

**Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**Monday, January 22, 2024, at 1:00 pm**  
**NEMCSA Large Conference Room**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Dutcher

**Roll Call**

Kim Fleming, Jerry Broad, Darlene Huff, Kim Pappas, Lorelei King, Carol Gosse, Terry Dutcher, Dale Evilsizer, Julie Kendrick, Amy Beach, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin, Shelby Gohl

AAA (Area Agency on Aging) Staff: Laurie Sauer, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Katlyn Franks, and Brooke Mainville

Quorum - Yes

**Approval of Agenda** – The agenda was revised to add another speaker, Jeff Meden. A motion was made by C Messina with support from L. King to approve the revised agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by D. Fay with support from J. Broad to approve the minutes of 12-4-2023. Motion carried.

**Nominating Committee Report**

A motion was made by D. Fay with support from C. Messina to close the meeting and reopen for the election of officers. Motion carried.

**Election of officers**

Chair – Terry Dutcher has agreed to continue in the position of Chair. C. Messina called three times for further nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations, she asked for a motion to accept the nomination of T. Dutcher as Chair. A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from D. Fay to accept the appointment of T. Dutcher as Chair by acclamation of the Council. All ayes, no opposed, motion carried.

Vice Chair – Dennis Fay has agreed to continue as Vice Chair. C. Messina called three times for further nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations, she asked for a motion to accept D. Fay as Vice Chair. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from D. Huff to accept the appointment of D. Fay as Vice Chair by acclamation of the Council. All ayes, no opposed, motion carried.

A motion was made by C. Messina with support from J. Broad to close the election of officers and open the regular meeting. All ayes, no opposed, motion carried.

**Appointment of a Nominating Committee for 2024** – Current members are: Connie Messina and Darlene Huff. A third person is needed for the committee. C. Corwin volunteered. Motion made by D. Fay, support from L. King to accept the appointment. Motion carried.

**Appointment of a By-Law Review Committee for 2024** – The current members of the By-Law Review Committee are Dennis Fay, Connie Messina, and Darlene Huff. C. Messina asked for any other volunteers. L. King volunteered. There being no further interest expressed by members, a motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from K. Pappas to reappoint the current By-Law Review Committee with the addition of L. King. Motion carried.

**Speaker – Hector Villarreal, Front Desk Facilitator, Program Coordinator Homeless and Prevention Services**

NEMCSA Water Program – A handout was distributed. Information is also available on our website at: <https://www.nemcsa.org/services/need-help-paying-water-sewer-bills.html> NEMCSA received a \$245,000 grant to provide help with water and sewer bills. The program started on October 1st and has helped 62 households with 83 people so far. The program covers 11 counties. Applicants must be at or below 200% poverty (\$29,160 for a single person). If you receive food benefits, you automatically qualify. Assistance is for metered only; it does not assist those with a well. The program will pay for past due or shut off notices. Water and sewer go together so it pays for both. It does not pay for garbage if that is included on the bill. Alpena, Iosco, and Cheboygan are the busiest counties to date. It is expected to pick up in the other counties with continued outreach. Bills are typically charged on a quarterly basis. The average bill is about \$700 for the quarter. Renters also qualify if they are responsible for their water usage. This program does not test water, that is done by your local health department.

Jeff Meden – Executive Director of the new PACE – Jeff gave a PowerPoint presentation.



PACE Northeast  
Michigan - 22JAN202

NEMCSA, as an equity partner for PACE along with Presbyterian Villages of Michigan (PVM) has hired Jeff to get the local project off the ground. PACE stands for Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly. It is an alternative to nursing home care and through an interdisciplinary care team of physicians, nurses, social workers, therapists, and aides, it coordinates and provides preventive, primary, acute, and long-term care services so older individuals can continue living in the community. The on-site day center is the hub of the program. There are currently 14 programs in 21 locations in lower Michigan serving over 4,000 participants. The coverage area is built by postal codes, there are 29 in our region. No participant should be more than an hour's drive from a PACE location. The goal is to open sometime this year and provide services to 120 clients within the next five years. All the services provided were reviewed. To be eligible, participants are age 55 and older, live in the PACE service area, meet the nursing home level of care, able to live safely in the community with the help of PACE, and eligible for Medicare and/or Medicaid. Private pay is also an option.

K. Pappas – Will you be working with one specific healthcare group? Jeff - We will be hiring our own staff but will partner with local groups. Kim – We have 4,000 eligible clients in the whole region, any thought of satellite services to serve our geographic area? Jeff – There will be gaps until we grow and expand to cover the entire area. PACE Central will be adding four new postal codes soon.

C. Messina – Who funds it? Jeff – NEMCSA is an equity partner along with Presbyterian Villages of Michigan. and Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements for client care.

C. Corwin – We have some existing programs at the COAs, meals, respite, homemaker, etc. How will that interface? Jeff – We do not view PACE as competition. C. Corwin - You are pulling from the same pool. Laurie - Some services could be contracted, home delivered meals might be a good match since there are currently several COAs with waitlists. PACE will just be another option. The legislators love PACE so does Medicare and Medicaid since it is considered a managed care health plan which helps contain the excessive costs of care. PACE will not be a match for everyone just like the MI Choice Waiver is not for everyone.

J. Broad – Is this competition or can we coordinate? Laurie – It really is not a competition. Your congregate meal participants do not qualify for PACE typically as they are more self-sufficient and mobile. There may be a bit of competition for staff but not for clients. Care Management and Waiver eligibility is in line with PACE eligibility.

### **Director's Report**

Staff Updates – A new CBC Program Specialist has been hired. Anne Marshall will work out of the Alpena office. The nurse position for our Gaylord office will be starting next week.

**UPDATE:** the candidate has now declined the position due to a higher salary offer.

Federal Funding – A government shutdown was averted when congress passed a short-term continuing resolution on January 18<sup>th</sup> that sets new deadlines in March for a final FY (Fiscal Year) 2024 funding package. The Continuing Resolution impacts the Older Americans Act funding for our core programs. Advocacy efforts are important. The allocations expected have a decrease of \$330,000 in NSIP funds and, because there is not yet a full budget deal, there is a rule that says a 1% sequestration decrease in funding applies. This means an additional \$450,000 reduction is expected. There is also a reduction in Michigan's population that will impact funding in a negative way.

ACLS Bureau – Funding will be available to provide respite services for Adult Home Help participants in adult day centers only. There are five adult day centers in our region. Eligible participants will have a maximum of \$3,000 to use. Funds will be funneled through the AAAs with our region receiving \$139,813. A meeting is scheduled for February 1<sup>st</sup> for planning.

MI Disability Rights Coalition – They received a \$378,417 grant from ACL (Administration for Community Living) to establish a collaborative connecting rural older adults and individuals with disabilities to assistive technology and durable medical equipment to address their diverse needs. The grant covers 29 counties including all 12 in our region. Region 9 staff will serve on their advisory council and host some demonstrations of assistive technology at some of our events.

Guardianship Bills – The new bills have passed. A handout was distributed.

Tax Assistance – A handout was distributed of available tax assistance in our region.

Adult Home Help – Payments for Adult Home Help workers will be changing soon as they will have to use an Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) system. Other managed care programs will see this change in late spring. This is a federal requirement and Michigan is delinquent in its

implementation of EVV and is now paying a penalty. The pressure is on for this to be in place and will impact the waiver program and our providers.

Dual Eligible Special Needs Program (D-SNP) – ACLS is still moving forward with transitioning MI Health Link to a D-SNP model. This will start in the state areas that participated in the MI Health Link pilot.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program – Advocacy for the program is gaining speed with the Commission on Services to the Aging requesting the staffing and funding formula used by the state be updated. It is based on four or five factors that have not changed since 1988. The new service standards for the program are currently out for review and comment.

Multi-Year Plan – The process has been extended by one year to put us on the same cycle as the State Plan on Aging.

Project Fresh – The state is looking to automate the coupon process this year. An RFP (Request for Proposals) has been released.

ARPA Funding for HCBS (Home and Community Based Services) – \$16 million will go to IMPART Alliance for direct care worker training and recruitment efforts this year with another \$9 million for next year. This will include a long-term care media campaign, PACE infrastructure grants, Caregiver Resource Centers is partially supported with ARPA, and expanded access to HCBS programs in terms of eligibility.

