

Utah Commission on Aging
Minutes for August 31, 2006

Commission Member Attendees:	
TantaLisa Clayton	Utah Legal Services
Michael Deily (for David Sundwall)	Utah Department of Health
Tani Downing	Utah Department of Workforce Services
Rob Ence	AARP
Lisa-Michele Church	Utah Department of Human Services
Pat Jones	Utah House of Representatives
Norma Matheson	Honorary Chair
Shauna O'Neil	Salt Lake County Aging Services
Rev. Robert Shrank	St. John's Lutheran Church
Sara Sinclair	Sunshine Terrace Foundation
Scott Wright (for Anne Peterson)	University of Utah
Commission Members Unable to Attend:	
Allen Christensen	Utah Senate
William Cox	Rich County
Michael Jones	Utah Department of Financial Institutions
Leone Harwood	Utah Department of Transportation
Joette Langianese	Rural Health Management
Larry Marx	Taylorville Police Department
Kristie McMullin	Southwest Applied Technology College
Jason Perry	Governor's Office of Economic Development
Anne Peterson	Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
JoAnn Seghini	Midvale City
Michael Styles	Utah Office of Ethnic Affairs
Dr. David Sundwall	Utah Department of Health
Other Attendees:	
Lori Gawf	Utah Office of Public Guardian
Nels Holmgren	Utah Department of Aging and Adult Services
Lynn Samsel	Coalition of Non-profits
Cathy House	University of Utah
Stephen Jardine	Governor's Office of Planning and Budget
Jileene Gunther	Utah Department of Aging and Adult Services
Alan Ormsby	Utah Department of Aging and Adult Services
Robyn Kempker	
Ellen Silver	Jewish Community Center
Annika Smith	Jewish Community Center
Meghan Thomas	Jewish Community Center
Denise Brooks	University of Utah
Marilyn Luptak	University of Utah
Ann Smith	
Angie Welling	Deseret Morning News
Cynthia Boshard	Intermountain Healthcare
Dr. Mark Supiano	University of Utah

The meeting was called to order by Chair Norma Matheson.

The meeting will be taped according to the updated Open and Public Meetings Act.

Shauna O'Neil made a motion to approve the June 20 meeting minutes; the motion was seconded by Lisa-Michele Church and was passed unanimously.

Sara Sinclair made a motion to approve the list of Special Committee and Work Group members; the motion was seconded by Rob Ence and was passed unanimously.

Special Committee/Work Group Updates

Scott Wright provided an update on the completed Sourcebook which is a directory of educational opportunities for older individuals and a directory of educational opportunities for those who want to study the field of aging. The Sourcebook currently resides electronically on the University of Utah web-site at <http://aging.utah.edu/agingsmart/>. Discussions are underway to make this available on the 211 and Utah Cares website. The Utah Senior Directory is also promoting the Sourcebook.

Maureen Henry presented flowers to Denise Brooks for her efforts in developing the Sourcebook.

Maureen Henry presented the status of the 211 Information and Referral project. Discussions are still underway regarding the listing of organizations that serve older individuals that are for-profit entities.

Maureen Henry presented the status of the End-of-Life Special Committee draft of a proposed new law and form for advance healthcare decisions. Meetings are scheduled with stakeholders to review the proposed changes.

Maureen Henry presented the status of the Healthcare Special Committee Care Management Plus project. This project is piloting the use of RNs as care managers in clinics and doctor's offices. The first training sessions for this pilot will be on September 6 and 7. The University of Utah, College of Nursing has developed a full web-based curriculum to help the training process. To date, 5 clinics (14 sites) are participating in this program. Assessment will be provided for via a federal grant (application pending).

Nels Holmgren presented information about a federal grant application that has been submitted to support healthy aging programs. If the grant application is not approved, there may still be an opportunity to participate in this program with plans for it to be rolled out nationwide in the future.

Lorna Koci presented the status of the healthy aging intern project. An intern will start shortly on this project. She will interview individuals in the fields of exercise, disease prevention, nutrition, and air quality. Following completed interviews, she will research any policy obstacles that are identified in the interviews.

Maureen Henry presented the status of the Public Safety Special Committee. The Commission on Aging staff is discussing how to proceed with this committee given the change in roles for Larry Marx, current committee chair. This committee is sponsoring a Financial Exploitation and Elder Abuse Class on September 12 at AARP. This will be taught by AARP staff and has over 50 individuals registered from Adult Protective Services and law enforcement departments.

Maureen Henry presented the status of the Quality of Life Special Committee. This committee is focusing on culture change in residential facilities. Commission participants were invited by Rob Ence, State Director, AARP to attend part of the AARP Volunteer Retreat on September 7 from 1:30 – 4:00. Dr. Thomas, a noted gerontologist, will be speaking at this retreat which is being held at the Marriott, University Park.

