

AREAWIDE COUNCIL ON AGING OF BROWARD COUNTY, INC.
VIRTUAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
OCTOBER 8, 2020

PRESENT

Arthur Birken
Alan Brass
Anthony Brunson
Timothy Curtin
William Edelstein
Pauline Grant
Representative Evan Jenne
David Lieberman
Malena Mendez-Dorn
Dr. Naushira Pandya
John Primeau
Senator Nan Rich
Hon. Ron Rothschild
Kenneth Rubin
Theodora Williams
Lisa Zucker

EXCUSED ABSENCE

Deborah Rand
Manuel Synalovski

STAFF

Charlotte Mather-Taylor
Natasha Elfarghali
Elizabeth Lombardo
Cheryl Morrow

CALL TO ORDER

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Areawide Council on Aging Board of Directors held a Virtual Board Meeting on Thursday, October 8, 2020, utilizing Communications Media Technology (CMT), voted and approved by the Board at the May 14 Board Meeting through a Resolution.

The meetings are made available to the public, as noted in the Resolution Requirements, so the public has the opportunity to submit comments to the email address referenced. President Grant asked if anyone had submitted any public record comments for the September 10 Meeting through email to the address indicated. Cheryl Morrow responded no.

President Grant then asked Cheryl to take a roll call vote to acknowledge that each member was present prior to any votes or motions requiring approval. Those not present included Deborah Rand and Manuel Synalovski.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes for the September 10, 2020 Board Meeting was made by Judge Ron Rothschild and seconded by Alan Brass. Due to Cheryl's computer's technical difficulty, Charlotte took roll call and called upon each Board member to vote individually. The vote was unanimously approved.

Senator Rich noted Julie Klhar is also the attorney for the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition and was able to have the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition Board vote to override the need to do an individual role call every time and suggested Charlotte call her. Charlotte responded she would contact her right after the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to Accept the 2019 Audit

President Grant called upon Alan Brass to give the following report:

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Our Accountant, Charles Krblich, has prepared and finalized the Areawide Council on Aging's Audit for 2019. Copies were emailed to the entire Board on Friday, October 2. The Board was asked to call Finance Director Natasha Elfarghali if a member had any questions. Ms. Elfarghali noted that she had received no calls. Since there were no calls, a motion was then made by Alan Brass that the Areawide Council on Aging accept its Audit for 2019, as prepared by our Accountant Chuck Krblick. Judge Ron Rothschild seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Brass thanked Natasha, along with Mr. Krblich and Marilyn, for their roles in assuring the success in preparing the Audit for 2019.

Mr. Krblich commented due to the circumstances incurred during 2019 and 2020, we made it through, and the Audit was completed.

President Grant thanked Mr. Krblich for the outstanding job his staff have continued to do for so many years, Alan Brass, for his leadership and Natasha for her help in producing a successful audit.

Motion to Approve the 2020 Area Plan Program Module Update

President Grant called upon William Edelstein to give the following report:

As in the past, the Board must approve our proposed Area Plan update for 2020. The Plan will be an extension of the already existent 2020-2022 document, with minor changes being made. Due to the COVID-19, DOEA asked all of our Area Agencies to only review and update the targeting and the performance measures in the modules.

The Planning Committee met at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 8, before the regular Board Meeting via zoom. The Committee Members included: William Edelstein, Chair, Tony Brunson, Tim Curtin, Malena Mendez-Dorn, Dr. Naushira Pandya, Kenneth Rubin, and President Pauline Grant, Ex-Officio. The Planning Committee was emailed a copy of the Plan for their review and approval. Each Board Member also received a copy of the materials by email. Our Planning Director, Elizabeth Lombardo, was listed as the contact for Board Members to call if anyone had questions regarding the document. Advisory Council Chair Gary Dirda was also emailed a copy of the Plan.

Mr. Edelstein then asked Liz if she had received any calls. Ms. Lombardo responded, yes. Bill Edelstein had called with one minor recommendation that was incorporated on page 55. Pauline Grant suggested that we add information regarding the number of people we had served in our services the past year. The Board agreed. Alan Brass commented that it was a thorough plan.

