



MINUTES

APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
FRIDAY, AUGUST 23, 2019 – 10:30 A.M.
COUNCIL BOARD ROOM
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

Members Present:

Francis Crowder, Ernest Riley, Rep. Ann Thayer, Cindy Wilson, Mack Durham, Dennis Claramunt, Henry Jolly, Ed Elliott, Willis Meadows, Joe Dill, Butch Kirven, Lillian Brock Flemming, George Fletcher, Don Godbey, Ennis Fant Sr, Rep. Mike Burns, Rep. Mike Forrester, Larry Chappell, Jack Mabry, Manning Lynch, Mildred Tillerson, Dana Moore, Julian Davis III, Rep. Neal Collins, Ensley Feemster

Guests Present:

Ms. Rochelle Garrett | AECOM; Mr. Cedric Wright | SC Dept. of Consumer Affairs; Mr. David Griffith | Prevent Alcohol Problems Association (P.A.P.A. Inc.); Mrs. Dorothy Feemster; Mrs. Flora Riley; Mr. Joel Dill; Mr. Daniel Gamble;

Staff Present:

Steve Pelissier, Chip Bentley, Brooke Ferguson, Arlene Young, Denise Ernul

Chairman Joe Dill called the meeting to order. Invocation lead by board member Butch Kirven. Steve Pelissier welcomed all guests and presenters. A motion to adopt June 28, 2019 meeting minutes was approved unanimously by the Board.

Identity Theft, Latest News, Protection, Response, and Legal Implications

Mr. Cedric Wright, Outreach Coordinator, SC Department of Consumer Affairs
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Mr. Wright shared initiatives of the Department of Consumer Affairs to address identify theft and assist people with prevention and who are victims of this crime.

> **History and Purpose**

- Established in 1974 by the Consumer Protection Code (Code), Sections 37-1-101 et seq., the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs (SCDCA) is the state consumer protection agency. SCDCA is the administrator and enforcer of the Code, as well as other regulatory statutes outside the Code. In this capacity, the Department helps to formulate and modify consumer laws, policies and regulations; regulates the consumer credit marketplace; resolves complaints arising out of the production, promotion or sale of consumer goods or services in South Carolina, whether or not credit is involved; and promotes a healthy competitive business climate with mutual confidence between buyers and sellers. Overall, the agency protects consumers while giving due regard to those businesses acting in a fair and honest manner.

> **Mission of SCDCA**

- Acting as an effective regulator
- Providing complaint mediation services that are unmatched at both state and federal levels,
- Saving millions for both consumers and small businesses through insurance rate filing intervention
- Serving as an educational portal for consumers and businesses alike
- Informing the public on effective ways of preventing and mitigating identity theft situations.

> **Protecting Yourself from Identity Theft through Scams**

- Education is, and always has been, a large part of the South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs' (DCA) mission. They understand navigating the ever-changing marketplace can be a daunting task. And with the rapid development of technology, scammers are more active (and more successful) than ever. It is with that fact in mind that DCA created a guide to avoiding scams.
- Red Flags to recognizing scams...
 - > When it's too good to be true
 - > Asks you to verify personal identifying information.
 - > Asks you to wire transfer money or purchase a prepaid/reloadable debit card or iTunes gift card and give them the number off the card.
 - > Sends you a check, asking you to cash it and wire or send money somewhere.
 - > Poses as a local, state, or federal law enforcement officer. They may also pose as other government officials.
 - > Scares you with threats of arrest or garnishment.
 - > Makes you think their "offer" is time sensitive by using statements like "Act NOW, or you won't get this great deal!"