Medicaid Taskforce

Maureen Henry requested input from Commission members regarding the Utah Medicaid Taskforce. The Commission on Aging was asked to submit testimony prior to the last taskforce meeting. Maureen Henry prepared information and submitted it to the taskforce. She did not present at the last meeting because the Commission on Aging had not met and approved a position to share with the taskforce. When asked, the Commission members felt that they could help by meeting with individual members of the Medicaid Taskforce. Commission members recommended that we form a legislative committee of the Commission on Aging to address all of the issues that the Commission want to have a voice in, including but not limited to Medicaid. Pat Jones stated that she thought this would be helpful and she and Allen Christensen would be glad to participate in this. Michael Deily stated that the Department of Health should be involved. The Commission can formulate a statement on Community Based Care within this group. Alan Ormsby offered to help with this, as did Sara Sinclair. This group will finalize talking points for meetings with Medicaid taskforce members and other legislators.

Commission on Aging – Legislative Taskforce

A proposal was made that the Commission on Aging form a Legislative Taskforce that should meet two times before the next Commission meeting in October, at which time the taskforce will present recommended policy changes.

Status of 2007 Legislative Items

Maureen Henry presented the status of the End-of-Life Special Committee work. A draft of proposed changes in this area is ready to share with stakeholders. Allen Christensen will carry this legislation.

The transfer on death deed proposed legislation will be carried by Pat Jones (assuming re-election) A bill file has been opened and data is being collected. This will be presented to the Utah Bar Association shortly.

The proposal to increase the small estate amount from \$25,000 to \$75,000 with inflation adjustments will be carried by Ross Romero (assuming election).

The proposal to add legal fees for elder abuse in civil action suits is being researched by Senator Hillyard. In response to a request from Senator Christensen at the June meeting, Maureen Henry reviewed other attorney fee laws and found that there is a mix of “shall” and “may” used. There is a question of whether a change to the law would make the current draft inconsistent with current law, which is being researched by the Office of Legislative Research.

Annual Report

The Commission on Aging Annual Report is being completed. It will be sent to Commission members during the week of September 4 for their review and input. It needs to go to the Executive Appropriations Committee on September 11 for presentation to the on September 19th. Comments from Commission members were requested by September 8th.

Renewal of the Commission on Aging

Following a break, the Commission on Aging discussed the topic of renewal of the Commission on Aging and/or transition of the work to another entity. Cynthia Boshard facilitated the discussion for this part of the meeting.

Maureen Henry presented information on the Commission on Aging statute, participants, projects, and possibilities for places to transition the work upon completion. Maureen noted that the Commission voted at the June 2006 meeting to recommend to the legislature an 8-month extension of the Commission on Aging.

Lisa-Michele Church circulated the attached documents and spoke in agreement that the work of the Commission on Aging should continue within the Division of Aging after the Commission completion. She stated that if it were to be transitioned to the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) that this would provide for the smoothest transition possible and would eliminate or reduce the loss of momentum. She stated that the original plan was for the work of the Commission on Aging to transition to DAAS.

Comments and questions were made regarding the proposal:

- Should some of the work of the Commission go to areas other than DAAS
- There is a need for additional resources within DAAS to carry on the work that is currently underway. Additional resources were not available before, why would they be available now?
- The Commission developed a roadmap for all of aging in the State of Utah, not just a roadmap for DAAS
- How will DAAS lead other departments within the state, and also the private sector? How can the DAAS lead this diverse group?
- DAAS will need to lead more than it has in the past and not be just a pass-through organization
- Ground will be lost if the Commission is transitioned outside of DHS
- How does the State Aging Board currently work?
- Even another 8 months will not be enough time to ‘finish’ the work of the Commission. What can be handed off should be handed off. The Commission can highlight the key issues and pass to those who have respective responsibility.

