

Governor's Advisory Council on Aging
June 7 and 8, 2011
Minutes

Attendance: Gladys Considine, Marvin Carter, CA Buckley, Mary Lou Miller, Betty Aye, Jo Lynn Yenne,
Al Ward, Jessie James Howley
Absent: Beverly Barnhart, Connie Bremner, Lauren Kippen
Guests: Shannon Lewis, Claudia Clifford
Staff: Kerrie Reidelbach, John McCrea, Brian LaMoure, Charlie Rehbein

Opening:

Chairman Considine opened the meeting at 2:05 PM with a discussion related to flooding and other weather related concerns across the state.

Reports from Council:

Mary Lou Miller reported that doctors in their area are refusing to take new Medicare patients. She also reported that oil business is still booming and that there are man camps set up. She was also glad we got the Big Sky Rx program back.

Jo Lynn reported that Kalispell got more transportation funds and is expanding services. She also reported that the home delivered meals in the Thompson Falls area were not open to receive any new admissions at this time.

Al Ward informed us that the Montana Wyoming Tribal Council held a Health Conference. He said people are not referred out unless it is a life and death issue. He also noted that Medicare Advantage on the Reservations takes money way from Tribal Health.

Legislative Update and Summary:

Claudia Clifford presented a legislative update. She handed out the AARP Montana Legislative Report for 2011. She reported that it was a hard session for human services programs. There was great advocating this session with a lot of involvement from the field and it really helped. There were over 25,000 post cards mailed in supporting senior issues.

The Aging network got the \$1.5 million of one-time-only funds which the Legislature has given them over the past couple of sessions back in the budget as one-time-only funds by taking the funds out of the Older Montanans Trust Fund.

The Big Sky Rx Program was restored but capped at 11,000 people. It was made whole again and is funded with Tobacco funds. At one point, the Legislature was going to use a little over \$3 million per year out of the Older Montanans Trust Fund as one-time-only funding but opted to keep the program whole but just cap it.

The Older Montanans Trust Fund had grown to about \$9,480,000 since 2007 when it was established. Out of these funds, the Legislature gave Aging Programs \$1,500,000 per year or a total of \$3 million for the 2012-2013 biennium as one-time-only funding, which means that these funds are not part of the base budget. They also put about \$6,340,000 for the biennium into the General Fund. They left about \$140,000 as a balance in the trust fund. Unless a trust fund is growing and has a funding source, history shows that the Legislature will raid it and even then they can take it unless it is a Constitutional Trust such as the Noxious Weed Trust Fund and the Coal Trust Fund.

There was some discussion about new legislators and if they understood the bills. It was noted that it is very important to educate your legislators prior to them coming to the session.

The discussion turned to national level and the debt ceiling issue and the effects it could have on services for not just our elderly but all programs. It was agreed as individuals, we can write letters to our congressional delegation as well as letters to the editor.

Aging Bureau Staff Reports:

John McCrea, Legal Services Developer, reported the Legal Services program is continuing to grow. There are about 160 legal issues the program deals including consumer debt and tenant landlord agreements. The legal documents and advice clinics have been a huge success and cover issues like durable powers of attorney, wills and living wills. The clinics use volunteer attorneys and Para Legals to assist and review the senior's legal documents. Some of the attorneys involved have come out of curiosity and have left wanting to be involved if we have another clinic in their area.

Kerri Reidelbach reported on Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs). We have six Area Agencies involved in being an ADRC. We have been coordinating with Independent Living Centers to help provide service and assistance to the disability community. As part of our current grant, we are developing ADRC partnerships, a mission statement and work groups. ADRCs are designed to be a one-stop or single point of entry for assistance and services for the elderly and disabled persons.

Charlie reported that Kelly Moore was back in a temporary position as the State Ombudsman. Traci Clark, the assistant state ombudsman took a new job with the Quality Assurance Division dealing with Licensing including Nursing Homes. Once the ombudsman position has been reviewed and approved, we will be hiring. We hope it is done by the end of August.

State Plan on Aging:

A copy of the State Plan on Aging was handed out. We did not receive any comments that required any changes but did clarify a few of our objectives and action steps for the Administration on Aging based on their review of our draft.

Centenarians and Centenarian Businesses:

We will be honoring centenarians and have been asked to consider honoring centenarian businesses as well this year. The Secretary of State's office has been identifying businesses and organizations that have been part of Montana's history for the past 100 years.

We will be doing a press release and trying to get information to long term care facilities so we can get identify and honor those 100 or older. We will take those who will be turning 100 by December 31 of this year. There was some discussion about recognizing and honoring centenarians year round. Some of the ideas were pictures in schools, a centenarian wall in the Capital, have birthdays put on community calendars, put them on a website, have AAA's contact local press, set up a website and contact point something like mtcentenarians@mt.gov, and have local ombudsman help identify those in long term care facilities. Work with OPI to do a statewide school project to have students interview 100 year olds, get some history from them, could be an English assignment, identify cultural differences and their contributions. Could make it a news event and tie it to Grandparents day in September.

Motion was made and passed to have a website established for centenarians on the SLTC webpage with the criteria that the person may be 99 years old but will be turning 100 before December 31st of the year we are in.

Motion was made and passed to have Jo Lynn contact OPI to explore a writing program to recognize Montanans 100 years old in area (city or county).

Pictures of centenarians must be in by September 1, 2011.

There was some discussion regarding centenarian businesses and that we would be coordinating those through the Secretary of State's office.

Motion was made and passed to include the 100 year old businesses and organizations in the program and at the luncheon.

Conference in October:

Theme is "Celebrating the Past, Charting the Future".

This year we are going to an on-line registration process. People can register by going to our website click on the Conference and register. While we have not done this before, it is suppose to work well and save us a ton of time.

Brian LaMoure went over the agendas for both conference sites. Al would work with Brian regarding presentation of the Flag in Billings. The second day in Billings will start at 8:00. Brian has a list of the booth costs and ads for the program.

Sponsorship for the mini-grants has been good; we will have several thousand dollars to give out in grants this year. Brian will set up the review committee.

There was some discussion about having a raffle again this year. It was agreed we would do one.

Brian will have two conference calls regarding the two sites next week.

Next meeting will be a conference call in September.