

# Allegan County Commission on Aging



3255 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite 200  
Allegan, MI 49010  
269.673.3333 - Office  
877.673.5333 – Toll Free  
269.673.0569 - Fax  
<http://www.allegancounty.org>

**Chairperson:** Larry Ladenburger  
**Vice Chairperson:** Alice Kelsey

## COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING - Minutes

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

9:00 -11:00 am

VIA ZOOM

### COMMISSIONERS

**Rick Cain**  
269-744-7918  
Shelbyville

**Dean Kapenga**  
616-218-2599  
Hamilton

**Chairperson**  
**Larry Ladenburger**  
(Senior Representative)  
269-673-6200  
Allegan

**Vice Chairperson**  
**Alice Kelsey**  
(Member At Large)  
269-366-0431  
Martin

### SENIOR MEMBERS

**Stuart Peet**  
269-672-9520  
Shelbyville

**Lou Phelps**  
269-870-3710  
Plainwell

**Natalie Van Houten**  
269-672-9359  
Shelbyville

### MEMBERS AT LARGE

**Richard Butler**  
616 902-0046  
Plainwell

**Patricia Petersen**  
616-644-8059  
Allegan

**Vacant**

**Vacant**

### STAFF

**Sherry Owens**  
269-686-5144  
Director

**Havilah MacInnes**  
269-673-3333 x 2495  
Senior Services  
Counselor

**CALL TO ORDER:** Called to order by chairperson, Larry Ladenburger at 9:11 am.

### CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM

### ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL

**Members Present:** Rick Cain, Larry Ladeburger, Alice Kelsey, Stuart Peet, Natalie Van Houten, Patricia Petersen, Rich Butler

**Others Present:** Sherry Owens, Havilah MacInnes, Jennifer Lemkuil, Alicia Lemmon and Sara Tague

**Absent:** Dean Kapenga and Luesettie Phelps

### COMMUNICATIONS: None

**APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES:** Alice Kelsey moved. Rick Cain supported. All in favor. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Alliance Home Health Care staff: Jennifer Lemkuil, Alicia Lemmon, Sara Tague

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Alice Kelsey moved. Rick Cain supported. All in favor, motion carried.

### PRESENTATIONS: NONE

### ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Director's Report:

1. Develop RFP for In-Home Supports

- Sherry states she had a meeting with Valdis 4/19/2021 regarding the in-home supports RFP. Expect the RFP to be released the first or second week in May. Currently there are thirty agencies who have expressed interest in this RFP and we anticipate successfully gaining another provider for in-home supports.

### Mission Statement

"Dedicated to serving Allegan County seniors by developing and coordinating services that support their independence, maintain their dignity, and preserve their quality of life"

## 2. Pre Plan Millage Renewal

- Fund Balance spend down: The call center is now in its second month. In March, we assisted 113 seniors in registering for their COVID vaccine. That is an average of approx. 27 calls per week. As of April 9th, we have assisted 35 seniors in April, so the service levels are increasing
- As part of our commitment to continuous quality improvement, the following changes have been made to this service to better serve the senior population in getting their vaccines as soon as possible:
  - Callers are asked if they have barriers to leaving their home and if they indicate they do, a detailed email is sent directly to appropriate Health Department staff to schedule an in-home vaccine
  - Callers who are able to attend a clinic are now registered and scheduled for an appointment at the location of their choice for the next scheduled clinic at the location
  - Callers are asked (at the conclusion of the call) if they need free transportation to the clinic, and if so, are provided the number to Allegan County Transportation and are urged to call immediately to schedule their ride
  - As we have done since the beginning, the callers are asked if they would like information regarding other Millage Services, and if they request it, a brochure is sent to their address

## 3. Increase Marketing and Outreach:

- The RFP for the marketing project will be released on Monday, April 12, 2021, with the following timeline:
  - April 20th - Questions from interested parties
  - April 22th - County response to all questions
  - April 29th - All bids are due
  - May 3 -7th - Review Committee scores makes selections
  - May 19th - COA approval and recommendation to BOC
  - May 27th - Board of Commissioners agenda item
  - May 31rd - Final Signatures

Before moving on, Rich Butler revisits the vaccination discussion from last meeting. He asked if there was an update on in house vaccinations. Sherry responds that was part of the revised questionnaire through the call center. Now if a senior has a physical barrier, his/ her name and contact information is sent directly to the Allegan County Health Department so that they can go out to the seniors home and provide their vaccine. This initiative is underway. While Sherry has no current information she plans to touch base with the health department and have an update for the next meeting in May.