MI Choice Waiver Renewal – CMS approved Program renewal for another 5 years.

RSVP – Rick Houchin, RSVP Program Director will be leaving NEMCSA next week for another position. Amy Otto, the current RSVP Services Coordinator, will transfer into the interim director position.

Region 9 COA Directors Meeting – We have a meeting scheduled for March 4<sup>th</sup> in Gaylord. The morning session will focus on financial review and information and the afternoon will be training by our HR department.

PACE Visit – The cancelled PACE visit with some of our COA directors will be rescheduled for February.

Veteran's Self-Directed Care Program – We are working on the potential to add self-determination services for veterans who need nursing home level of care to stay at home. They hire their own workers, and we conduct the case management. K. Pappas – Will this complement the current Aide and Attendance? Laurie – No, to my knowledge, this is completely different.

Nutrition and Wellness Summit – The annual summit is scheduled for September 10<sup>th</sup> in Higgins Lake.

Annual Day of Training – We are working on a training session for staff, COAs and MI Choice vendors. We hope to arrange a DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) speaker to meet the annual training requirement.

MHEF Grant – Things are going well. Interviews are being conducted with home delivered meal participants and data is coming in. Dr. Richard Douglas is leading this effort to study the impact of a lack of non-emergency medical transportation for home delivered meal clients.

## **Program Reports**

**Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher** – Terry reported on their December 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. There are a variety of outreach and management activities in the Director's Report. They are also having trouble finding attorneys and gave a 5% stipend to current staff who are covering the vacant positions. Connie has the handouts and will mail the information with today's meeting minutes.

**Region 9 COA Directors Report – Dale Evilsizer** – Dale reported he is looking forward to our director's meeting on March 4<sup>th</sup>. He and Lorelei spoke before the meeting about similar situations in trying to hire staff due to wage discrepancies. He stressed the need to have programs funded appropriately. The nutrition programs are heavily subsidized with millage funds which are capped at \$1 mill. Both state and federal funding need to increase to support the services adequately. There are items in the state budget being funded such as a boxing gym, improvements to a Chamber of Commerce, and \$1.6 million for the ballet. We only get \$1 million for the meal programs statewide. We need to advocate across the board because our services are underfunded. We have some of the most efficient and effective programs for the vulnerable in our communities. We need to step up and let our legislators in both Washington DC and Michigan know that. Please reach out by email, letter, or phone call to do anything you can to help.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens** – Laurie reported that Maija is currently working on the Elder Abuse Conference to secure a location and speakers.

**Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski** – Kitty gave a Power Point presentation.



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Open enrollment for Part D ended December 7<sup>th</sup>. She gave examples of some issues and appeals experienced this year. Open enrollment for Advantage Plans (part C) started January 1<sup>st</sup> and ends March 31<sup>st</sup>. The federal budget renewal also renews MIPPA funding. SHIPtools audits continue. Regions cannot publicize their savings until Michigan has an 80% accuracy rate. MMAP audits mean more complex data entry. Counselor recruitment is on-going. Region 9 will hold an orientation session in February or March and interested recruits will take the initial training during the summer. New to Medicare webinars continue to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month with viewing available at COA sites. The next is scheduled for February 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville** – Brooke gave Power Point presentation.



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She reviewed a list of upcoming Health and Wellness Workshops, Healthy Living, Caregiver, and Dementia Webinars. Projects for fiscal year 2024 include:

- An Aging Opioid Grant for \$24,319 to provide staff training for COAs, community medication collection events, outreach, two Chronic Pain PATH Workshops, and develop a regional referral network for substance use disorder for older adults.
- A Caregiver Resource Center Grant for \$191,750 will be used to hire an additional staff person, develop a support group network, 4-week self-care module, Caregiver Connection Facebook Group, marketing and promotion, respite vouchers, and mailing caregiver newsletters.
- Expanding Dementia Care Support in Underserved Communities with a \$130,520 MSU Trualta Grant to continue to provide Trualta and a Caregiver Conference scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup> in Standish which will be geared toward technology.

**Services Coordinator Report – Kelly Robinette** – Kelly reported there were changes made to the nutrition standards and there is a meeting next week with the state to finalize them.

### **Advocacy Reports**

**MSAC (Michigan Senior Advocacy Council)** – L. King reported they met last on December 13<sup>th</sup> and have a meeting scheduled for this Wednesday. The guardianship bills and the ombudsman program are currently the hot topics for advocacy. There has been push back from formal guardians who were not consulted for input into the bills. They do not like the mandate to see clients monthly versus every 3 months. MSAC needs to hear about any feedback you may be getting from guardians. It is the stories that capture the attention of the legislators, and we need you to talk with them. Increased wages for direct care workers is also an issue. We have situations where managers could potentially make less than the workers. Many legislators do not know the facts. They will listen if you talk to them. Our ombudsman Maija has a huge workload and has only one volunteer. They need to know this. Our advocacy topics are picked by the Area Agencies on Aging Association. Our MSAC group is having them attend our meeting to discuss their picks and other topics for advocacy.

**State Advisory Council – Richard Douglas** – No report.

### **State Updates**

**ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) Lacey Charboneau** – Lacey reported she does not have much to add after Laurie's report, but that advocacy is particularly important. There was a \$1 million increase to the already allocated \$1.7 million for the home delivered meal program in the state.

### **Local Updates from Council Members**

L. King – Crawford had another delay on the new building. Now it is the electrician. The project is over budget and there is tax incremental financing. Any funds in excess for taxes will go to other areas in the community. We do not want the senior center to be cut.

C. Messina – Otsego is looking for a pool table if anyone has one to give away.

D. Fay – We are up for our transportation millage again this year and hope to renew at ¼ mill.

C. Corwin – We need to educate the public on what those millage funds cover.

### **Action Items**

None

### **Questions or Comments**

None

### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by J. Broad with support from A. Beach to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 pm. Motion carried. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 25, 2024.

## **Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging Monday, April 22, 2024, at 1:00 pm NEMCSA Large Conference Room**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Dutcher.

### **Roll Call**

Darlene Huff, Kim Pappas, Lorelei King, Carol Gosse, Terry Dutcher, , Amy Beach, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin, Shelby Gohl, Bill Stypick  
Excused: Kim Fleming, Jerry Broad, Dale Evilsizer, Julie Kendrick

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Katlyn Franks, and Brooke Mainville, Kelly Robinette

Quorum - Yes

**Approval of Agenda** – A motion was made by C. Messina with support from D. Fay to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by D. Fay with support from L. King to approve the minutes of 1-22-2024. Motion carried.

### **Nominating Committee Report**

We have two new appointments for membership. Ron Odenwald has applied to represent Cheboygan County as Member-at-Large. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from D. Fay to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Bill Stypick has applied to represent the general public and veteran's services. He lives in Alpena. A motion was made by D. Huff with support from D. Fay to accept the application. Motion carried. Welcome!

**Advisory Council Bingo** –To test their knowledge, each member received a bingo card with answers to various questions about the AAA and advocacy. Prizes were given to those with a bingo. It was fun a fun learning experience and will be revisited again at a future meeting.

### **Director's Report**

AAA staff – We have good news. We have finally hired a nurse for our Gaylord office and one for our West Branch office. Both will begin in early May. We have currently stretched other staff to cover these areas. The CBC (Community Based Care) team is now fully staffed. Retirement - Kelly Robinette is retiring. Tomorrow is her last day with us after 23 years. She has done a wonderful job for the agency and will be greatly missed. We are searching to fill her position which requires either a licensed Dietetic Technician or a Registered Dietitian.

AAA Satellite Offices – In addition to Alpena, we have offices in Cheboygan, Gaylord, and West Branch. NEMCSA has purchased the elementary school in Cheboygan and there is extra space available so we will be consolidating our Cheboygan and Gaylord offices to the new location. As a result, there are a few office items available for free to a non-profit. The COAs were given the opportunity first. We still have a few desks, a bookcase, office chair, and file cabinets left. If interested, reach out to Laurie.

