

**MINUTES**  
**Utah Commission on Aging**  
**August 25, 2008**  
**12:30 – 2:30 pm**

**Commission Member Attendees:**

Norma Matheson  
Maureen Henry  
Rep. Steven Mascaro  
Michael Deily for David Sundwall  
Cherie Brunker  
Mayor JoAnn Seghini  
Gary Kelso  
Mark Supiano  
Ryan Christiansen for Diana Kirk  
Helen Thatcher for Kristin Cox  
Sheldon Elman for Shauna O’Neil  
Nels Holmgren for LM Church  
William Cox  
Sheriff Jim Winder

**Representing:**

Chair  
Executive Director  
Utah House of Representatives  
Utah Department of Health  
Health Care  
Utah League of Cities and Towns  
Long-Term Care  
Higher Education  
Financial Institutions  
Workforce Services  
Salt Lake County Aging Services  
Utah Department of Human Services  
Utah Association of Counties  
Public Safety

**Other attendees:**

Laura Owen, OPG  
Donna Russell, OPG  
Fran Wilby, U of U College of Social Work  
TantaLisa Clayton, Utah Legal Services

The meeting was called to order by Norma Matheson, Chair.

**1. Welcome, Introductions, and Lunch Provided**

The minutes from June 3 were approved.

**2. Status Report**

- Long-Term Care: The Committee has drafted principles to guide creation of a long-term care system, and will be meeting shortly to discuss the next steps in the process. There is also a Committee at the Legislature that was convened by Representative Newbold. This committee has a parallel draft of principles as well. The Long-Term Care Committee will be working to finalize the vision statement.
- State Workforce: The NGA Technical Assistance Grant application was not approved. Although Utah was not accepted, the program officer encouraged us to send two representatives to attend the national Policy Academy meeting in Maryland. Members from the Commission will be meeting with the Governor; one of the questions will be whether the Governor wants the Commission to take

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on any additional role in the cross-department workforce issue based on the Utah 2030 results.

- Mental Health: The Committee is working on an IRB application for the survey to providers. The Committee has been working closely with OPG staff on the question of what is the population of people who lack health care decision-making capacity and also lack an appropriate health care decision maker. The survey will give a sense as to what the facilities are doing with this population of patients so that the need can be assessed.
- Advance Health Care Directives: The Commission obtained a grant from the Michael Foundation in the amount of \$10,000. This grant will provide outreach regarding the advanced directives to ethnic and minority communities throughout the state. After meeting with various community leaders and members from the Department of Health, it became evident that, before a program can be established, people first need to be introduced to the concepts in an educational session to determine whether the communities have an interest in participating. There will be an educational session on September 18 at the Department of Health to provide background information on the Advance Directives. After the session, we will solicit involvement from various ethnic and minority community leaders.

The grant application to the R. Harold Burton Foundation for \$20,000 was not approved.

In addition, training on the Advance Directives continues to health care providers across the state.

- Geriatric Loan Forgiveness: The Commission is planning to move forward with legislation that will provide loan forgiveness for health care providers with expertise in geriatrics. An amendment to the existing rural health legislation administered by the Office of Rural Health is the recommended course of action. This would open up the program to physicians and advanced nurse practitioners with advanced training in geriatrics. Senator Davis has agreed to open a bill file for the upcoming legislative cycle; he is discussing co-sponsorship with other senators. The Commission will seek support from the Utah Medical Education Council and other associations.
- Financial Security: The Committee, working with AARP, is in the final phase of having a tool ready to evaluate the Financial Security Guide. After the tool goes through IRB, educational pilot programs will begin at employer sites. It is important to measure the effectiveness of intervention, not only with the Guide, but with any product the Commission puts out.

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- Sustainability: The Commission supported the successful application for VA Western Region Rural Health Resource Center. Byron Bair, a member of the Mental Health Subcommittee, will serve as the Center's Director. Salt Lake City was one of three regional sites selected to serve older vets in rural areas. The targeted population of this center will be on Native American and geriatric veterans with a focus on access and technology. The Commission was also instrumental in creating a Higher Education Committee of colleges and universities throughout the state; BYU Director of Gerontology Vaughn Call had a preliminary role in providing the data for the application. The center will receive two million dollars annually for five years.

Another application supported by the Commission is a grant to be submitted to the Center for Disease Control to form a Injury Prevention Center to be led by a new faculty member from University of Utah's Department of Surgery who is interested in geriatric trauma; particularly, fall prevention. If approved, this grant would provide an opportunity to partner with the Rural Health Resource Center to get a fall prevention program to rural areas throughout the state. The Commission has recruited providers willing to train seniors in rural communities and test the training through telemedicine; providers will use a model previously used by physical therapists.