Prior to the vote, Mr. Edelstein remarked that the Committee Members were extremely impressed with the report's depth and the materials and encouraged everyone who had not had a chance to read it to please do so.

A motion was then made by William Edelstein that the Board of Directors of the Areawide Council on Aging of Broward County, Inc. approve the Area Plan Program Module Update for 2020.

The motion was seconded by Tim Curtin and unanimously approved.

President Grant thanked both Charlotte and Liz Lombardo for an outstanding job and stated the Board would like to receive quarterly report updates on the Area Plan in the future.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director thanked Judge Ron Rothschild for the lovely thank you letter sent to our office regarding his involvement with the SHINE team. Charlotte will have Ms. Lombardo share it with SHINE staff and volunteers. Charlotte also mentioned Medicare open enrollment would begin October 15 and encouraged anyone needing help to contact the SHINE team.

Flyers have been sent out for an upcoming town hall meeting this Friday afternoon, October 9. The main topic will be on How to Avoid Investment Fraud and Protect against COVID-19 Investment Scams. Among the speakers who will be featured is Andrea Busada, Director of Broward County Elderly and Veterans Services, who will discuss the services they offer, two representatives from the US Securities and Exchange Commission, and someone from Coast to Coast Legal Aid. The Executive Director will be welcoming everyone and talking about our services. Charlotte explained it was a rapid turnaround in putting the program together and discussed providing these educational programs again during 2021 for our seniors.

The meal program continues to be running smoothly. As of October 2, 1,223,310 meals have been served. We have approximately 6,000 clients served per week, with almost 70,000 meals served weekly. We continue to advertise the meal service's availability through our website, emails, advertisements, and flyers throughout the County. The Executive Director again thanked Senator Rich and the County for providing this service through the end of December.

Charlotte referred to the Governor's newsletter she had sent out earlier, which featured the Area Agency's meal program, and felt it was a great honor to be mentioned. The Department of Elder Affairs, along with the Governor's office, has been very complimentary of our emergency meal program.

The Executive Director gave an update on the two technology pilot projects she has been working on with the Department of Elder Affairs. The Department will fund half an FTE and a quarter an FTE for our projects' participating in the pilots. This funding will be beneficial since the projects currently cannot bill for all of the services they usually provide due to being closed or only partially open because of COVID-19. The projects have already identified most of the participants, so they are ready to start. The rollout will begin November and December and are yearlong. The companies will be administering a pre, mid, and post-assessment. Charlotte again stressed she is very grateful to be representing our Area Agency for testing these pilot technologies for the entire State. She hopes the results will show both technologies help improve seniors' quality of life and address isolation, depression, and loneliness, which has increased in the senior population. If the technologies are shown to impact seniors positively, the DOEA can potentially expand their use.

The Executive Director noted the Agency had received news on another technology project to serve an additional 500 new people who are not currently in our network. The program will be utilizing TV technology and tablets. Charlotte asked if anyone knew of someone who could benefit from this program to please let her know. She feels there is also an opportunity to showcase our Health and Wellness classes and the support groups offered through this technology.

The Executive Director gave an update on our Helpline. During September, our Helpline call volume was 5,256 calls (about 250 calls a day). There has been a slight increase from August, with a total of 4,918 incoming calls (approximately 234 a day). The majority of the incoming calls continue to be related to the emergency meals program. Approximately 17-22 referrals per day are for long-term care, and the Helpline has seen an increase in calls relating to our EHEAP program, which helps pay FPL utility bills.

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In reference to the status of our Projects, the Governor has issued his next stage of reopening. The Department of Elder Affairs and the Governor's office are very much interested in whether any of our projects are planning on reopening and are not taking a stance as to whether they should open or not. They are concerned with the seniors' safety and are requesting all the eleven Area Agencies submit, on a weekly basis, a detailed update report on the status of what the projects are planning on doing.