AAA Staff Trainings – All staff were recently trained in Mental Health First Aide. The training was provided free of charge by Northern Lakes Community Mental Health. We also have a full day training scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup> at Forwards Conference Center in West Branch for an Elder Law Bootcamp with Chalgian & Tripp. They train on all aspects of elder care including trusts, wills, Medicaid, long term care, guardianship, etc. They are very generous in providing the training to us for free. We have opened it up to the COAs and CBC vendors. You are all welcome to attend as well. Register at: <https://forms.office.com/r/ek2wk0iq59>

Health Endowment Grants (3) – The first grant is in Iosco County for the non-emergency transportation study. The workgroup is requesting an extension to the end of September to enable them to conduct more interviews and write their findings. Approximately 100 individuals are being interviewed. The second grant is working with the MSU School of Social Work to provide a technology conference in May in Arenac County. The third grant is working with the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition for assistive technology training. Laurie sits on their advisory council. They will provide training for our staff and possibly COA staff on how to use various forms of assistive technology.

ACLS Opioid Grant – A handout was distributed. The map shows the extent of substance abuse in our region and the rest of the state. These are the instances of non-fatal poisoning. We will use the grant funds to provide education, drug take-back events, etc. Substance abuse is pretty significant in the senior population.

Public Hearing – We have a public hearing on the FY 2025 Annual Implementation Plan scheduled as part of our May advisory council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup>. A copy of the draft plan will be available on the website and distributed at the meeting.

Federal Budget – The federal budget was passed. We are waiting to receive the final grant award. Our population numbers are a bit lower so we're expecting some reductions.

Older Michiganians Day (OMD) – Handouts were distributed. OMD will take place next week on May 1<sup>st</sup> as part of Senior Action Week. Follow the week's activities on our Facebook page. Please read the platform. There are four areas of advocacy, 1) Support and Strengthen the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, 2) Support Family and Informal Caregivers, 3) Expand Access to MI Choice, and 4) Increase Access to Home and Community-Based Services. Anyone planning to attend OMD please let Laurie know by Wednesday. We are no longer limited to 10 for our region. We currently have 11 going; 5 from Iosco, 3 from Roscommon, 2



from Crawford and 1 from Alpena. The letter writing campaign is again taking place. Please read the letter and if you agree, please sign and date and leave it for Laurie to take with her when she visits our legislators on OMD.

**Veterans Self-Directed Care Program** – We were approached by the Veterans Association to add this program to our range of services. Our staff are excited about it. We will pilot it in a couple of counties initially. We are fortunate to have Bill Stypick as a member of this council. He is a retired Veteran Service Officer. You may have heard him on our podcasts. If not, you are encouraged to go online and listen to his past podcasts. Lots of good information.

**PACE (Program for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly)** – NEMCSA is in a joint venture with Presbyterian Villages to open a PACE in Alpena in the old Peebles building by Big Lots. Final plans are in the works and the application to CMS has to be completed. It is expected to open this fall.

**D-SNPs – Dual Eligible Special Needs Plans.** The state has awarded 9 health plans contracts to develop DSNPs across the state. It will be in phases with MI Health Link regions first. We will prepare for working with them in a few years.

### **Program Reports**

**Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher** – Terry reviewed handouts from Legal Services of Northern Michigan. He was unable to attend the last meeting. They are closing the Sault Ste Marie office as part of their downsizing due to a reduction in available attorneys. They are fully staffed in Region 9.

**Region 9 COA Directors Report – Dale Evilsizer** – Dale was unable to attend but gave a report to Laurie. The COAs had a meeting with the AAA on March 4th. As always, this was very informative covering finance, nutrition, special projects, HR issues regarding drug policies, and general updates. Several directors met with Region 9 representatives and PACE staff in Mt. Pleasant on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. Older Michiganians Day is May 1<sup>st</sup>. Please attend if you can and make sure you reach out to your legislators.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens** – Laurie reported the Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Conference is scheduled for Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10am to 3pm at the Hillman United Methodist Church, 111 Maple Street, Hillman 49746. Trooper Kunath has been confirmed to present on scams and fraud. This morning CMS released the final minimum staffing rule which will require a total minimum staffing standard of 3.48 hours of care per resident per day. In addition, facilities will now be required to have a registered nurse onsite twenty-four hours per day. Maija is currently completing her quarterly routine visits to all of the nursing homes in the region.

**Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski** – Kitty gave a Power Point presentation.

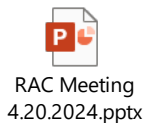


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MMAP recertification is underway for all MMAP counselors. Recertification training topics include Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and Medigap plans. All regional and site trainers

have to take a 2-hour gender orientation training from MiGen formally SAGE Metro Detroit. MDHHS is governing the MMAP and set target goals and trainings. Medicaid Renewals - As of December 2023, 1,131,815 enrollees renewed their coverage, and 606,907 enrollees were disenrolled, including 108,260 who were determined ineligible and 498,647 who were terminated for procedural reasons. This means they have to reapply. It has been a challenge. Counselor recruitment is underway. If you feel your Medicare card has been compromised, please talk to a MMAP counselor or Medicare directly. Also, check out the podcast Lorelei recently did on OMD and advocacy.

**Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville** – Brooke gave Power Point presentation.



The new Caregiver Brochure was distributed and reviewed. It is also on our website at:

<https://www.nemcsa.org/userfiles/filemanager/chcxf5t4qkwnxws5xxsn/>

Each COA received a bundle as well. The Caregiver Conference held last Friday was a success with 17 vendors and 81 attendees. Our next conference will be Advancing Caregiving Through Technology at the Flying Pig in Standish on May 17th. Brooke shared Trualta statistics. Aging Opioid Grant funds will provide a Chronic Pain PATH starting April 20<sup>th</sup> and several medication take back events in the region. Our Caregiver Resource Center includes our Caregiver Connection Facebook Page, a support group network, respite vouchers, self-care module, marketing, and promotion. Possible MHEF Grant for a Caregiver Corner in local libraries was discussed. Fifteen libraries are interested to date.

Region 9 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – To celebrate our 50 years as an area agency on aging, we are developing a 50 and Fabulous Campaign. 50 older adults will be spotlighted along with a postcard mailing, Facebook contest, and celebration party.

Brooke also reviewed a list of upcoming events outlined in the PowerPoint handout.

**Services Coordinator Report – Kelly Robinette** – No report.

### **Advocacy Reports**

**MSAC (Michigan Senior Advocacy Council)** – L. King reported the last meeting was virtual in March. She will be in Lansing this week meeting with legislators to remind them of OMD. We are fortunate that both Representative Ken Borton and Senator Michele Hoytenga were direct care workers in the past. Copies of the Citizen's Guide to State Government were distributed. You can contact your local Representative's office to have additional copies mailed to your COA.

**State Advisory Council – Dr. Richard Douglas** – Laurie received a written report. Richard is new to the Council so to date it has been a sit-and-listen experience. The SAC has new staff assignments, and a new chair will begin next month.

### **State Updates**

**ACLS Bureau (Administration for Community Living Supports) Brenda Ross** – We are very happy to announce Brenda Ross as our new Field Representative. She has been with the State of MI for over 17 years. Her passion is working with aging adults. Previously, she was the Director of Operations for Senior Helpers for 5 years.

Updates – They too are waiting on the final numbers for the federal funding. The April State Commission on Aging meeting was cancelled. The next one will be held in May. ACLS Bureau has completed their Age Friendly Plan and submitted it to AARP. Several service standards are out for public comment. They would love to see as many as possible in Lansing for OMD. It's annual implementation season. Brenda will be in Crawford this Thursday to observe an assessment with Region 9 AAA staff. She looks forward to attending our RAC meetings. Region 9 is scheduled to present our FY 2025 AIP to the State Commission on Aging in September. For the State Plan on Aging, a needs assessment is on the website to gather information on what seniors need to maintain their independence. Tammy Lemer with Housing and Homeless Services is working on the Emergency Shelter Program. Tammy is asking for input from AAAs and support for individuals experiencing sudden homelessness. Go to: [www.Michigan.gov/bphasa](http://www.Michigan.gov/bphasa)

### **Local Updates from Council Members**

Lorelei – The new Crawford senior center open house had over 300 people.

### **Action Items**

None

### **Questions or Comments**

None

Brooke - CBS will be doing an entire week on scams. Brooke has a video as well. Annual free credit report – get it at [www.creditkarma.com](http://www.creditkarma.com) it's free. If your report score goes up or down it will tell you why.

### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by L. King with support from A. Beach to adjourn the meeting at 3:14 pm. Motion carried. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm. Your attendance is very important to endorse our FY 2025 Annual Implementation Plan.

**Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging Meeting  
and Public Hearing on the FY 2025 Annual Implementation Plan  
Monday, May 20, 2024 at 1:00 pm  
NEMCSA Large Conference Room - Alpena**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Dutcher

**Roll Call**

Kim Fleming, Jerry Broad, Darlene Huff, Kim Pappas, Ron Odenwald, Lorelei King, Terry Dutcher, Amy Beach, Chuck Corwin, Bill Stypick

Excused: Dale Evilsizer, Julie Kendrick, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Shelby Gohl

Unexcused: Carol Gosse

Guests: Brenda Ross, Dona Wishart

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Katlyn Franks, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Maija Aikens

Quorum - Yes

**Approval of Agenda** – A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from L. King to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** – The April minutes did not go out and will be on the agenda for approval at our July meeting.

**Nominating Committee Report**

We received an email from Julie Kendrick, Montmorency Delegate, that she has resigned from this Council. A motion was made by L. King with support from C. Corwin to accept the resignation. Motion carried.

Close the meeting – A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from L. King to close the meeting and open the public hearing. Motion carried.

**Public Hearing on the FY 2025 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP)**

Kitty gave a Power Point presentation. A draft copy of the 2025 AIP was distributed.



2025 AIP  
Presentation for May :

Fiscal year 2025 is the third year of the multi-year plan. The plan provides demographics and addresses the needs of the service area. It outlines services to be provided, identifies advocacy efforts, and lists all focal points. Last year the multi-year plan was extended through fiscal year 2026 to align with the state plan.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 created the authority for providing grants to states in response to lawmaker concerns for the lack of community social services for older persons. The OAA established the Administration on Aging or ACL, which serves as the federal authority on matters concerning older persons. 56 State Units on Aging receive federal

funding to administer a wide array of service programs provided through the nationwide network of 618 Area Agencies on Aging who provide services for aging adults in local communities. Region 9 covers 12 counties of northeast lower Michigan. Local Councils and Commissions on Aging act as focal points for aging services in each county.

The OAA Aging Network Partnership of federal, state, and local funds connects with service providers to deliver: in-home services, caregiver supports, access to legal information and assistance, promotes independence and choice, senior employment and volunteer programs, elder rights, and access to long term care supports and services, and more.

Michigan is aging faster than the U.S. population. The median age in Michigan increased by 4.3 years between 2001 and 2021. Michigan was the 29<sup>th</sup> oldest state in 2001 but was the 14<sup>th</sup> oldest state in 2021. Region 9 has the highest population of 60+ in Michigan at 34%. Population statistics were reviewed for all 12 counties for age 60+ and the Medicare only population of those disabled or age 65+. Our region also has 31,172 seniors living in poverty and 24,466 veterans age 60+. Diverse populations represent 8% of the overall population in our region.

We have a new collaboration between Presbyterian Villages of Michigan, NEMCSA, and the Region 9 AAA to develop a PACE program in our region in 2025. The Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly is funded by Medicare and Medicaid. It will be located in Alpena. It is planned to serve 120-150 individuals age 55 and older who require a nursing home level of care and will help older adults meet their healthcare needs in their community and home. Counties covered, Alcona, Alpena, Montmorency, Presque Isle, plus the border of Iosco County. PACE provides all primary care for medical, prescription, dentistry, labs and x-rays, social services, medical specialty services, occupational and recreational therapy, personal care, transportation, and meals.

Our Services include Care Management, Care Transitions Program, Information and Assistance, In-Home Services, Community Programs, and additional programs such as MMAP, MI Choice Waiver, an MSU Dementia Grant to provide Trualta and another Empowering Communities Grant for Evidence Based Disease Self-Management Education Programs, as well as our Caregiver Resource Center and trainings.

Our plan addresses Michigan's State Plan on Aging and focuses on four goals:

1. Improve access of aging service to black, indigenous, people of color and LGBTQ+ older adults in northeast Michigan
2. Reduce the impact of social isolation on older adults and improve access to information, assistance, and social outlets through a variety of means to improve the lives of aging adults in northeast Michigan
3. Ensure older adults have a robust, well-trained workforce to serve their needs
4. Ensure access to services and supports in a manner consistent with person-centered practices

The following questions were addressed: How does respite work? They can receive the service in their home, an adult day care, or through a long-term care facility. Is Care Management an additional program or a core program? It is one of our core programs. Do you have sign boards for the deaf and mute community? We have access to someone to provide that service or we can look into the possibility of the COAs purchasing some with their funding. How do care transitions differ from the waiver? The Care Transitions Program

has not started and if it isn't addressed this year, it will be in our 2026 plan. We plan to target Iosco County to start. Care transitions uses a Community Health Worker to connect people with resources in the community when being discharged from the hospital.

Timeline – The timeline was reviewed. The completed final plan will be presented to the Michigan State Commission on Aging at their meeting in August or September.

A copy of the draft and once approved, the final 2025 AIP will be available on our website at: <https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/aip.html>. Questions and comments may be directed to Laurie Sauer, AAA Director at [sauerl@nemcsa.org](mailto:sauerl@nemcsa.org) or 989-358-4663.

Dona Wishart, Otsego County Commission on Aging Director, thanked the council for their service and the AAA for providing information today on the 2025 AIP. She had the opportunity to tour several PACE programs and noted we have a strong partner in Presbyterian Villages. PACE comes with many challenges for fundraising and growth. She also reported the Otsego COA is launching an Age Tech program/department and that Region 9 AAA has helped with the direct care workforce shortage and acknowledges our efforts with wage increases and incentives. Thank you for your collaboration.

A motion was made by R. Odenwald with support from D. Huff to close the public hearing. Motion carried. A motion was made by K. Pappas with support from L. King to return to the council meeting. Motion carried.

### **Director's Report**

ACLS Bureau - Laurie introduced Brenda Ross, our new Regional Aging Representative.

Feedback on RAC Bingo – We used this at our last meeting as a fun way to refresh ourselves on the things we learn at our meetings. Members found it fun and educational. We are open to other ideas as well.

Services Coordinator – We are looking to hire a Dietetic Tech to fill Kelly's position. The job is posted. We are hoping to contract with a Registered Dietitian on staff with the Head Start Program to contract menu review, monitoring, etc. Kim – Gordon Food does offer menu planning for a fee. Laurie – Yes, but menus still have to be approved by the AAA and it may be a conflict of interest because many of our COAs use GFS food service.

Older Michiganians Day – The event was held in Lansing on May 1<sup>st</sup>, and it was a great event with over 400 in attendance from across the state. We had 14 total in attendance from our region and had good conversations with Representative Hoadley and Representative Borton's aid. We then delivered over 200 advocacy letters to our remaining representatives and senators.

Elder Law Medicaid Bootcamp – We have a staff training tomorrow in West Branch with the law firm of Chalgian & Tripp on Medicaid benefits, estate planning, long term care, etc.

State and Federal Budgets – We do not have a federal budget to date. State revenues are looking positive for the rest of this year and next. SGAs were sent out for ARPA funds.

Contracts – The Pre-Bidders Conference was held, and the process is moving along.

RAC Membership – Our membership numbers are falling. Please let us know if you have any ideas for recruitment, especially for minorities.

RAC By-Laws – The By-Law Review Committee met prior to our last meeting and reviewed the current by-laws. A draft of the suggested revisions was sent to the members for final review and comment. They will be brought to the full membership at our July meeting. There was also a request to address the idea of meeting at a more central location or traveling to other counties for meetings.

Iosco Community Resource Group – Laurie attended their second meeting. The group is made up of various service providers in Iosco. They discussed resources and shared information about various local organizations. SCAAMP – Senior Coalition for Alpena, Alcona, Montmorency and Presque Isle, is a new senior advocacy group for entities providing services to older adults. The AAA has been invited to participate.

PACE Update – The Alpena PACE is moving along nicely, construction/building remodel will begin soon. They are looking to hire sometime in the fall to open in 2025.

Program Results for the AAA – A handout was distributed with program information from the ROMA agency report. The information is specific to aging and reflects most of the programs we offer.

