

MINUTES
Utah Commission on Aging
April 1, 2008
12:00 – 2:00 pm

Commission Member Attendees:

Norma Matheson
Maureen Henry
Senator Allen Christensen
Cherie Brunker
Gary Kelso for Sara Sinclair
Representative Steven Mascaro
Rob Ence
Mark Supiano
Marilyn Taylor for Diana Kirk
Helen Thatcher for Kristin Cox
Shauna O’Neil
Lynne Shaffer for Deborah Bayle
Archie Archuleta
William Cox
Alan Ormsby for LM Church
Jim Winder

Representing:

Chair
Executive Director
Utah Senate
Health Care
Long Term Care
Utah House of Representatives
Advocacy Organizations
Higher Education
Financial Institutions
Workforce Services
Salt Lake County Aging Services
United Way
Ethnic Minorities
Utah Association of Counties
Utah Department of Human Services
Public Safety

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

1. Welcome and Lunch Served

The minutes from February 6 will be approved at the June meeting.

2. 2008 Legislature Summary

Legislation Affecting Aging Issues:

- SB 161: This was a cleanup bill on the Advance Directive bill from last year. After negotiation with the Department of Health to get some issues on the POLST form resolved, the bill passed unanimously.
- SB 34: This bill allows individuals who wish to notify DMV of an individual’s impaired driving; this is not an aging bill, as it affects any person regardless of age. The bill passed.
- SB 50: This bill would have allowed for additional tools for the State Office of Recovery Services to assist in the recovery of funds that are spent on an individual by Medicaid when that individual has assets. The bill failed in the House. The Commission will continue to watch this issue and lend its support next year, if needed.
- SB 52: This bill allows victims of identity theft to seek restitution.
- SB 178: This bill would have required counties to defer property tax for individuals 65 or older. The bill failed; there was concern over the impact on the counties and that it might adversely affect aging programs overall.

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- HB 76: There has been concern by the Healthy Aging Committee that this bill would eliminate county-owned facilities that promote health to lower-income people and seniors.
- HB 366: Removed the authority of a Medicaid-certified nursing facility to increase its bed by 30%. Unused beds can be moved or sold to other providers for underserved areas.

The Medicaid Task Force was not renewed.

Alan Ormsby reported on the budget for the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

Representative Mascaro will have two bill files opening after May 5 that are tax and senior-related. There will be further discussion on these bills at the June meeting.

3. Commission Activities Update

Public Safety:

- The Committee is moving ahead with a survey of law enforcement officers. Sheriff Winder will be returning the completed surveys to Maureen. Scott Wright from the University of Utah Department of Gerontology Interdisciplinary Program helped to develop this survey that looks at the awareness level of officers regarding laws on elder abuse, and their general perceptions of the elderly. Education and intervention could increase attention to elder abuse and financial exploitation.
- AARP's national office is sponsoring a training on May 1 on elder abuse and financial exploitation in the context of domestic violence. Utah Legal Services is coordinating.
- With Sheriff Winder's input, the issue as to whether the current systems for reporting victimization of the elderly community are adequate. There is an initiative to create uniform crime codes into the already existing system so that law enforcement officers can report on specific demographics. The outcome would be the ability to track elder abuse. By collecting this information and building support, policy changes can bring better prosecution.

Community-Based Care:

- The Committee is looking at one final issue, and may then dissolve. It has focused in on 211 and the need for quality statewide information and referral systems. There are discussions between Workforce Services and the Utah Food Bank to see how everything is playing out. The primary issue is that Utah Cares, the information source for 211, is part of the E-rep Program, and may become decentralized in the process.

Financial Security:

- Met at ARRP with USU Extension and Utah Saves to discuss the evaluation of the financial security guide and talk about how to make sure that Utah Saves is effectively communicating the "saving for retirement" portion of the message. A retirement calculator seems to be the most effective means of getting people to

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figure out how much they will need in retirement. There should be legislative discussion on whether to allow the public to participate in the state's 401k plan.

Health Care:

- Dr. Brunker continues to work on the Care Management Plus project, which is looking on how to improve care management in physician offices to help lessen the burden on the health care system.
- Maureen met with University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics and agreed to help connect area agencies with community clinics where medical assistants could refer people who need additional resources to Salt Lake County Aging Services.
- The College of Nursing is developing a list of competencies for geriatric nurse case managers.
- The Committee is looking at a loan forgiveness bill for geriatrics professionals in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, social work, physical therapy, as well as other fields. South Carolina has a good model that is producing data on this issue, and we will use this model as a basis for our design.