Larry Ladenburger mentions the mobile vaccination vehicle that was sponsored by Gun Lake Casino.

## Financial Reports

- 2021 Senior Millage Budget Projections document revised. This revised form will now include projections for revenue in addition to the spending resulting in a more real-time/ accurate picture of fund balance spending moving forward.
- Currently we're seeing spending trends moving above where we were in 2020 and we're just getting into the shut down months.
- Sherry feels we'll at least be able to spend what was budgeted from fund balance thanks to the additional service initiatives we're spending on this year.
- Stuart Peet requests clarification of the 10% mandatory reserve. Sherry clarifies that the \$292,610 is the targeted reserve and projected unallocated funds year end is currently \$902,777.

## Outreach Report

- Havilah mentions we are still seeing a high demand for ramp assistance. One in three are potentially eligible for the community block grant.
- Direct care worker shortage is becoming a crisis. Wayland, Dorr, Fennville are rather difficult areas to staff as per every agency we have heard from. Providers all over Michigan are making big pushes and incentives such as higher pay, sign-on bonuses, etc. to bring workers in. People are not being very responsive.
- Mentioned concern over the staffing crisis will create negative attention due to not being able to provide services advertised. We can anticipate board members and commissioners may start to receive calls with regard to this situation.
- Additional complications in staffing are driving up requests for in-home supports through millage as people who are qualifying for MiChoice Waiver are having great difficulty staffing the hours granted. Even with difficulty, our in-home providers have been able to handle two recent emergency service requests immediately but this capability will be inconsistent depending on staffing.
- Havilah gave an overview based on recent ServTracker assessment. According to the client data base, as of December 2016, the millage had 322 active clients for all services and served a total of 761 seniors total. From December 2016 to present, the senior millage has serviced just under four thousand seniors and currently has 1,410 active.
- Larry asked about snowbirds coming home: do we see most of them coming home in April and May?
  - Answer: Not a lot right now. Most of the snow bird requests were back in February this year but many didn't travel last year due to COVID.
  - Additionally, many will not be eligible with returning.
- Problems persist with regard to referrals made for people who are not interested in millage services.
- Patricia asked about First-Quote Medicare. She received a text from this company.
  - Quarterly push from Medicare regarding low income and dual eligible seniors. Best advice is to not call or text them back. She can feel free to call Allegan County Seniors Services and speak with Havilah or Lauren.
  - Medicare is picking up- five new appointments just this past week alone.
- Havilah presents two cases of seniors we've helped lately. One is a MMAP client who had a medical emergency, was living on \$519 a month. Allegan County

Senior Services provided MMAP assistance as well as getting him signed up for some of the millage services. Another was a woman who experienced complications of her diabetes which caused her mobility issues. The hospital would not admit her due to COVID patients in house. She is 89, lives alone, and all her family providing support work full time. The family called unsure what to do with their own full time work schedules being impacted along with her worsening condition and inability to ambulate.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**1. Recommend Board of Commissioners revise COA By-Laws Round table**

- Larry Ladenburger- he’s fine with matching the other boards. We have two members pending and he would like to get them admitted.
- Alice Kelsey- she’s fine leaving it to the commissioners. She thought the process was that applications were submitted to Allegan County Senior Services, it was reviewed by chair and vice chair along with the commission then it would go up to the BOC. So will it now bypass the first part of the process?
- Sherry clarifies that she would forward new applications to Becky Blaine who would then manage adding the request to the BOC agenda. The important part is to standardize this process and make sure everyone is apprised of these changes.
- Rick Cain- our process is a bit more cumbersome than many other COA boards use. He would like to see it go to the more streamlined version.
- Stuart- agrees with Rick Cain to make the process move faster.
- Natalie VanHouten- She agrees with Rick and everyone else.
- Rich Butler- in favor of the simplification due to so many people being busy.
- Pat Petersen- is in agreement with everyone else. We should simplify the process.
- Larry clarifies we are voting to shorten with no additional verbage.
- Sherry goes on to review the additional changes to the By-Laws document:
  - Article 3A- regarding the process of appointing new board members.
  - Article 3F, it is a matter of policy and procedure for board members missing meetings.
  - Article X- there is now a bi-monthly administrator update to replace the annual reports.
  - Article XI- entire county budget is submitted by the executive director of finance

