

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY
Friday, October 15, 2021**

Members Present

Ada Anderson	Douglas County
Barbara Boyer	Arapahoe County
Bob Brocker	At Large Denver
Bob Davis	City and County of Broomfield
Cary Johnson	Jefferson County
Cathy Noon	Arapahoe County
Connie Ward	Jefferson County
Dawn Perez	Adams County
Donna Mullins	Jefferson County
Houston "Tex" Elam	At Large Arapahoe County
Jim Dale	DRCOG Board - Golden
Karie Erickson	Douglas County
Wynne Shaw	DRCOG Board - Lone Tree

Guests Present

Allison Cutting, Douglas County Mobility, Conner McCarthy, Grants Manager Aging Resources of Douglas County, Kristine Burrows, Jewish Family Services, Mark Levine, DRCOG Consultant, Valerie Robson, Aging Resources

DRCOG Staff Present

AJ Diamontopoulos, AHC Manager, Ana Lilia Lahowetz, Case Manager Cassie Scott, I&A Manager, Christine Manikowski, AHC Navigator, Doug Rex, Executive Director, Jayla Sanchez-Warren, AAA Division Director, Marlene Priest, AHC Navigator, Michelle Martinez, Case Manager, Mindy Patton, AAA Division, Assistant Ryan McGee, Transitions Counselor, Sara Beth Ford, Refugee Program, Manager Shannon Gimbel, Ombudsman Manager, Sharon Day, AAA Business Operations Manager, Travis Noon, Senior Program Specialist, Zack Gibbons, Fiscal Specialist, Zayra Ordonez, AHC Administrative Assistant

Cathy Noon Committee Chair – Called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

Public Comment Period (Non-ACA Members)

There was no Public Comment.

Report of the Chair

Cathy participated in the Funding Subcommittee meeting which is in the process of reviewing the RFP application. She commended the subcommittee on the great job they were doing.

Report of the AAA Director

- Program updates
 - AHC team screened over 1,088 cases, 47% of those cases reported meeting at least one need. The top need was food, then housing, followed by transportation.
 - Rebranded the voucher program to Choice Services Program.

- In August, DRCOG provided 3,378 rides an increase of 37% from the previous month.
- Home voucher program provided over 1,000 hours of service in August.
- The veterans' program has 133 clients. They plan to add another staff person to the team at the beginning of the year.
- There were 45 facilities with COVID outbreaks with more assisted living facilities than previously.
 - The Attorney General will be opening an investigation regarding Innovage the PACE program. Shannon Gimbel provided this link https://gazette.com/premium/colorado-attorney-general-launches-probe-of-denver-based-home-health-provider/article_e63bc8bc-2883-11ec-be09-eb2a86b003cc.html. An audit was conducted in May, and they are awaiting results for possible legal action.
- Jayla was invited to be a part of a panel at a recent Golden city council study session which included Dale Elliott from Volunteers of America, Karen Stewart from Age Friendly Jefferson County and ACA member Donna Mullins. It was an unprecedented opportunity to do a 90-minute study session with the Golden City Council.

Jim Dale said he and City Councilman Paul Haseman were working to help the Golden senior population with a referral system and would like to dedicate some funding for the referrals.
- DRCOG is currently airing 15 second spots on PBS advertising SHIP open enrollment.
- SAPGA is making the following recommendations:
 - Continue funding for the Senior Policy Advisor, which is held currently by Jarett Hughes
 - Funding for statewide broadband access to include technology, training, and education.
 - Funding for an age-friendly public health initiative which brings groups together that are working on older adult health issues including health maintenance and disease prevention
 - Transportation infrastructure and design pilot focused on funding for dialysis transportation for older adults.

Bob Brocker added that they were getting closer to a pilot program with an expectation of starting in a few months and hope to work with DRCOG, CDOT and RTD. Jayla is interested in a cost-sharing model. Jim Dale suggested a provider fee to assist dialysis patients.
- Secure funding for savings education and outreach to help older adults prepare for retirement.
- SAPGA introduced an equity tool that will frame and develop opportunities to equalize resources and opportunities for all older adults
- There is more and more talk of equity, diversity, and inclusion in several meetings Jayla attended. There will be new regulations coming from the Administration on Aging that will include this.
- Jayla attended the National Association of Legal Services Developer meeting where they encouraged targeting services to specific groups such as LGBTQ+, immigration, Native American, Latino and Black populations. Inclusion of language and access for visually and hearing impaired
- The Administration of Community Living is asking for more data to support better health outcomes and support AAA services.