### **Program Reports**

**Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher** – Handouts were distributed. T. Dutcher reported they are working on 2024 employee contract negotiations. A new attorney will start in August. Revenue is strong and interest is being earned. The next meeting is scheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Region 9 COA Directors Report** – No report. We will be scheduling an AAA/COA Director's meeting sometime in June.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman Report – Maija Aikens** – Maija reported she continues to work on the Elder Abuse Prevention conference to be held at the Hillman United Methodist Church on August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10 am to 3 pm. She has also been busy with visits to the nursing homes in the region. Kim – Are you seeing a lot of openings? Maija – Not too many, there are no wait lists. Chuck – Do you have any more volunteers? Maija – I just got another lady. She had the state training and will move on to individual training.

**Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski** – Kitty reported Fraud Prevention Week is June 3-9. Scams and frauds are prevalent. MMAP Recertification deadline is June 30<sup>th</sup> and includes DEI training. Jessica Fleming is the statewide trainer.

Shiptools Audits – MMAP has their own secure database called Shiptools. Ongoing audits are being conducted as a nationwide effort to improve accuracy.

New Project – The state office is working with N&R Publications which helps nonprofits and government agencies educate and engage communities by telling stories that focus on complex issues. They encourage online interviewing. Region 9 was picked for the rural area and Detroit for the urban.

MMAP Awards – The annual awards will be held locally this year with the theme “Go for the Gold.” It includes a mandatory training component. Kitty is currently in the planning stage and hopes to hold it in August.

More Counselors Needed – New Counselor Orientation will be held in June. This will allow them access to part of the Shiptools to attend online training modules. Kitty is also in the talking stage with Cindy Oakley, Director of the AARP SCSEP in Alpena for a MMAP Site Coordinator job training position in Iosco County.

There are upcoming sessions on fraud and scams. There was a data breach discovered earlier this year, watch your Explanation of Benefits for anything suspicious.

**Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville** – Katlyn reported for Brooke. The Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Conference held in Mio had 81 attendees and 17 vendors. The Caregiving Through Technology Conference held in Arenac County had 30 attendees and 8 vendors. The Matter of Balance workshops in Arenac is wrapping up with 13 completers. Brooke will also present on AAA services and programs at the Hale Senior Center on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Upcoming workshops include a virtual Powerful Tools for Caregivers starting May 30<sup>th</sup>, Diabetes PATH in Alpena starting August 6<sup>th</sup>, Powerful Tools for Caregivers in Alpena beginning August 6<sup>th</sup>, Matter of Balance in Alpena starting August 5<sup>th</sup>, and a virtual Dementia Caregiving Series starting September 5<sup>th</sup>.

Mobile Secretary of State Office – A handout was distributed. Mobile offices offer the following services, applying/renewing a driver’s license or state ID, renewing vehicle plates, updating address, transferring title, disability parking, converting for a REAL ID, and removing or adding a lien. Mobile units will be coming to the Alpena Senior Center on May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Alcona Senior Center on July 10<sup>th</sup>, Houghton Lake Center on June 5<sup>th</sup>, Roscommon Center on June 14<sup>th</sup>, and the St. Helen Center on June 21<sup>st</sup>. These are for seniors only and not open to the general public.

**Services Coordinator Report** – No report.

### **Advocacy Reports**

**MSAC – Lorelei King** - Lorelei reported there was good participation and questions at Older Michiganians Day. One member met with a legislator and asked if she had someone in a nursing home and spoke with her. She is on the appropriations committee. She was made aware of what the Ombudsmen do also. The hot topic for the day was the guardianship issue. MSAC members will continue working with legislators on these important topics. Local coffee hours with legislators are a great opportunity for all of us to get to know them better.

**State Advisory Council** – No report.

### **State Updates**

**ACLS Bureau Brenda Ross** – Brenda has been with the state office for over 17 years. She is new to this role, but her heart is with helping aging adults. A decision was made that there is a conflict of interest with SHIP and MI Choice. Guidance was sent out to the AAA regarding



the conflict of interest. Laurie said it has been resolved. The Commission on Services to the Aging met on Friday. Workgroups were formed to review the Home Injury Control and Disaster standards. Senior Project Fresh has been approved for this year and is in full swing. This is the program through the USDA to provide coupons to seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. In June, the Case Management Standard will be reviewed. The workgroup for the Intra-State Funding Formula is working on the LTC issue. Client information needs to be captured as administrative funding. There are some name changes within the department. The Technical Assistance & Quality Improvement Section is now the Aging Network Support Section and Field Representatives are now Regional Aging Representatives. We believe this better represents the structure and staff of the Operations & Aging Network Support Division. Region 9 will present their Annual Implementation Plan for FY 2025 to the Commission in September. The first in-person All-Star meeting will be held on September 9<sup>th</sup> at the McMullen Center followed by the Nutrition Summit. Questions followed: L. King – Are legislators invited to the All-Star meetings? B. Ross – No. C. Corwin – I was informed the chore standards are being reviewed. B. Ross – They have been completed and public comment is done. She will check if they were approved. L. King – Is anything being done with the nutrition standards? B. Ross – Review has been completed and the carryout meal will still be considered a home delivered meal.

### **Local Updates from Council Members**

None

### **Action Items**

Endorsement of the FY 2025 Annual Implementation Plan – A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from L. King to endorse the FY 2025 AIP. Motion passed unanimously. The draft will go to the NEMCSA Board on June 7th.

### **Questions or Comments**

K. Pappas – The process to obtain benefits for veterans' services can take 4-6 months. I advocated to Representative Cavit. The PACT Act has an expanded list of allowable benefits. B. Stypick – The number of veterans living in poverty is disturbing. A surviving spouse can apply for a VA pension if her income is low enough and the spouse served in war time.

R. Odenwald – This was his first meeting, and he thanked the group for allowing him to serve on the Council. He has a varied background and is currently Deputy Supervisor for Tuscaloosa. Abuse of vulnerable older adults is a hot button. He is a member of the Indian River Kiwanis Club and assists with the food bank distributions. They are now able to sponsor their own food truck. The April distribution served 68 cars, 148 households, and 525 individuals, 151 of which were children.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 by a motion from K. Pappas with support from L. King. Motion passed. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 22, 2024.

# Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging Meeting

## Monday, July 22, 2024 at 1:00 pm

### NEMCSA Large Conference Room - Alpena

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Dutcher 1:00 pm

#### **Roll Call**

Kim Fleming, Darlene Huff, Kim Pappas, Ron Odenwald, Lorelei King, Scott Ulery, Terry Dutcher, Dale Evilsizer, Amy Beach, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin, Bill Stypick

Excused:

Unexcused: Shelby Gohl

Guests: Brenda Ross

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Katlyn Franks, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Brooke Mainville

Quorum - Yes

**Approval of Agenda** – A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from L. King to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by L. King with support from D. to approve the minutes of April 22, 2024. Motion carried. A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from L. King to postpone the approval of the May minutes until our next meeting so that all members have received and reviewed a copy. Motion carried.

#### **Nominating Committee Report**

Alpena Delegate – D. Huff reported Jerry Broad has resigned from this council. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from D. Fay to accept his resignation and send a letter of appreciation. Motion carried.

Crawford Member-at-Large – The Crawford County Commission on Aging has appointed Scott Ulery as Member-at-Large. A motion was made by L. King with support from C. Corwin to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome Scott.

Iosco County Delegate – Carol Gosse has resigned as the Iosco Delegate. A motion was made by C. Messina with support from D. Huff to accept her resignation and send a letter of appreciation. Motion carried.

#### **By-Law /Operational Policy Review Committee**

Laurie reported the By-Law Review Committee met on May 20, 2024 and propose the following revisions to the Operational Policy. A copy was distributed, and all changes reviewed. We are not required to be subject to the Open Meetings Act.



Operational Policy -  
Draft revision 4-22-20

A motion was made by D. Fay with support from C. Messina to accept all the proposed changes. A roll call vote was taken. All yes, no opposed. Motion carried.

## **FY 2025 Funding Recommendations – Katlyn Franks**

A copy of the recommendations was distributed.



FY 2025 RFP Award  
Recommendations.pdf

Katlyn reported these are the results from applications submitted for FY 2025 funding. Once the applications were received, a committee of three people reviewed them. Those applicants scoring 40 points or higher received funding.

