
MINUTES

**APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
REGIONAL AGING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, June 19, 2024 – 10:30 A.M.
APPALACHIAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS BOARDROOM
GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

Members Present:

Barbara Jardno, Bob Briggs, Britt Gillespie, Charles Pinson, Dorothy Manning, Edna Pitts-Reid, Glenda Manigault, J.T. Boseman, Jane Hall, Joe Dill, Steve Luck

Members Absentee:

Beth Grant, Judy Caywood, Mae Frances Sarratt, Pat Grate

Guests Present:

Lisa Patton, Bates McKinney, Jennifer Robbins, Katie Sides, Robin Reed, Shawanna Cook, Dianne Norris, Sharon Riley, Joel Dill

Staff Present:

Shelly Mitchell, Dani Vankirk, Pam Anderson, Terry Mendola, Anne-Marie Coogler

The meeting was called to order at 10:30am by Mr. Dill and an invocation was offered by Mr. Boseman. Prior minutes from April 17, 2024, were approved by Mr. Pinson and a second by Mr. Briggs. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Recognition of Guests: Shelly Mitchell, recognized and welcomed:

Welcome to Dianne Norris, sister of Dorothy Manning, and Sharon Riley, by invitation from Tim Womack.

Procurement Update: Shelly Mitchell presented:

We went out for procurement for all services in all counties this year for contracts beginning July 1, 2024. The agencies that put in a bid attended a question-and-answer session before a subcommittee that was selected by Mr. Dill. The subcommittee included Glenda Manigault,

Barbara Jardno, Joe Dill, Shelly Mitchell, Dani Vankirk, and Tim Womack. At the last RAAC meeting, the recommendations from the subcommittee were reviewed and voted on by the RAAC members. This recommendation was then presented to the board and was accepted unanimously. Tim and I met with each provider and have completed the final rate negotiations.

From a program standpoint, we have made some positive changes and selected the best providers to offer services to our community. From a finance standpoint, our rates for most services have increased tremendously. When our rates increase, this doesn't trigger a budget increase so we may be serving less people if our budget remains stagnated. We are focusing on the quality of our services to ensure that our clients remain happy with the services we offer.

Thank you to the subcommittee for working diligently during the procurement process and for making those hard, but necessary decisions. Thank you to Mr. Dill for presenting the RAAC's recommendations to the board.

Regarding unit rates, the final negotiated rates were comparable to those rates presented in the procurement packets. In some cases, "rebalancing" was necessary to spread administrative costs appropriately among the services a provider is offering.

Family Caregiver Update: Amanda Mlinar presented:

The final year end numbers will be presented at the next RAAC meeting. We currently do not have a waitlist.

A new pilot program will be introduced the next fiscal year called the Working Caregiver Program. We have received \$100,000 in additional funding that will be used to subsidize caregiving expenses for those caregivers that are currently working. We will be able to reimburse up to \$1,000 a month for caregiving expenses for those that qualify. The hope is that this will be a successful pilot program that will result in a permanent program.

Caregiver Connection Meetings have been going well. In the spring we made bunny wreaths with a group of 18 people in attendance. August is the next gathering, and we will be making gel candles. Dementia discussions are offered every other month by Dorrine Dubois. Word of mouth and social media are currently the way we are conveying these group meetings to the public. We no longer provide Alzheimer's support groups since that is offered by the Alzheimer's association.

Ombudsman Update: Anne-Marie Coogler presented:

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was June 15. To bring awareness to the community we are hosting "Jazz for Justice" tomorrow evening at Senior Action from 6pm – 8pm. The agenda includes live music, food, and a presentation concerning scam prevention. The team has received sponsorships totaling over \$9,000 with the largest sponsor being Bon Secours with \$3,700.

Residents in SC facilities receive \$30 a month (personal needs allowance) to purchase items that the facility doesn't provide like toiletries, clothing, additional snacks, eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids, etc. In 1988, SC raised the personal needs allowance from \$25 a month to \$30. The Ombudsmen across the state are working with Dale Watson from SCDOA to increase the personal needs allowance. We encourage everyone to educate yourself and support bill HR7682 (Personal Needs Modernization Act) with your legislators.

Homemaker & Personal Care Update: Terry Mendola presented:

Homemaker services include light housekeeping, and our clients receive 3 hours of service bi-weekly. Personal Care recipients receive 2 hours of service twice a week. As of the end of the month we have served 233 clients, 126 of those clients received personal care and 107 received homemaker services. The rate for FY25 will increase to \$26 per hour and we will provide these services to all 6 counties. There is currently a waitlist of 312 clients.

We have utilized some ARP funding to provide a pest control program. We are waiting for the state to authorize if the program can continue once ARP funds expire using state funding.

Oconee currently has 13 people on their waitlist. These clients should be able to receive services with the FY25 budget.

Info/Referral Update: Pam Anderson presented:

We have hired a fourth assessor. Last month we assessed 341 clients. Since Oct. we have removed 66 individuals from the homemaker services waitlist and 20 from personal care.

Database & Finance Update: Shelly Mitchell presented:

The rollout for the new database is July 1. AIM entry will continue for June and will cease July 1. The system will place clients on a tiered platform based on need. Individuals falling to the third tier will not be flagged for a reassessment.

We will receive our HCBS (state funds) in July. The state is applying for a no cost extension for the ARP funds. With the ARP admin funding we are reimbursing our providers for costs directly

related to the new system. This includes 1 AIM seat, hardware equipment, startup fees, licenses, routes, and scanners.

The SCDOA is updating their policy and procedure manual. Once this is complete, we will adjust our contracts and policies to reflect those changes.

Nutrition Update: Dani Vankirk presented:

For the month of May we served over 33,000 meals. We are looking forward to the changes in the coming year with new providers. The Easley center is still under construction, and it is estimated to open next fall.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:44am.

Next Meeting is August 21, 2024