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- Avoid Phishing Scam used to collect personal data through the internet, email, and/or text
 - > Do not open any attachments
 - > Do not call a phone number
 - > Use antivirus or antispyware
 - > Do not reply to an e-mail, text or pop-up message that asks for personal or financial information.
 - > Do not click on any links in an email or text message or copy into your browser.
 - > Do not open attachments or download any files from an email or text message.
 - > Do not click on a number contained in the e-mail or text.
 - > Always review your financial statements carefully.
 - > Always review your personal credit at least once a year. Call (877) 322-8228 to dispute unauthorized charges and credit information. You can get your report by visiting www.annualcreditreport.com or calling unauthorized merchants regarding purchases, accounts, and incorrect information.
 - > Regularly update your mobile/computer antispyware software and a firewall; to include the following protections are an added benefit to securing fraud/identity theft:
 - Two-step verification or multi-factor authentication, if your password has been accessed without authorization
 - Boost your router security with a strong password
 - Don't use the same username and password for all accounts, especially if your username is your email address.
 - Avoid Calls from numbers unknown
 - Completely fill out credit card charges for Tips at restaurants; leaving no spaces between numbers and or \$ symbols, and a cross out zero when leaving nothing (Ø).

Prevention of Substance Use and Abuse in the Twelve to Eighteen Year Age Group in the Upstate of South Carolina

Mr. David Griffith, CEO, Prevent Alcohol Problems Association (P.A.P.A.)
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Mr. Griffith served previously on the board of Greenville County's Commission on Alcohol and Drugs for 5yrs and currently CEO of a 501c3, Prevent Alcohol Problems Association (P.A.P.A. Inc.).

Mr. Griffith described the youth substance abuse situation in the Upstate, as well as evidence based strategies for reducing abuse through a program called Change Attitudes Now (C.A.N. Club).

> **About P.A.P.A. Inc.**

- The organization has been in existence since 1963 to change the paradigm of how young people base their decisions towards the use of illicit drugs and alcohol.
- Their mission to assist our youth in making positive choices about underage drinking alcohol and illegal drugs through youth prevention programs and community partnerships.
 - > Bringing the C.A.N. (Change Attitudes Now) Club Program to the Upstate
 - The C.A.N. Club was form in 1997, to proactively focus on positive choices and accountability to decrease illegal drug use, after a high school newspaper survey in Cody, Wyoming reported over 80% of their students had tried illegal drugs.
 - The building blocks to the C.A.N. Club:
 - > Student managed: Kids are accountable to their peers.
 - > Recognition: Everyone wants attention and recognition through positive reinforcement.
 - > Accountability: A drug test can be requested of any member with reasonable suspicion.
 - > Community Support: CAN Membership rewarded with discounts throughout the community.
 - Current Membership Info for Cody, Wyoming
 - > Becoming a member entails a student & parent notarized signed contract, starting as early as the 4th grade.
 - > 1275 total members (86% membership of 4th-12th graders). High school students are typically mentors to middle school students.
 - > Members benefits include: discounts with participating community partners; monthly social events - planned, organized, and ran by members; engagement in diverse opportunities during the summer months with career awareness/options, camps, job shadowing; participation in contest, sponsorships, and scholarships.
 - > Program updates: healthy lifestyle education and cultural change history (2008), bring in national recognized speakers to motivate/encourage positive actions and leadership development; continuous postings to social media.
 - C.A.N. Club Effectiveness
 - > Over two decades of maintained drug usage of 50% or less than national average based on survey given to the students in Wyoming.
 - > The C.A.N. Club has a higher success rate with broader reach and lower annual budget than a 28 day of rehab for one teen.
 - C.A.N. Club for the Upstate
 - > Peer pressure is always a driving force for young people's decisions towards drug and alcohol use, so providing positive peer pressure is key to positive influences to our Upstate youth.

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- > C.A.N. is student driven, reinforcing real student leadership as a critical key element
 - > The program is always evolving and fresh, with student involvement without the bureaucracy.
 - > The C.A.N. Club is currently in the process of becoming Evidence-Based Design Accreditation and Certification (EDAC), to meet the standards for gaining additional community/business support from those organizations that require it.

ACOG State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) Overview

Ms. Kim Reyes, SHIP Counselor

The SHIP Program provides advice to seniors on insurance options available to them, and helps seniors when they have an insurance payment issue with a health care provider or insurance company. Ms. Reyes provided an overview of this initiative.