End of Life:

- April 16 is National Health Care Decisions Day; it is hoped that this will get people throughout the state to pay attention to the new Advance Directives. The Commission has obtained a Governor's Proclamation for this day and is looking for partners in this statewide effort. IHC has agreed to donate \$1,000.00 to promote this effort. The web site will be listing partners and activities that are happening throughout the month of April.
- Maureen recognized Shauna O'Neil and Salt Lake County Aging Services for hiring two staff members dedicated to educating the public and health care professionals regarding the new Advance Directives.
- The Commission is working with the U of U Division of Continuing Education to hand off the training functions beginning this summer. The target populations will be health care facilitators and attorneys.

Mental Health:

- The Committee is working closely with the OPG to identify any gaps in services while continuing formulation of a bill for next year for surrogate decision makers.
- The Committee is creating a matrix to identify those pockets of people who need assistance in health care decision making.

Higher Education Advisory Committee:

- This Committee will take the place of the Education Committee and will work to address how higher education can better contribute to the formulation of aging policy statewide and the necessary education to those who will be providing care to the aging community. The first meeting will take place April 4.

Workforce Committee:

- The Commission is working to reconvene the committee of HR directors to look at the role of the Commission regarding workforce issues. Norma and Maureen met with Kristen Cox at the Department of Workforce Services and discussed how to use seniors to fill the gaps in the professional workforce that the state will

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soon be facing. There are a number of work-related programs for low-income seniors throughout the state; however, there is little for those seniors who do not fall in the low-income category.

- The Committee will need to decide whether to develop a model for retaining older workers, as well as look at various policy barriers that currently keep older workers out of the workplace. Education will be essential and institutional policies and federal programs need to be examined.

Funding:

- Two grants have been submitted; 1) R. Harold Burton Foundation for \$20,000, and 2) Michael Foundation for \$10,000. These grants, if awarded, would focus on outreach and education and translation of the advance directives into other languages, Spanish being the most urgent. Facilitators could be trained to assist people in filling out the forms in the various ethnic and minority populations throughout the state. On an historical basis, the minority populations have had a very low uptake on advance directives. It is hoped that education from within the communities could be provided so that the advance directives can be an effective tool for the entire population.
- An additional grant was submitted to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in the amount of \$300,000.00. This grant would fund an intensive study on capacity issues to cover salary support, research, and policy over a three-year period.
- The Center on Aging has released a call for proposals for its 2008 Pilot Grant Program. Policy Issues that the Commission has identified as ones that the Commission is working on could be considered for this program.

Public Relations Activities in April:

- Will be releasing the CareSource data
- Will be releasing the Utah 2030 report
- National Health Care Decisions Day is April 16.

4. Utah 2030

Maureen discussed the steps that have been taken thus far:

- Each department in state government was asked to look at how it would be affected by the changes in the aging population.
- Each agency looked at ways it was already doing things that would help to address the increase in the aging population. This process reframed the way that state agencies looked at their constituencies and raised the awareness how much this demographic does and will effect what the agencies do within their purview.
- Each agency looked at what their priorities would be over the next three years to address the increasing aging population in the state. Each agency came up with three priority areas.
- Each agency looked at what specific, concrete actions it could take to address the identified priorities.
- Each agency identified specific results it would use whether or not the action steps were successful.

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There were some underlying themes:

- State government workforce is the most pressing issue across the board. It is anticipated that there will be a wave of retirement in the next ten years.
- Utah's successful economy has raised challenges for the state government because it increases the competition for the professional workforce.
- Infrastructure will be challenged.
- More succession planning is needed.
- There will be an increased demand for services.
- The agencies expressed the need for education of the public, professionals, and policy makers.
- Use technology to fill the gaps.

There is a federal program that hires retired professionals to fill shortages in the public sector. DEQ could possibly be linked with this federal program, as this agency has expressed that it needs to retain aging professional workers as one of its priorities.

The final result will ultimately be a 250 page document that will contain all of the agencies' briefs. The documents will be available online; there will be a limited amount of printed copies.

A schedule of Commission events will be mailed to the members on a regular basis.

The next meeting will be held June 3, 2008, from 12:00 p.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.