further stated these trends suggest the need for us to better understand and anticipate the needs of a diverse aging population and be prepared to provide quality services to all.

Commissioner Verma stated that lack of awareness about cultural differences could make it difficult for both providers and clients to achieve the appropriate care needed. Commissioner Verma noted as a Commission we should invite speakers from different

ethnic communities to Commission meetings to discuss issues such as stereotypes, cultural traditions/conventions and ways in which society could avoid cross cultural misunderstandings with emphasis on valuing differences such as language and beliefs.

Discussion followed with the Commission agreeing to invite recognized experts from different ethnic communities to speak to the Commission regarding cultural differences. Commissioners Verma, Talab, and Leung will work with OSA to develop a format and identify potential speakers. The Commission thanked Commissioner Verma for a very good presentation.

#### “Own Your Future” Campaign

Jane Church from the Office of Long Term Care Services and Supports presented to the Commission a direct mail campaign called “Own Your Future.” The purpose of the campaign is to increase awareness about the need to plan for long term care needs. Ms. Church stated the Governor kicked off the with a press conference on November 30, 2006 with more than 1.7 million letters mailed to Michigan households with at least individual age 45-65 years of age. Over 83,000 responses for more information have been received to date Ms. Church noted a website has been developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide a wide range of information on understanding, planning and paying for long term care. The website is [www.longtermcare.gov](http://www.longtermcare.gov). Ms. Church ended her presentation with a request for the Commission to help spread the word about planning ahead for long term care needs. If you have additional questions, want more information or copies of the “Own Your Future” materials please contact Jane Church at 517-241-9173 or [Churchja@michigan.gov](mailto:Churchja@michigan.gov).

Commissioner Talab asked Ms. Church if the materials were available in Arabic. Ms. Church responded the materials were available in Spanish on the website, but not in Arabic. Ms. Church asked Commissioner Talab if ACCESS could assist in helping translate some of the campaign materials to help spread the word in Arabic-speaking families and communities. The Commission thanked Ms. Church for a very informative presentation.

#### Legislative Update and Advocacy Process Action Team

Sally Steiner, OSA staff, introduced Linda Pivarnik, staff to Representative Mark Meadows. Ms. Steiner updated the Commission on current legislative bills of interest to older adults and the aging network. Ms. Steiner also updated the Commission on the new leadership posts in the House and Senate. Ms. Steiner stated that OSA has established a legislation and advocacy process action team (PAT) for the purpose of tracking and responding to proposed legislation.

#### 2007 Legislative Orientation

Sally Steiner and Scott Wamsley, OSA staff, presented the information and materials requested at the November Commission meeting to assist in legislative visits Commissioner may schedule. Ms. Steiner explained the packet of information provided and reviewed the information designed to help guide them in scheduling and conducting

visits to their state elected officials. Mr. Wamsley explained the informational materials developed for the Commission to leave with the legislator after a scheduled visit. Mr. Wamsley stated the folders contain demographic and service information for Michigan and each planning and service area (PSA). Also included was OSA's brochure and general information on the Michigan aging network. Discussion followed with Commissioner Bollinger stating the importance of the visits as a "meet and greet" session opportunity. The Commission thanked staff for their efforts to develop these materials.

#### Other

Commissioner Newport reminded Commissioners about the February strategic planning session to be held in the afternoon following the Commission meeting and encouraged everyone to attend.

Commissioner Walters stated he attended a groundbreaking ceremony of a 48 unit senior housing complex in Sandusky, Michigan.

Commissioner Verma noted a company from India has purchased the Miller Brothers Company in Homer, Michigan. This purchase represents the first time a company from India has purchased a business in Michigan.

Commissioner Newport stated Alpena is in the process of forming a senior alliance with representation of all the various groups concerned with aging issues and is very interested in the concept of Livable Communities.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

A copy of the December and January Corrective Plan of Action progress report from The Senior Alliance is included in the Commission folders.

Next meeting of the Commission on Services to the Aging will be on February 16, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the State Operations Center in Dimondale. The Commission, together with Consumers Energy, will be recognizing the 2006 Gatekeeper of the Year at this meeting.

The next meeting of the State Advisory Council will be held on February 8, 2007, 9:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn West Conference Center, Lansing. Commissioner Rau will be attending as guest Commissioner.

#### **ADJOURN**

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wilson and seconded by Commissioner Rau. Commissioner Kennedy adjourned the meeting at 12:40 p.m.