Merit Award – We received 4 applications. The AAA is required to spend 50% (\$114,459) of the expected award on the development of, or on-going support of, adult day centers. The requests were more than the amount available, so we took the average between the four applicants. If any fell below the minimum amount, they are brought up to the average. The funds are not part of NEMCSA, the adult day centers are with the COAs. Three combined grants make up this funding category.

Title IIIE National Family Caregiver Support Program – We received 14 applications. Funding is expected to be \$110,079. Caregiver Education, Support, and Training are separate this year. They are usually combined. One COA requested the full \$50,000 for respite. We did our best to divide the funds between all the applicants. There were no applications for Evidence Based Disease Prevention. L. King – Was there a reduction in the amount that you had to separate it out? Katlyn – There were three new separate standards this year which required it to be separated.

Title IIID Evidence Based Disease Prevention Health Promotion – We received 8 applications for a total of \$28,618 in funds. Everyone received their requested amount. The Crawford Water Aerobics is a go, they met program certification. They use the hotel pool.

C. Corwin – If a county offers a program and an adjacent county does not, can folks in the adjacent county take the program? Laurie – Yes. C. Messina – Can I take the class in Crawford if I'm in Otsego? Laurie – Yes. L. King – There is a fee though, the hotel charges \$8 for use of the pool.

Elder Abuse Prevention – We received 2 applications. Funding is expected to be \$6,154. Both funding requests were approved. K. Pappas - What is the timeline for applying? Katlyn – The proposal process is now closed. K. Pappas - Did only two apply? Katlyn – Yes. These are all the applications we received. L. King – What is the 65 Checklist? Brooke – The Otsego COA provides it for participants aged 65 and older. They do a weekly or monthly meeting on various topics. They have one scheduled on elder abuse. They've been providing it for two or three years now.

Discussion – C. Corwin – Don't be daunted by the application process. Region 9 AAA staff will walk you through it and suggest changes to help you get the funding. These are government funds. Region 9 has always been there for us. Laurie - Sometimes it's a lot for the smaller counties to provide some of these programs. We have unallocated funds because

nobody applied for them. We will ask again later in the year if anyone is interested in these funds. We try to push as much funding out into the field as possible.

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from D. Fay to approve all the recommendations and recommend approval from the NEMCSA Policy Board. Motion carried. C. Corwin abstained from voting.

### **Director's Report**

AAA Staff Updates – It is with regret that we announce that Maija Aikens, LTC Ombudsman has resigned. Her position is posted on our website. L. King – Is it because of the workload and it being part-time? Laurie – That was part of it, it requires a lot of travel. It's a big job. Good news is that the legislature passed the increased funding for the program. L. King – What happens in her absence? Laurie – The State Ombudsman covers for her until we fill the position. C. Corwin – Is that posted as a full-time position? Laurie – Yes because the Elder Abuse Prevention funds are blended into the Long Term Care Ombudsman program, not just the conference. C. Messina – What credentials does the job require? Laurie – It requires a bachelor's degree in human services. D. Fay – Didn't we have some ombudsman volunteers? Laurie – We do have one and she's still volunteering. We have also hired a Nutrition Services Coordinator, Tyler Sluck. He started last week. He is at a training today but will be at our next meeting. He is not a dietitian or dietetic tech so we don't quite meet the standards. As a result, we have contracted with a Registered Dietician, Janet Malusi, for menu review and assessments. She has gone out on some assessments already and is getting a good picture of how meals prepared, delivered, etc. Tyler will do the day-to-day activities of monitoring verifying the COAs have required paperwork on file, etc. He will also be Serve Safe Certified so he can take meal temps, review food storage and inventories and other monitoring activities.

MASC Conference – The Michigan Association of Senior Centers is holding a conference on November 13-15 in Lansing. The COAs have been notified. There are some interesting agenda items this year.

Federal Budget – We finally received our final Statement of Grant Award for full year funding. We found out our ARPA funding is able to be carried over (not verified in writing yet). This is good, but it creates more work. For FY 2025 the House is proposing a \$21 million cut to Older Americans Act programs. We are unsure which ones. However, Title IIIB, E, and VI are expected to get an increase. Sadly, they are proposing cuts to C1 and C2, SCSEP and APS (Adult Protective Services). These are not final. Increases include \$5 million to Title IIIB (1.2%). These are your homemaker, personal care, and respite services. , \$3 million for NFCG and possibly \$20 million to NSIP. Level funding is proposed for Title IIID, VII-LTO, SHIP, and ADRC. The proposals will now go to the Senate for deliberation.

State Nutrition and Wellness Summit – September 10, 2024 at the Ralph MacMullen Conference Center, Higgins Lake. Attendance is limited to five per region due to facility size. Two are already taken by Laurie and Tyler. We'll see how many COAs are interested. We may have to have a drawing for the other three slots.

AAA Staff Meeting – A full staff meeting and training is scheduled for August 9<sup>th</sup> in Gaylord and includes a MiGen Credentialing Training (DEI), and Hospice 101.

MI Choice Program Challenges – Capitation rates are not keeping pace with program needs, and providers (3 this month) are dropping the program due to the EVV requirement. We have a meeting coming up with the state on rate setting to see what they will recommend. One catastrophic case can wipe out your funding. It's hard to absorb that kind of budgetary impact.

L. King – Is the change in auto insurance rates affecting this too? Laurie – It could be an issue. The auto insurance is supposed to cover first and then other programs may or may not cover other costs.

L. King – What happens if someone's case becomes catastrophic? Laurie – We have to serve them .

EVV (Electronic Visit Verification) – This is a federal requirement of any Medicaid program providing home care. It verifies when the worker showed up, the job(s) they did, etc. This requirement is causing some of our service agencies to pull out of being waiver providers. Three COAs pulled out. Many feel burdened by the requirement.

C. Corwin – This has been in the private sector for years. The concept is not new, but it is new to our region.

RAC Membership – We continue to struggle with membership vacancies. Please let Laurie know if you have anyone in mind or suggestions for recruitment.

PACE – Construction has started at the old Peebles building in Alpena. They are on target to open next year.

### **Program Reports**

**Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher** – A handout was distributed of a current list of attorneys and staff for Legal Services of Northern Michigan. Handouts were distributed. T. Dutcher reported they reviewed the list and discussed their contingency plan. The next meeting will be in person in October in St. Ignace.

**Region 9 COA Directors Report** – Dale reported the fiscal year ends in September so COA directors will be very busy over the next few months. A virtual meeting was held with the AAA on June 25<sup>th</sup>. One of the topics was the overtime rule. This will heavily affect most of the COAs. It was a very informative meeting. We also discussed the direct care worker shortage and training, service concerns for personal care, non-emergency transportation, and EVV. One topic that is always discussed is funding. Many COAs are really starting to struggle. Food and labor costs keep going up. It is so important that we advocate to our legislators, it's such an easy argument.

D. Fay – Are they making you go hourly? Dale – Yes, we're unable to raise my salary to be in compliance with the new threshold. Laurie – They either have to raise their salary or switch them to hourly.

L. King – We're not going to lose any COA directors because of this are we? Dale – I don't believe so. We all fill in when other staff can't do their jobs.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman Report** – No report.

**Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski** – Kitty gave a Power Point presentation.



July 2024 RAC  
Meeting.pptx

We have five counties with over 40% senior population. I can share the stats if you need for advocacy.

Congratulations to the counselors who completed their recertification. The role of a MMAP Counselor is outreach and counseling. New counselors are needed throughout the region. SOGI training deadline is November. Four new applicants are in the process of starting initial training. D. Fay – Is it state or federal where all the gender questions are being asked? Kitty - That comes from Medicare. There is a lot of discrimination. We need to identify our clientele and provide services. Once identified, we can better serve that group. Advocacy should be part of everyone's program.

A region-wide viewing event, New to Medicare, will be held on August 14<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. We will continue with the monthly ones held the second Wednesday of each month. These are very informative and explains how Medicare works.

The Go for the Golden Years: 2024 MMAP Olympics and Awards Ceremony will be held here at NEMCSA on Wednesday, August 7<sup>th</sup> from 9:45 am to 3:00 pm. Special guest is Jennifer Page, Executive Director of MMAP, Inc. The agenda includes MMAP Olympic games, a training webinar, awards, recognitions, and door prizes. Lunch is included. Funding was received from MMAP to provide it.