South Carolina has implemented the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) to help those applying for Medicare and Medicaid to make the correct choices regarding their insurance. SHIP is a free health benefits counseling service for Medicare beneficiaries and their families or caregivers. SHIP is funded by federal agencies and not associated with any insurance agency.

> About S.H.I.P.

- If you are eligible for Medicare, you are eligible for free SHIP counseling.
- SHIP counseling services are rendered to population as young as 18 yrs. of age and beyond
- Medicare health and drug plans can change each year regarding cost, coverage and what providers and pharmacies are in a beneficiary's network. October 15th to December 7th is the open enrollment period when all people with Medicare can change their health plans and prescription drug coverage for the following year.
- Beginning 2019, Medicare beneficiaries opting coverage through Medicare Advantage plans will have an additional enrollment period beginning January 1 and lasting through March 31.
- The Appalachian Area Agency on Aging also houses the SMP, (Senior Medicare Patrol) program for the region. This program assists with Medicare fraud and abuse cases.
- The Appalachian Area Agency on Aging's Benefits Counselors assist Beneficiaries all year long with plan issues, claim appeals and subsidy programs.
- Benefit counselors are state certified through the Office on Aging to ensure they acquire the most current, relevant information for assisting callers.
- Support, plan, and/or organize community outreach for state agencies, community organizations, and local businesses (i.e. Farmer's Market Voucher Program, discussions with focus group/businesses about health plan effects upon retirement).

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Steve Pelissier, Executive Director

Mr. Steve Pelissier, Executive Director, concluded the meeting with information on various topics.

- > As members of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), Mr. Pelissier introduced, the Director of our Economic Development Dept., Mrs. Brooke Ferguson, to discuss the NADO award given to this dept. Mrs. Ferguson discussed the outstanding work performed by Senior Analyst, Mrs. Beth Lewis and Demographic & Market Research Analyst, Ms. Bryana Mistretta for ACOG's comprehensive Data Center driven by Tableau. The Data Center has moved beyond the typical excel spreadsheet to esthetically pleasing graphics and charts with interactive functionality with the Tableau platform; however spreadsheets are still available.
 - Data Center is free to the public and can be accessed by going to ACOG's website <https://www.scacog.org/Statistics--Population>.
 - Information is functional and downloadable in several formats for multiple purposes.
 - Currently working with individual economic organizations and counties to provide the Data Center on their websites.
 - Please feel free to contact Economic Development Dept. with any suggestions on any other data sets.

- > Changes made on July 1st to our senior service providers are showing much improvement from the previous year.
 - Greenville County meal providers were switch from a group out of Newberry to Meals on Wheels of Greenville wherein food quality has increased
 - Anderson County's consortium with Meals on Wheels and Anderson Interfaith Ministries has not only increased food quality but has also increased congregate sites from 2 to 5 with more on the way.
 - Changes to the communication gap are being resolved by providing seniors a person to speak with when calling to provide clear instructions for transportation with the Anderson County provider MasterCare.
 - In Spartanburg County, the new Landrum congregate site proposed to open in 3-4 months will now open in 1-2 months.
 - Still trying to find a replacement for the Blacksburg congregate site that closed in Cherokee County.
 - Key to the success of Pickens County's congregate site was Meda Bowers. With her absence due to the recent leadership change, it is doing well in spite of the change.
 - Across the country, Meals on Wheels would not typically partner with agencies similar to ours because of the federal requirements they would have to assume, making our partnership with Meals on Wheels unique.

The collaboration has fostered improvements to food quality and increased service areas for our seniors. Hopefully, the positive impact with this unlikely partnership would promote other COGs and organizations to seek similar collaborative efforts.

- > Mrs. Jessica Winters, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman, discussed ACOG's participation in the upcoming "2019 Walk to End Alzheimer's" on Saturday, October 5th with ceremony starting 9:15 at Fluor field (945 S. Main St., Greenville, SC 29601). Registration and donations can be made online at <http://act.alz.org/goto/ACOG>; virtual walk available.

The next Board Meeting will be at 10:30 am on September 27, 2019. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Mr. Joe Dill, Chairman

The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments has complied with the Freedom of Information Act in scheduling and conducting this meeting