

**Orange County Department on Aging  
Advisory Board on Aging**

**MINUTES**

March 8, 2022

Seymour Center / Virtual

Attendance: Lucinda, Heather Altman, Colin Austin, Rachel Bearman, Jenny Womack, Jeff Charles, Vibeke Talley, James Harris. Staff: Myra Austin, Beverly Shuford, Janice Tyler, Kim Lamon-Loperfido, Shenae McPherson

Guest: Lucinda Poole

Excused: Jerry Gregory, Dick White,

1. Introductions and Announcements
  - a. Introductions and welcome to guest and potential board member, Lucinda Poole
  - b. Announcement that A Helping Hand (our only non-profit in-home care provider) has closed. This is a major loss to our community.
2. Approval of Minutes – February 8, 2022
  - a. Approved with the correction of the spelling of Vibeke's name

Director's Report

3. COVID Update and Department operations
  - a. Effective March 7, the OC BOCC and municipalities removed the mask mandates
  - b. Both centers will return to pre-pandemic room and building capacities
  - c. All close contact activities are resuming
  - d. Transition of lunch program to a dual model – in-person dining and curbside pick-up.
    - i. Participants were surveyed as to which they preferred (12 Seymour/15 Passmore want to return in person). We expect that to increase as the word spreads that inside dining is available.
    - ii. Home deliveries to those that are transit dependent will be discontinuing in 1.5 weeks as Transit services to the Centers resumes. At that time, home deliveries of meals will end. Transit dependent participants who do not come in to the centers and who qualify will be transitioned to MOW.
    - iii. Mask mandate in place on public transit through the 18<sup>th</sup>.
    - iv. Lunch program will resume to 5 days a week.
  - e. Resuming OCPT transit services to the Centers
    - i. Janice met with the director of OCPT on 3/7/2022, to gear back up to bring folks back to the Passmore Center
    - ii. There is a OCPT funding issue and the senior center transportation is now not in their budget

- iii. Driver shortages, vehicles needing updated and funding are all an issue
    - iv. This service has been in place for 35 years, our seniors don't have the funds to pay for roundtrip transportation (\$6 round trip per day in urban zone; \$25.50 one way from the rural areas)
    - v. Janice will continue to work with and advocate for OCPT budgeting for transportation for seniors
    - vi. OCPT ridership is way down from pre-pandemic level
  - f. Seymour Center evening/weekend hours will resume in the near future
    - i. Looking at April 1, to resume at Seymour.
    - ii. Evening/weekend hours at the Passmore Center depends on the SportPlex using our facility and reimbursing us for the staff time to open the facility
  - g. With masks being optional, it is important for everyone to be respectful of each person's choice concerning masks
    - i. New County mask signage will be translated into Spanish and Mandarin. We will keep old signs just in case we need them.
    - ii. We can encourage, but cannot require a resident to mask up, unless in a healthcare setting. It is importance to respect everyone's choice.
    - iii. Hybrid classes will be offered from now on as part of our service standards
    - iv. Participants are coming back slowly to in-person activities
- 4. N95 Masks Distribution – 800+ persons received masks from the Senior Centers, and this without advertising. We still have a small quantity of masks available.
- 5. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program update
  - a. The majority of the VITA volunteers are only comfortable doing the virtual program. A small core of volunteers will now offer pilot Valet Service. To get started we will not advertise the valet service. Instead, we will reach out to county residents who have contacted VITA and that do not have access to technology.
  - b. Offering two free online virtual VITA options: 1) GetYourRefund.org/Cash4NC (by Code for America). Individuals upload their documents and Orange County VITA volunteers prepare their taxes, and 2) MyFreeTaxes (by United Way), a “do it yourself” option.
  - c. We have served over 300 with the online options
  - d. Only IRS certified volunteers can receive and scan the drop-off document. The actual prep is then done via phone
  - e. We recognize that that this new drop-off service is needed for our older adults and low-income individuals
  - f. Not offering in-person and drop-off VITA services was not our choice. The volunteers were not willing to do in-person/drop-off due to the pandemic.

## New Business

- 6. 2022-23 Budget

- a. The budget was submitted on February 17. At that time staff was not aware there was no funding for senior center transportation services from OCPT.
  - b. Requested a five hour per week increase in hours for our Food Service Coordinator. This request will move this position from 35 hrs to 40 hrs per week. This increase in hours will be funded through HCCBG.
  - c. American Rescue Plan asked to continue to fund and to increase the funding for the lunch program
  - d. Outside Agency Application Review – Scorecards have been submitted. Thank you Dick, Colin, Jeff and Vibeke for scoring the applications.
  - e. Lucinda recommended we reach out to the Keenan Foundation for ~5k for special initiative funding
7. Aging Board vacancies/recruitment/reappointments
- a. A couple of Board members reappointment.
    - i. Vibeke agreed to be appointed for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term
    - ii. Heather has served her two terms but Janice will be requesting one year extension from the BOCC
    - iii. Lucinda Poole is applying for board membership. Janice will send a letter of recommendation on behalf of the Aging Board to the BOCC.
    - iv. Two vacancies will remain with preference being given to rural Orange County and racially diverse applicants
    - v. Recruit from the Project EngAGE and MAP workgroup members

#### 2022-27 Master Aging Plan

- 8. Workgroup meetings are continuing. Most groups are now on meeting 3 of 5, except for the Housing workgroup who finished in 3 meetings
- 9. Board members thoughts on the how the process is going
  - a. Housing – Dick White
  - b. Community Supports and Health Services – Rachel Bearman, Jerry Gregory, Heather Altman
  - c. Civic Participation and Employment – Colin Austin
  - d. Outdoor Space and Buildings – James Harris, it is a lot of work and it shows how strong this administration is and that the outcome will be good for the County
  - e. Social Participation – Jenny Womack
  - f. Communication and Information – Vibeke Talley
  - g. Transportation – Jeff Charles
- 10. MAP Leadership Team – Workgroup Leaders, Board Chair, Racial Equity Team and interns meet weekly to talk though any issues and provide help as needed
- 11. Scheduling in-person MAP Steering Committee meeting April 8, 10a – 12p, at Carol Woods Retirement Community. We will share information in individual groups and get steering committee input
- 12. New look for the next MAP

- a. Working with the County graphic designer to design a professional final MAP report. Goal is to be completed to present on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May during Older Americans Month

13. Continuing to work on Key Informant Interviews

Committee Progress Reports if needed:

14. Dementia Friendly Business Campaign

- a. Five trainings have happened or are scheduled
  - i. Margaret Lane Art Gallery renewing
  - ii. Manley Estates/Adelaide Walters
  - iii. MOW
  - iv. OWASA (training 3 shifts)
  - v. The Downsizers renewing
- b. Contact the Aging Helpline if your agency is interested in training/renewing [agingtransitions@orangecountync.gov](mailto:agingtransitions@orangecountync.gov), 919-968-2087

15. Senior Tar Heel Legislature – Dick White, no report

16. Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committee, no report

17. Nursing Home Community Advisory Committee – Vibeke Talley

- a. When they get the okay to go ahead they will be back in the nursing homes. Nursing homes are open to the public, but not to the NH CAC's yet. They are trained and ready to go as soon as they get the go-ahead

18. Friends of the Passmore Center, no report

19. Friends of the Seymour Center, no report

Adjournment

**Next meeting: April 12, 2022 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. – Passmore Center and Virtual**