The Commission's applications to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Atlantic Philanthropies to support policy projects were not approved. The Commission is working to build links with the Archstone Foundation. The Foundation created three endowed chairs, one of which is the Scott M. Matheson Chair in Health Care Studies at the University of Utah. The Foundation's priorities are end-of-life, fall prevention, and elder abuse.

The Commission will also submit an application to the Borchard Foundation on Law and Aging; they fund aging policy work.

There will be a Strategic Planning Meeting before the meeting with the Governor to discuss sustainability, strategies, and long-term plans for the Commission. One recommendation is the proposal to continue the Commission as a Governor's Commission, even without the funding. The Commission is likely to have funds left over at the end of this year, and the trend in federal government funding seeks a feedback loop and a relationship between researchers and state and local government agencies. Representative Mascaro asked Maureen about a statement in the June 3, 2008, Minutes: "The Commission may wish to seek continuation as The Commission on Aging without state funding. This would improve the ability to obtain funding elsewhere....." He asked if seeking the funding if the Commission was not part of the state would be easier or not. Maureen replied that seeking the funding as a formal state entity has both its up sides and down sides. There is language in the statute that allows the Commission to bring in

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money as a state entity. Maureen clarified the minutes by stating that keeping the Commission in place as a state entity would improve the chances of obtaining funding, but not getting money from the state would not improve the chances of obtaining funding.

Maureen estimated that the Commission has funds for a reduced six months after July 1. If the Commission is not renewed, we will find ways to use any unallocated funds to meet the Commission's statutory obligations.

Mayor Seghini talked about the FACTS Program, which was a group of agencies similar to those that are represented on the Commission, and asked them to plug into their budgets to support aging. The Commission can accept donations.

- Archie Archuleta has requested that he and Maureen consider going to the National Hispanic Council on Aging Meeting in Albuquerque in the fall. There will be sessions relevant to what the Commission is working on. As more information becomes available, the Commission will be informed via e-mail.
- Elaine Jarvik and Lois Collins from the Deseret News are working on Features on Aging which should be forthcoming shortly.

**3. Elder Abuse in Utah**

TantaLisa Clayton explained that the survey was a starting point in identifying concerns. The purpose of the survey was to increase awareness of elder abuse by law enforcement, identify and close gaps, and potentially increase prosecutions of elder abuse at all levels. TantaLisa thanked Sheriff Winder for his contributions to this project.

Sheriff Winder explained that elder abuse is an under-reported, un-identified secret in our society. The survey was startling and yet not surprising in that law enforcement officers do not and will not know the subtleties until training occurs and there are specialized units to gain a handle on the problem. Trying to continue the initiative, either by the Commission, or by a task force, will move ahead aggressively to form an elder abuse unit.

Maureen explained that this survey was designed to give to law enforcement officers. We received 200 responses out of a possible 400. The level was patrol officers. Sheriff Winder confirmed that the majority of responses came from road officers. The average age was 30, predominately white male, high school to associate degree level. The questions were drafted by the Public Safety Subcommittee; Scott Wright supervised Wendy Thomas, as part of her master's program in Gerontology. The survey was piloted with law enforcement officers across the state; it was fine-tuned and then piloted with Sheriff Winder. The survey was based on the Palmore Facts on Aging Quiz, which looks

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at knowledge of facts about people as they age, and also looks at negative and positive bias. The survey results comprise a unique data set; nothing else has been done like this nationally, and could have national significance.

12% of the people surveyed thought they had all the training they needed on elder abuse; 16% said they did not have training, but did not any more training; and 72% said they either wanted or needed additional training. 71% responded either that they were not familiar with the definition of a vulnerable adult (29.5%), or that they were unsure if they were familiar with the definition of a vulnerable adult. Responses to the qualitative questions suggest that even the 29% that reported they are familiar with the definition were not necessarily familiar with it. 80% showed negative bias toward the aging; 9% showed positive bias; 5% showed no bias.

The case studies presented were true examples from Adult Protective Services; Maureen noted that APS made around 250 referrals to law enforcement in the previous year. Out of these 250, only a single digit number were charged; APS was not aware of any prosecutions. APS does not have prosecutorial authority; they can only refer to law enforcement or the prosecutor.

The resulting policy responses confirmed that:

- More training is needed
- Need better data collection
- Form multidisciplinary committees to address matters
- Consider dedicated prosecutor. The most effective program in the nation is in San Diego; they have a prosecutor whose sole job is elder abuse.

Sheriff Winder stated that elder abuse cases will be housed in the Family Crimes Unit. Maureen said that the next discussion within the Public Safety Committee will be how to use the results.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.