Charlotte reported the Northwest Federated Woman's Club continues to stay open. Tender Loving Care, who had to shut down due to a covid-19 case, has reopened. The Daniel Cantor Center opened in June and follows strict protocols to ensure its clients' safety. The Northwest Focal Point was planning on opening on October 5 but has not done so. In conversations with some of the providers, their main concern is whether they will have to shut down since their client attendance is low. We are continuing to provide the projects with face masks upon their request.

The Department of Elder Affairs sent out to all the Area Agencies an opportunity to apply for a SNAP Grant, which allow the AAA's to help seniors apply for food stamps. Staff prepared the needed information and submitted the application, and we were recently notified we were selected. Staff is in the process of setting the program up to begin in November. It will last for two years, with a possibility of reapplying in the future.

Our Health and Wellness classes are doing well. They continue to be advertised on our website and through social media. Flyers are also included in the meal delivery program. Anyone who knows of someone interested in these classes can call the Agency or go on our website.

The Health Foundation had been providing funding for the Health and Wellness classes to all the Area Agencies for the past few years to help train staff. Unfortunately, this funding is being eliminated, but they have offered to pay for free training one last time to interested AAA's. Charlotte has signed us up our AAA for the training.

Charlotte thanked Dr. Pandya for inviting her to participate at the symposium on Age-Friendly Health Care, held at NSU on September 25. She expressed it was a very rewarding and educational experience.

Dr. Pandya remarked it worked out very well with over 180 people registered and 140 actively participating and was well received by everyone.

The Dementia Care and Cure Initiative (DCCI) Committee is beginning to film their zoom educational training sessions on various topics to assist caregivers and people with dementia. These sessions will be made available on YouTube under ADRC TV and on our website.

The Executive Director shared she recently interviewed with Comcast NewsMakers to talk about our Agency services.

As previously discussed at a prior Board Meeting, Judge Ron Rothschild contacted Charlotte regarding members who have been on the Board and have not yet had an orientation. The Executive Director has prepared a list of people who wanted to participate, including Advisory Council members, and explained if anyone had a preference, she could move forward and set up the orientation through zoom communication within the next month or two or wait until after the New Year to calendar one at the Agency.

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The Executive Director announced our Finance Director, Natasha Elfarghali, has submitted her resignation. She has informed Charlotte she needed a few months off to deal with some personal issues that need to be addressed. Natasha is in the process of finalizing the invoicing on contracts and the meal delivery program, which has been behind and helping to complete unfinished responsibilities in the fiscal Department. Well wishes were extended to Natasha from the Members.

Senator Rich addressed the issue of Nursing Homes and expressed concern regarding the reduction of testing by the State. She maintains contact with Dr. Paula Thaqi, Director of the Florida Department of Health in Broward and feels Broward County may need to step in to fill the void due to the state reduction of testing. Broward County currently contracts with the Department of Health and ambulance companies to administer in-home testing for homebound seniors and the disabled. The County may need to increase the capacity of the homebound testing program.

Dr. Pandya commented from the provider standpoint and noted there is so much suffering due to a lack of socialization and care. She feels that the reopening of nursing homes is necessary but with caution and strong infection prevention.

Senator Rich again stressed the importance of the 2020 Census. Due to a recent court ruling, the date has been extended to October 31. The response rate for the County is currently at 62.9%. The County is extending the Workforce Campaign as well as other marketing strategies to help increase the count of the hard-to-enumerate population until October 31. Senator Rich urges everyone to get the word out, either through conversations or emails with their networks.

Senator Rich mentioned that while certain municipalities have had great success in meeting and exceeding their 2010 Census self-response rates, several cities are struggling to meet that goal. Municipality response rates range from 84% to 36.3%. The lowest counted cities include Hallandale Beach, Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, Deerfield Beach, Hillsboro Beach, and Pembroke Park. Senator Rich asked if anyone has any personal connections or influence with elected officials in those cities to reach out to their residents and encourage them to fill out their census forms.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

Excused Absences included: Manny Synalovski and Deborah Rand, had business commitments.

President Grant extended birthday wishes to Theodora Williams, who will celebrate her birthday on October 9.

ADJOURNMENT

Since there was no further business, by the motion of Alan Brass, seconded by Tim Curtin, President Grant adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Senator Nan Rich, Secretary

APPROVED _____