
MINUTES

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL AGING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025 – 10:30 A.M.
APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARDROOM
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

Members Present:

Beth Grant, Charles Pinson, Edna Pitts-Reid, Glenda Manigault, Joe Dill, Steve Luck

Members Absentee:

Barbara Jardno, Bob Briggs, Brett Gillespie, Dorothy Manning, J.T. Boseman, Jane Hall, Mae Frances Sarratt, Kam Flynn

Guests Present:

Nick Kulick, Christina Gebbia

Staff Present:

Tim Womack, Shelly Mitchell, Pam Anderson, Dani Vankirk, Anne-Marie Coogler, Amanda Mlinar

The meeting was called to order at 10:37am by Mr. Dill and an invocation was offered by Mr. Pinson. Prior minutes from August 20, 2025, will be addressed with the December meeting due to low attendance.

Recognition of Guests: Tim Womack, recognized and welcomed:

There were no new guests to recognize at this time.

Family Care Giver Update: Amanda Mlinar presented:

We have 80 caregivers signed up for the event tomorrow being held at Senior Action beginning at 9:30. We are collecting items for the caregiver gift bags that will be distributed in November. We have received 8 applications for the Seniors Raising Children Christmas program. We will begin collecting donations shortly.

Ombudsman Update: Anne-Marie Coogler presented:

The Winter Wishes Ombudsman program will adopt 2 mental health facilities this year, McKinney House and Easley Retirement. We will provide additional information once the residents have provided their wish list.

The personal needs allowance has increased from \$30 to \$60 monthly. The original ask was to increase this allowance to \$100, so we will continue to advocate for an additional \$40.

Marie was involved in a case where a resident had a sister stealing money from her. After working with the bank and the resident, the sister was prosecuted. \$54,000 was taken by the sister. Other examples of exploitation included a case where a resident had \$245,000 stolen. These examples reinforce the importance of routine visits and resident education.

Columbia will host a benefit walk on November 3rd, with all proceeds supporting the Ombudsman Program. Funds raised will be used to purchase relocation bags for residents who must move from one facility to another. These bags will be stocked with essential hygiene items and basic clothing to help ease the transition and provide comfort during the move. 14 facilities across the state have closed for various reasons.

Tim shared that a facility had a fire alarm going off constantly for weeks in August. The Volunteer Ombudsman reported it to Amanda Plumley, which in turn reported it to the appropriate authorities (DPH) and involved Dale Watson from the SCDOA. In October, the alarm was still going off 24/7. DPH finally went into the facility to find the parts needed had not been ordered as reported by the facility. This is only one example of the necessity for the Volunteer Ombudsman program and the great work that program does. With over 500 facilities, it is imperative to have a thriving volunteer program to assist our staff.

Personal Care Update: Terry Mendola presented:

We have been able to add 30 clients from the waitlist to the personal care program. We have a total of 161 clients in the personal care program.

Assessment Update: Pam Anderson presented:

We were able to give Rebuild Upstate 22 clients, clearing all the tier 1 people on the waitlist. Greenville Meals on Wheels received 20 clients. Sr. Center of Cherokee completed 11 minor home repair projects last year.

Nutrition Update: Dani Vankirk presented:

Easley's new center opened in September, becoming the third center in Pickens County. In its first month, the site welcomed more than 250 attendees. The center is located in the former YMCA building, adjacent to the newly constructed YMCA.

Aging Update: Tim Womack presented:

SCDOA received an additional \$10 million last year and the Director, Connie Munn, will ask for an additional \$10 million in state funding this year. The ARP funds have expired so we are Federally back to pre-COVID spending levels. If we receive the additional \$10 million statewide, we will be back to the increased level of funding we had during the COVID years.

We are one of the few AAAs that provide Minor Home Repair and the only that offers Yard Care. These remain a highly identified need through the Needs Assessment. The SCDOA is encouraging us to provide a dental and pest control program. We are going to continue to focus on feeding people and building on our core programs rather than beginning either of these programs.

The Federal Regulations have been updated to include a Final Rule that restricts members of the Board from being a voting member of RAAC. Those Board members can still participate in RAAC and we need you to be a part of RAAC. The bi-laws committee on the Board will update their bi-laws and once that has been completed, we will address the RAAC bi-laws.

We do not have funding for marketing. If you have an event you would like us to speak at, please let us know. We want to educate the community about the services we provide.

The new SHIP counselors are doing great. Open enrollment begins today.

Finance Update: Shelly Mitchell presented:

We are currently waiting for our state carryforward funds to be allocated, hopefully in October. The estimated amount is approximately \$700,000. Historically, Federal Funds have covered roughly three-fourths of our total budget, with State Funds filling the remaining one-fourth.

However, with the recent increases in State funding—and as we move into a position to request additional support—the Federal/State split is shifting to a 50/50 balance for our annual budget. This is a positive change, as our budgeting flexibility comes from State funds.

Member Updates and Discussion: All

- Discussion – lack of family support for those in facilities
- Rebuild Upstate has opened a new warehouse in Easley. This will allow them to accept donated materials and make purchases in bulk. The grand opening was held last week.
- SC Legal gave an update – added to attorney staff, provided the process of how a client receives legal services, overview of types of representation they can provide. Clients are not charged for the legal services SC Legal provides.
- Discussion – aging structure since the dismantle of ACL – All under Health and Human Services, a core group of ACL is still employed.
- The government shutdown has not affected us currently.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:01pm.

Next Meeting is December 3, 2025