COMMISSION ON AGING ROLL CALL VOTE											
DATE:		April 21, 2021									
MOTION:		Recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the proposed revisions to the By-Laws									
MOVED BY:		Patricia Peterson									
SECONDED BY:		Rick Cain									
RICH BUTLER	RICK CAIN	DEAN KAPENGA	ALICE KELSEY	LARRY LADENBURGER	STUART PEET	PATRICIA PETERSON	LOU PHELPS	NATALIE VAN HOUTEN	VACANT	VACANT	
Y	Y	A	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y			

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **1. Provider meeting with COA**

- Sherry introduces three members of Alliance who was the only group to chose to attend today. Once the entire document has been presented, she would like to give Alliance a chance to speak to the group
- On Monday, April 12, 2021 Senior Services staff and the Chair/Vice Chair of the Commission on Aging met with the providers to discuss the potential capacity issues that could result from the proposed marketing campaign.
  
- Goals for this discussion:
  - Identify capacity that will be needed to support increases that potentially result from a successful marketing campaign
  - Identify maximum capacity with current providers
  - Identify barriers to increasing capacity
  - Develop a plan for managing increased service levels
  
- Current barriers:
  - Unit rates- especially for in-home supports
  - There was a lengthy discussion surrounding the intake and assessment process and the amount of work that occurs between when a referral is sent
  - High refusal rates-curently at 30%
  - Clients testing positive and staff exposure resulting in quarantines make staffing shortages even more difficult
  - Many of the other funders perform the case management task and simply send an authorization to bill for a pre-determined number of units weekly/monthly. These tasks are included in the Scope of Work for millage providers and the unit rate is higher for Millage services than MI Choice Waiver and other funding agencies based on the additional responsibilities.
  - The Home Delivered Meals are delivered in a truck that holds 288 hot meals. The current meals per day is between 210 and 225 depending the current count. UPDATE: Sherry received word that Senior Services, Inc is able to use an old “hot and cold truck” that would allow ample capacity, so the only barrier would be hiring an additional driver. Increases may necessitate adjusting delivery times in the future.

### **Issues and concerns surrounding the roll out of the Marketing Campaign:**

- As referrals begin to be submitted due to the increased marketing, there will be a need to hire additional aides, HDM drivers, assessors, etc. It would be helpful if the marketing firm could provide information on penetration rates, and expected rate of return on each of the proposed marketing strategies.
- Marketing strategies need to be deployed in a controlled manner so that new referrals don't overwhelm the system.
- Will the County's chosen marketing firm work with the providers to upscale their marketing of the County programs?

**Final thoughts and next steps:**

1. At the end of the Provider meeting, the providers were asked to send an email to Sherry by the end of Thursday (4/15) with the following:
    - The agency's top 1-3 major concerns or suggestions
    - The agency's maximum capacity to service level that their agency is capable of providing
    - Any other suggestions that were not discussed today
  - Now that all questions were received Sherry will send a recap email, distributed to all attendees, that provides the detailed discussions concerned and answering any questions that were asked.
  - After the Marketing RFP is awarded and a timeline for the overall marketing strategy has been established, a similar meeting will take place to provide a general timeline for the proposed kick off to allow the providers to evaluate their current staffing levels, and begin to plan for increases.
  - Intake and initial assessment processes and the ability to share common forms will be reviewed to improve the process and minimize the waste in time and effort.
2. **Update on COVID Vaccination support**
    - Answer Connrec tis our call service to register for the covid vaccine with the Allegan County Health Department.
    - In March we had 113 calls
    - We adjusted the call in the beginning in April so we will look at those number next meeting
  3. **AAAWM Local Match Request**
    - Local match for allean County is \$4,258, this amount has not changed since 2019
    - Local Match is required by Federal and State funded aging programs that provide services in your area to older adults and their families

**NOTICE OF APPOINTMENTS:** 2 At Large seats vacant

**Applications Pending: Sally Heavener and Rachel Brenner**

- Update: Rachel has declined at this time and Sally was approved by the BOC

**FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Have Rick, Natalie and Stuart, who sit on the area agency of aging board, give a subcommittee report each COA meeting. This will begin in May

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Pat and Rich are on the outreach committee. There is nothing new to report at this time. This is tabled until the marketing firm is established

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion to adjourn made by Patricia Petersen and seconded by Stuart Peet. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned by Larry Ladenburger at 11:20am.

Next Meeting – May 19, 2021, 9 – 11 am via ZOOM