- Remember the mission of the Commission.
- DAAS would provide a home for the work of the Commission.
- There is a need to eliminate the silos that have developed in the state systems.
- Can DAAS keep the level of excitement and energy and have the needed leverage to keep the COA work going and to move issues forward?
- The work needs visibility and money to keep going, this may not be available to DAAS.
- The COA has broken through the silos that have existed for several years.
- Division directors are not shy about pulling in others, including the Governor, when needed to look at issues.
- Do we want a true public-private partnership?
- A Commission with a deadline has helped to get work done quickly and to keep it focused. This may not be the case with a long-standing group.
- Instead of going to the legislature twice, we should go to the legislature with a proposal to transition the work of the Commission to DAAS on July 1, 2006 and request that money and needed staff be allocated, along with making any necessary changes to the board.
- The need for leadership on these issues was noted. Norma Matheson, Maureen Henry, and Lorna Koci were complimented in their efforts and leadership.
- Alan Ormsby stated that he meets on October 11 with the current Aging Board and, at that meeting, he will discuss the transition of this work to DAAS. He requested input from the group prior to this meeting.
- Will there be a vehicle to reconvene a group in the future to re-visit the issues of aging and recommend making course corrections where needed?
- DHS is willing to take on these challenges with a level of commitment that is needed.
- The Utah 2030 project should address most of the priorities that need to be set statewide.
- We need a strategy that addresses this transition in one shot.
- The Commission has had the freedom of not providing services, not being bogged down with day-to-day operations. The Commission has looked at all aging individuals, not just the frail.
- DAAS has a window to address aging issues and it is closing. They can get the state ready, but, it will require considerable change.
- Leadership will be key.
- More details on a DAAS plan were requested.
- There is a concern about going to the legislature for any funding. Aging in general may lose money for services if they must compete with COA funding.
- A plan is needed before September 19 which is the date of the COA presentation to the Executive Appropriations Committee.
- We need to stop taking time from every COA business agenda to discuss COA continuity.

Details on transition will be developed and shared with commission members prior to September 19.

Maureen Henry thanked individuals for all their contributions to the Commission on Aging.

TantaLisa Clayton moved and Tani Downing seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting.

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Department of Human Services – Division of Aging and Adult Services
Statement to the Commission on Aging
August 31, 2006

It is the position of DHS/Aging that the Commission on Aging is performing a worthwhile and valuable service in identifying and working on aging issues associated with the coming boom in our population of senior Utahns. We are extremely impressed with the broad commitment from community partners that is evident in the Commission's work. At the conclusion of the Commission's term, DHS and the Division of Aging are fully committed to continuing the important work of the Commission at a vigorous pace.

While it has been suggested that the Commission extend its term -- or find another home at another state agency -- that would result in a loss of momentum and resources. The Commission is internally funded by DHS at present, as part of DHS' ongoing commitment to aging issues. That funding is not available after 2007. It makes no sense to have the Commission on Aging move elsewhere, procure additional funding and proceed on a parallel track to the Division of Aging and Adult Services in yet another department of state government. Funds should be conserved for direct services wherever possible.

- The statutory charge of the Division of Aging envisions implementing recommendations such as the Commission will be producing. *"The division is the sole state agency... to serve as an effective and visible advocate for the aging and adult populations of this state."* U.C.A. 62A-9-104(1).
- The current responsibilities of the Division of Aging are complementary to the issues being addressed by the Commission. *"The Division has authority to establish, either directly or by contract, programs of advocacy, monitoring, evaluation, technical assistance, and public education to enhance the quality of life for aging and adult citizens of the state."* U.C.A. 62A-3-104(5).
- DHS Administration is willing to adjust funding and personnel to respond to the needs outlined by the Commission in its final report adopted by the Governor and the legislature.
- DHS Administration is willing to seek additional funding and resources from the legislature if necessary to carry out the Commission's recommendations as adopted by the Governor and the legislature.
- DHS is committed to re-designing the Board of Aging and Adult Services to incorporate those Commission members willing to continue on in the implementation phase of the Commission's work. There they could play a valuable role in insuring that the Commission's goals are reached by helping to lead the Division in a policymaking role.

Some Commission members may be skeptical that the Division of Aging and Adult Services can rise to the task of implementing the Commission's work. DHS would like to point out that the Division is currently taking leadership in preparing for the coming

aging population boom. It was the Division that asked Representative Jones to sponsor the legislation to create the Commission and they always understood they would take the lead in implementing the Commission's road map. The Division of Aging will be required to rise to the occasion by the very fact of aging demographics, apart from what happens at the Commission. This is a change that is on the horizon for the state and we are excited to meet it.

In considering the extension of the Commission on Aging beyond the original two year term, here are some important factors:

- The Commission on Aging was originally presented to the legislature as a two year effort and it may be viewed negatively by some legislators to alter that.
- The Commission on Aging is successful in large part because community leaders have generously given their time and energy for a two year term; that commitment may not persist indefinitely.
- The Commission on Aging is successful because it has a mandate from the Governor, the legislature, and DHS to address certain issues in a broad statewide manner. Its effectiveness would be diluted if it were to become just another advocacy group existing outside the very Division where aging policy for the state is carried out.

In summary, the Division of Aging and Adult Services is ready, willing and able to carry out an implementation strategy. We pledge to be full partners with the Governor, the legislature and the Commission in placing the resources of the Division behind this effort. We would appreciate the support of the Commission to that end.