Move to approve consent agenda

Items on the consent agenda included: Summary of the October 15, 2021, meeting.

Agendas and summaries are posted on the DRCOG website located at <https://drcog.org/calendar> from there choose the month and date of the meeting, click on the event. Once clicked you will find the link to the meeting for that month.

Action Items

Status of ACA Transportation Subcommittee

- The goal of the Transportation Subcommittee was to prepare for an aging population, plan for the growth of the population and develop an infrastructure.
- The committee met six times and educated the group on all aspects of the program.
- The next step was to add members and begin to look at data gaps, what was working, what wasn't working. Initially there was no way to know how COVID would impact transportation providers who are now struggling with increased service requests and less staff.
- Jayla recommended delaying the work of the subcommittee until the spring of 2022 due to these staff shortages and increased service requests. She did not feel this was a good time to have providers pull data that may not be reliable due to COVID or take valuable time to participate in a committee.
- By the spring, staff will also know the status of the ARPA and Senate Bill 290 funding.

Discussion

There was discussion of expanding services to unserved areas such as Byers, Gilpin County and Clear Creek.

Motion

Tex Elam made the motion to postpone the Transportation Subcommittee until spring of 2022. Bob Davis 2nd the motion. Motion was unanimously approved.

Informational Briefings

Homeless and Housing Update

- Jayla said 30% of the AAA calls have been related to housing in the last month.
- Jayla, Rich Mauro, and others have been working to bring attention to the older adult homeless issue. They have met with elected officials, representatives from Senator Hickenlooper's office, the Governor's staff, and AARP
 - A Denver Post article from Alex Burnett generated a report on Channel 7 news.
 - DRGOG is producing a White Paper to send to elected officials and Jayla did an interview on Colorado Public Radio related to the issue.
- Jayla is working with the owner of the White Swan hotel in Lakewood to see if they would consider serving older adults who are homeless. Jayla spoke with the State Unit on Aging to see if some of the COVID funding could be used for housing vouchers, they said it could be done. Jayla is now working on internal processes and she hopes to have the program in place at the beginning of 2022

- There is another hotel further west on Colfax that may be bought. The buyer is interested in helping provide temporary housing for homeless older adults. Temporary housing would allow the homeless to get services and long-term housing.

Discussion

Carey Johnson mentioned there were people living in their cars at Walmart parking lots. Jayla said there is work going on with police and others to develop resources for safe parking lots that will have extra police patrols.

Jim Dale said that Golden now has a homeless coordinator and affordable housing coordinator on board.

There was more discussion regarding the cost of mobile home parks and how many are being sold or are renting at a premium. They are also being taxed as personal property rather than real estate.

Cathy said both Denver and Aurora have dedicated funding for the homeless. She suggested DRCOG begin to advocate and raise awareness within those systems.

County Reports

Arapahoe County – Cathy Noon

Centennial Senior Commission gave an update to their city council. They have five initiatives that they are tasked with researching costs. One was an electric shuttle to get seniors back and forth across Arapahoe Road.

Douglas County - Karie Erickson

Douglas County is seeing less participation in their county meeting.

Jayla and Karie had a good conversation with the state regarding the Douglas County kitchen. Due to the equipment shortages, there are waitlists and backorder issues for years with a 30% to 50% up charge. Finding commercial space in Douglas County has been difficult too.

Douglas County has come up with an idea for playgrounds to incorporate equipment for older adults. Older adults could get some physical therapy of their own while taking grandchildren to the playground. They would like to see it statewide. Larkspur is looking at the opportunity.

Jefferson County – Donna Mullins and Cary Johnson

Jefferson County sent out 168 certificates of appreciation in conjunction with their Senior Heals event recognizing frontline workers. They had 5 frontline workers who have gone above and beyond that will be interviewed by a videographer. Six mayors and three commissioners will be interviewed as well.

Carey mentioned that it has been difficult with COVID to get participation in the JCCOA meetings and that he foresees them struggling for quite a while.

Other Matters by Members

Tex Elam announced that he has agreed to serve on the board of Via.

Cathy is pursuing an idea to get vaccines out to people in Gilpin County called "Slots for Shots." It is working with a casino where DRCOG could provide the vaccine, a meal and the casino could donate a \$20 gambling card. Jayla said they could use the COVID vaccine funding, and it would be a good way to address lower vaccine rates.

Next meeting – **November 19, 2021**

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.