My Social Security – They are changing their platform. Beneficiaries will no longer be able to sign in to their personal *my* Social Security account with their username and password. You will have to transfer over and use one of SSA's Credential Service Providers: Login.gov or ID.me. For more information on *my Social Security: How to Create an Online Account* go to: [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10540.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10540.pdf)

New Podcast – Our latest podcast is Preventing Healthcare Fraud. View it on our website at: <https://www.nemcsa.org/services/senior-services/podcast.html>

**Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville** – Brooke gave a Power Point presentation on the following.



7.22.2024 Brooke  
Pwr Pt.pptx

The Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation Prevention Conference is scheduled for Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Hillman United Methodist Church. **Register.** A flyer was distributed. Breakfast and lunch provided.

Weight Management Program – We are offering Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less. This is an online 15-week weight management program led by a registered dietitian nutritionist. The class is open to older adults 60 and older, family caregivers, or Kinship Caregivers who live in our 12-county service area. Each week covers a different topic such as Navigate the Diet Maze, Manage Stress, Cook Smart, etc. We purchased 20 slots and 9 are currently filled. 70% maintained or loss more weight 6 months after completion.

Caregiver Resource Center Grant – The AAA offers a Caregiver Connection Facebook page, a support group network, self-care module, and marketing and promotion. The grant was extended to March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Fall Prevention Toolkits – Fall Prevention Week is September 23-27, 2024. The AAA will provide each COA a supply of Fall Prevention Placemats. We will also provide presentations, press releases, social media posts and additional handouts.

Aging Opioid Grant – A sample flyer on How to Prevent Medication Misuse was reviewed. This will also be distributed to the COAs.

Webinars and Classes – Brooke reviewed a list of upcoming webinars, Matter of Balance, Powerful Tools for Caregivers and PATH classes. Information is also in the AAA newsletter which you all receive.

**Nutrition Services Coordinator Report – Tyler Sluck - No report.**

### **Advocacy Reports**

**MSAC – Lorelei King** - Lorelei reported MSAC has a subgroup that worked with Senator Stephanie Chang on the guardianship issues. We're hearing that getting the topics on some of the platforms has been difficult. There were two pushbacks; 1. That we were going to lose guardians if opened up to family members and 2. Probate judges are concerned about the cost of having mental evaluations. Hopefully, this will be revisited in the fall. An increase of \$3 million for the ombudsman program was passed but it hasn't been signed yet. MSAC members are encouraged to continue to meet with legislators over the summer break when they're out at events and coffee hours. Alice Snyder did a wonderful job when advocating to Michelle Hoitenga, giving her the stats on the seniors in our region and what happens when we get these cuts. numbers of seniors and % of seniors in our region and what happens when get these cuts. She also brought up to her the change in car insurance rate and the effect it has on veteran's rates. When you talk to your legislators, speak about the items you're passionate about and talk to their staff as well.

C. Corwin – Another important demographic is that 77% of seniors vote. That's 2.3 million seniors. They understand those numbers.

**State Advisory Council** – Laurie reported they are working on updates to their by-laws, and they are interested in the losco transportation study.

### **State Updates**

**ACLS Bureau Brenda Ross** – Brenda reported they are still reviewing several operating standards including the waiver standards. An in-person All-Star meeting is scheduled for September 9th at the Ralph MacMullen Conference Center, the day before the Nutrition Summit. We are in the height of assessment and annual implementation plan season. She conducted the annual assessment with Region 9 last month. It went very well. Your agency is well run. It's always exciting to see the things going on in your region. Your plan will go to the State Commission on Aging in September.

### **Local Updates from Council Members**

D. Fay – We have our transportation millage renewal coming up. We’re wondering if we’ll get the ¼ mill. We will do our best to keep the program going if the millage fails.

C. Messina – Otsego was up for renewal. It became a big mess, and we were cut.

L. King – Crawford has a millage renewal too. We’re competing with millages for the Sheriff and Road Commission. We had a presentation at our board meeting last month about options for the COA. Kirtland College gave suggestions. They do a fundraiser every year. The COA did receive a grant and can proceed with pickle ball courts outside.

AAA Director Evaluation – Just a reminder if you haven’t done so, please either complete the evaluation online sent with the meeting notice, or I have paper copies available here.

### **Action Items**

Both the Operational Policies and FY 2025 Recommendations for Funded were addressed earlier. Both passed. The funding recommendations will be forwarded to the NEMCSA Policy Board for final approval at their meeting on August 2, 2024.

### **Questions or Comments**

None

### **Adjourn**

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from L. King to adjourn the meeting at 2:38 pm. Motion carried. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## **Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging Meeting Monday, September 23, 2024 at 1:00 pm NEMCSA Large Conference Room - Alpena**

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The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Dutcher 1:02 pm

### **Roll Call**

Kim Fleming, Darlene Huff, Bonnie Altman, Ron Odenwald, Lorelei King, Crystal Yachcik, Terry Dutcher, Amy Beach, Connie Messina, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin

Excused: Kim Pappas, Dale Evilsizer

Unexcused: Scott Ulery, Shelby Gohl, Bill Stypick

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Katlyn Franks, Kitty Glomski, Connie McQuarrie, Brooke Mainville, Tyler Sluck

Quorum - Yes



**Approval of Agenda** – A motion was made by D. Huff with support from D. Fay to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes** – A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from L. King to approve the minutes of May 20, 2024 and July 22, 2024. Motion carried.

### **Nominating Committee Report**

Alpena Delegate – C. Messina reported Bonnie Altman has been appointed as delegate by the Alpena Senior Center. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from D. Huff to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome Bonnie.

Iosco Delegate – Crystal Jachcik has been appointed as delegate by the Iosco County Commission on Aging. A motion was made by D. Huff with support from A. Beach to accept the appointment. Motion carried. Welcome Crystal.

### **Speaker – Mary Kavanaugh-Gahn, Deputy Director, Legal Services of Northern Michigan**



Region 9 AAA-  
Presentation 9.23.24.p

Mary gave an overview of their services. Legal Services of Northern Michigan (LSNM) is a public interest law firm with 6 offices serving 36 counties. They receive a grant from the Region 9 AAA but the majority of their funding comes from Legal Services Corporation and the Michigan State Bar Foundation. As they are grant funded, they must follow certain guidelines for case eligibility. There is an income/asset limit for clients of at or below 125% of poverty and \$15,000 in assets. There are some exceptions. LSNM has four priority areas for case selection, Safe, Secure and Stable Families, Habitable, Safe and Affordable Housing, Adequate Resources to Live Independently, and Fundamental Rights. The legal issues they deal with the most include housing (evictions and foreclosures), family law and domestic violence, elder abuse and elder law, consumer law (debt collection and contract disputes), and benefits law/income (social security disability, unemployment, food assistance). They also receive VOCA Elder Abuse Grant funds to assist with counsel for those experiencing elder abuse specifically. They have an elder abuse attorney on staff in Gaylord.

Funds from Region 9 (\$27,400 annually) are used to provide civil legal services to seniors aged 60 and older in our 12-county region. There is no income limit, but the focus is on serving the needy and frail with simple estate planning, divorce, fraud, collections, contracts, and benefits. Intake and initial screening is done over the phone or can be done in person. The intake is followed by an appointment with the client to determine whether to accept the case based upon the information provided. The meeting needs to be solely between the attorney and the senior to ensure confidentiality is preserved. Mary can be reached at: 231-741-0771 ext. 1. Discussion followed:

C. Yachcik – Can the client bring someone else with them? Mary – If the person stays with them, they are advised that there would no longer be client/attorney privilege. C – What if the person they bring has power of attorney or guardianship? Mary – We would have to see those documents before we meet.

L. King – Guardianship is a hot topic right now; do you get involved? Mary – Just with terminating one especially if there is proof of elder abuse.

C. Corwin – I know of two situations with people who wanted to change their court appointed guardian, do you do that? Mary – It depends if there are issues with the guardianship. We help the most vulnerable. If it's just a simple switch we would review it.

T. Dutcher – The state bar association has helped with funding when LSNM is out of funds. We are lucky to have them on board. Mary – Yes, they try to supplement if they're able.

B. Altman – We have a higher percentage of seniors here and on the west side of state. What is making more seniors want to come here and are we looking at increasing funding? Mary – It's not that they are moving, it's that they are staying, and younger folks are moving away. Seniors are moving to Traverse City to retire. We can always use additional funding. We could use another ten attorneys. We guess at our funding and function on what it actually is. I don't know who you would lobby for additional funds.

