

ORANGE COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD ON AGING  
MINUTES

March 15, 2011

PRESENT: Leo Allison, Heather Altman, Alex Castro, Peggy Cohn, Ed Flowers, Mary Fraser, Steve Lackey, Haryo Marsosudiro, Mike Symons, Janice Wells

GUEST: Pat Sprigg

STAFF: Myra Austin, Gwen Harvey, Kathie Kearns, Kathy Porter, Vibeke Talley, Janice Tyler

The meeting was called to order at the Central Orange Senior Center by Vice-Chair Mary Fraser. Following introductions, the minutes of the February 8 meeting were approved following the motion made by Alex Castro and the second by Peggy Cohn. A report on the Senior Tar Heel Legislature meeting by delegate Janice Wells was added to the agenda.

In her Director's Report, Janice Tyler announced her appointment as Director of the Department on Aging. She reported that an orientation of new Advisory Board members had been conducted for Alex Castro, Mary Fraser and Ed Flowers on March 3. Ms. Tyler and Heather Altman presented the 2010 Master Aging Plan Annual Report to the Board of County Commissioners. Leo Allison, Alex Castro and Jan Wells met with Ms. Tyler to review the Outside Agency Funding Requests that had been submitted to Orange County for senior services. Mr. Castro noted that there was great variance among the applicant agencies and the amount of funding they requested for the number of Orange County residents served. Ms. Wells stated that each application was carefully reviewed and Mr. Allison added that some did not follow application guidelines. The completed score sheets are available for viewing. Gwen Harvey explained that these recommendations will be reviewed by Orange County Financial Services.

Janice Tyler gave a summary of the financial status of Senior Care's Adult Day Health Services program. She announced that the Board of Directors will decide at its April meeting if the program has sufficient funding to continue operation. The Program Director, Alvon Baldwin, is sending board members weekly census reports. Ed Flowers, who serves as Senior Care Treasurer, noted that the program's sliding scale fee schedule does not generate sufficient revenue to cover operational costs even with increased enrollment. Additionally, transportation is an issue. Mary Fraser stated that she has been working with day health clients to obtain Veteran's Administration funding but the process is very cumbersome.

Janice Tyler announced that the Department on Aging's Resource Connections Fair at University Mall will be held on March 23.

RSVP Director Kathy Porter informed the Advisory Board that the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal sponsor of the Orange County program, is being threatened with loss of funding. The Corporation is asking that communities who benefit from the local volunteer program voice their support to their legislators. Peggy Cohn asked for specific numbers of individuals enrolled and agencies assisted by this program. Leo Allison requested that the support campaign information be sent to Advisory Board members electronically.

Upon her arrival Chair Heather Altman shared a letter received from the Board of County Commissioners in appreciation of the Master Aging Plan presentation made at their March 3 meeting. The letter also commended the Advisory Board on Aging for its accomplishments in 2010 and requested that any survey proposed for the next MAP Update have their prior approval.

Peggy Cohn announced that Capstone Project proposal, submitted to the UNC Department of Health Behavior/Health Education, is one of 17 projects to be presented to graduate students and faculty on March 18. Ms. Tyler added that the Department has also submitted a request for a summer practicum student, with funding provided by Carol Woods and the Friends organizations.

Janice Tyler announced that a vacancy on the Triangle J Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council still exists. Mary Fraser volunteers to join Jeane Suddarth, Heather Altman, and Jan Wells as Orange County representatives. The next meeting is March 29.

Assistant County Manager Gwen Harvey suggested that the Board of County Commissioners be notified of the potential loss of RSVP funding and the letter-writing campaign as well as the proposed MAP Update community assessment. Kathie Kearns distributed a summary of the FY 2012 budget request with the breakout of revenues and expenses.

The Chair introduced Pat Sprigg, President and Chief Executive Officer of Carol Woods Retirement Community. Ms. Sprigg had co-chaired the initial Master Aging Plan in 2000-2001. The Advisory Board asked her share her reflections on the previous Plan process. She complimented the background material that was made available and the progression of significant accomplishments. However, she did feel that the process was labor intensive and the structure was cumbersome. She stressed that a successful public/private partnership must involve the community, not plan for it. She suggested that the wide base of participation could be more streamlined. She supported the aging-friendly community theme. She also stressed the need for an easy mechanism for monitoring its success.

Ms. Sprigg questioned the necessity of so many subcommittees, created by dividing the Plan by functional status. She suggested clarifying the role of the Board of County Commissioners, the Towns, department staff, and Triangle United Way. A review of what remains to be done from the previous Master Aging Plan Update, the Community Resource Connections grant, and the Governor's Conference on Aging report could be very beneficial. Other County Aging Plans are more succinct and may provide tools for tracking time frames and responsible parties.

Ms. Sprigg noted that the enormous amount of participation created synergy. This endeavor requires more publicity, especially in the private sector. Streamlining the planning document will result in easier readability. Jan Wells asked if the NC Division of Aging Plan's style is too simple. Ms. Sprigg responded that the key is to state what can reasonably be accomplished in the five-year period. Mary Fraser asked about the size of the Steering Committee, which previously included all subcommittee chairs. Ms. Sprigg suggested that subcommittee chairs could report to the Steering Committee without having membership. This Committee could be the evaluation group for the process. Discussion followed about how the evaluation process could be designed.

The Chair asked the Advisory Board to consider its next step in this pre-plan process. Ms. Sprigg noted that the Orange County Master Aging Plan was the first in North Carolina and one of the first in the nation when it was adopted in 2001. She stated that Carol Woods has a three-year plan with an annual work plan. The key is to solicit community input early in the process, using the community engagement model to reach a cross-section of the population. She referred to the large amount of data collected for the previous plans that is available for use. Janice Tyler announced that several folks have responded to the Senior Times notice to volunteer for this planning process.

The Chair asked the subcommittee who had reviewed other Plans (Allison, Castro, Fraser, Wells) to report their findings. Ms. Fraser stated that many followed the NC Division of Aging Plan format by identifying six issues. The State Plan focused on categories of services: those to protect, improve, or expand. Another way to evaluate service was to identify gaps in the system. Mary Fraser remarked that town hall meetings are time consuming but the information gained would be very valuable. Ed Flowers suggested targeting the Northern Orange, West Hillsborough, White Cross and Bingham communities for input. The Cooperative Extension network and the Department on Aging listserv are other avenues. A draft of the timetable was reviewed with the Plan Update to be present to the County Commissioners in May, 2012. Alex Castro suggested that the State Plan could be the template for the Orange County Update. Ms. Fraser added that the Advisory Board could recommend the guiding principles for the Plan and the Steering Committee could develop the content.

The plan review subcommittee agreed to review the Division of Aging Plan and make a recommendation on its use as the template to the Advisory Board. The Board Chair and Department Director will join in this effort. Ms. Harvey noted that the Healthy Carolinians are currently conducting a community health assessment that may provide information that will be useful to the planning process.

Jan Wells summarized the Senior Tar Heel Legislature 2011 priorities just adopted at the meeting in Raleigh:

- Expand Project Care \$1.5 million
- Increase HCCBG by \$5 million (17,000 currently on waiting list for services)
- Increase funding for senior centers by \$2 million
- Mandate random drug testing for long term care facilities staff
- Add four mobile units to the dental care program

Ms. Wells announced the upcoming NC Elder Abuse Awareness campaign.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Tyler  
Secretary