C. Corwin – I go into the home to do assessments. More than half of my clients moved up here from downstate. The cost of living is less so people are moving into northeast Michigan. Roscommon has the most growth of retirees.

R. Odenwald – Ron gave an example of a bad guardianship case on a Mr. Pappas in Petoskey. He is a veteran who lived independently. He went to the VA and asked for help balancing his checkbook. The VA decided he needed a guardian and placed him with an attorney who took his savings along with three other clients. The attorney went to prison, but the restitution made to the victims is for \$300 per month. Mr. Pappas is 99 now and has recovered \$900 to date. He will never get all of his money back. Michigan has some of the worst guardianship laws in the nation. It gives a false sense of security. Some appointed guardians keep the family away.

### **Director's Report**

AAA Staff Updates – Laurie introduced Tyler Sluck, our new Nutrition Services Coordinator.

AIP – Our annual implementation plan was approved on Friday by the State Commission on Services to the Aging. We were chided for not having much diversity on our boards. Many AAAs received the same message. There is a commissioner who feels we need to do more to recruit for our RAC and NEMCSA Board. We have not had minority individuals applying. Please talk to anyone you may know that could help fill this requirement.

State Advisory Council - Laurie attended the meeting in Lansing where Richard Douglas presented on the Non-Emergency Medical Transportation report completed from the study done in Iosco County. There was a lot of interest in their findings and recommendations. We will try to have him present at our next meeting.

ACLS Bureau All-Star Meeting – The meeting was very good with mostly financial and MMAP workshops. ADvancing States was there as well. They represent units on aging nationwide. They talked about changes coming to the Older Americans Act.

Options Counseling RFP – The Crawford COA hosted a listening session by the state on the new Request for Proposal (RFP) coming this fall for options counseling. Only one person

showed up. There was not a lot of advance notice, so recruitment efforts were not good. There was little input from our side of the state.

MSU Institute – The MSU Institute for Health Policy, Veterans Health, and Wellness Collaborations is looking for collaborations and resources to list on their website.

Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Prevention Conference – The conference held last month in Hillman went exceptionally well with almost 100 attending. We had a good diverse mix of topics and speakers.

Regional Council on Aging By-Laws – The proposed changes were approved by the NEMCSA Policy Board. Members received a final copy.

Interesting News – Elizabeth Gallagher, long time MI Choice Program Director, retired unexpectedly last month. Heather Hill has stepped into the role. Cindy Masterson, ACLS Director of Operations & Aging Network Support Division, is retiring the end of December. She has been a good support for the aging network and AAAs. Also, Alice Snyder, Crawford COA Director will be retiring in March. She has been there over 20 years and has been very proactive and a strong advocate.

MMAP – Last Monday out of the blue, we learned the ACLS Bureau is putting into motion a plan to pull SHIP (State Health Insurance Program) also referred to as MMAP in Michigan, out of AAAs and into a bid process as other states do. This will coincide with the state's plan to release the RFP for options counselling as well. The RFP will provide three options: 1. An entity can apply for options counselling only, 2. An entity can apply for SHIP & MIPAA (Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act) only, or 3. An entity can apply for options counselling, SHIP, and MIPAA altogether. MIPAA will not be available as a standalone. With limited knowledge and without seeing the RFP language, we anticipate we will apply for the funding. We fully understand the value of this program to our older adults and the commitment many COAs have made to ensure this program's success in region 9. Discussion followed.

M. Downs – Will MMAP be in our senior centers? Laurie – That is to be determined. M – Didn't we train our MMAP counselors? Laurie – Yes, the SHIP office in Lansing did the training. It will now be with the ACLS Bureau. L. King – What is options counseling? Laurie – It is to help people learn about their care options in order to make informed decisions. We hope it will help with enrollment into MI Choice. It's the same as what MMAP counselors do in providing Medicare information. L – Is there anything we can do as a group? Laurie – I don't know. I hear they made their decision and are moving forward. C. Corwin – Will non-governmental agencies be able to apply? Laurie – We don't know until the RFP comes out. Most states bid their program out.

C. Messina – I would like to voice my opinion if you have contact information. Laurie – I will find out from ACLS Bureau. Their staff was also taken by surprise. Brenda Ross – You can contact Katie Alexander, Grant Manager at [AlexanderK16@michigan.gov](mailto:AlexanderK16@michigan.gov) or Kristina Leonardi, Division Manager at [LeonardiK1@michigan.gov](mailto:LeonardiK1@michigan.gov)

Federal Budget – The budget has not been resolved to date. We are hearing that a continuing resolution to take us to December 13<sup>th</sup> is likely.

Miscellaneous – The Direct Care Worker Premium is going up to \$3.40, an increase of .20 cents, a 5% increase will go to MI Choice contractors to increase the base pay amount, and Older Michigianians Day (OMD) is scheduled for May 7, 2025.

Commission on Services to the Aging – Their next meeting will be in Bellaire on October 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am at the Antrim County Building if anyone is interested in attending. Laurie will attend.

EVV – The state system for electronic visit verification is still having issues. It is set to go live but right now it's a mess. This is the program that requires community living supports workers to clock in and out when at a client's home and record the tasks they performed. It is a requirement by the federal government in the Medicaid program. C. Corwin – Will we meet the deadline in Region 9? Laurie – The system is still not ready, but we will do our best to meet it.

## **Program Reports**

**Legal Services Board – Terry Dutcher** – Terry reported they will meet in October.

**Region 9 COA Directors Report** – Dale submitted a report. The COA directors will be very busy this last week of the fiscal year. They had their annual waiver contractors meeting. The requirements for what needs to be sent in were minimal this year. There has been some concern about the Department of Labors new regulation on salaried workers. Cathy MacFalda from NEMCSA has been working with the group. The simple solution is that most of the COA Directors and staff will be moved to hourly before the deadline. The Michigan Supreme Court recently ruled to increase the minimum wage to \$12.48 per hour. This is altering the structure of our payrolls. The bottom end of the payroll will receive significantly higher wages than those above them. The state and federal reimbursements are not keeping up with inflation let alone new unfunded mandates. This is making recruiting and retention difficult. Advocacy is very important. He would love to see every county represented at the next Older Michigianians Day. He also thanked AAA staff for their work over the last year.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman Report** – Laurie interviewed three applicants last week. We have one in mind to hire. We have to perform the required checks and offer the position. We anticipate an increase in funding for the program.

**Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty Glomski** – Kitty gave a Power Point presentation.



Sept 23 RAC  
Mtg.pptx

Kitty reported We have four new MMAP Counselors. A recognition event was held at the NEMCSA office on August 7<sup>th</sup>. The theme was Go for the Golden Years – The MMAP Olympics. Certificates and medals were awarded by MMAP Executive Director Jennifer Page. Rookie of the Year is Bradd Chisholm, Alcona County Volunteer, Above and Beyond Awards went to Kathy MacArthur, Samaritas – Alpena and Karen Meyers, Rogers City Community Center – Presque Isle County. Tammy Findlay from Crawford was awarded Counselor of the Year, and the Leadership Award went to April Zettel from Ogemaw County. MMAP Executive

Director Jeniffer Page presented Alice Dawson from the Cheboygan COA the State Award for Site Coordinator of the Year.

Clients are losing their managed Medicaid plans from United Healthcare and Meridian. They need to switch to a new Medicaid Provider by September 17<sup>th</sup>. CMS released guidance to help states with processing of Medicaid renewals following the Medicaid public health emergency unwinding period. That deadline has been extended to 2025.

Social Security is projecting a 2025 cost of living adjustment of 2.5%. Approximately 2/3 of seniors rely on social security for more than half of their monthly income and 28% depend on it entirely. Upcoming trainings were reviewed. The New to Medicare Webinar held regionwide on August 14<sup>th</sup> was a success with 26 attendees and 13 sites participating. The Medicare & You 2025 Handbooks will be available soon. Open enrollment is October 15 thru December 7.

**Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke Mainville** – Brooke gave a Power Point presentation.



RAC Meeting  
9.23.2024 3 (1).pdf

Updates – The Elder Abuse conference was a success. Thirteen Matter of Balance (MOB) workshops have been held. Fall prevention week started today. The Caregiver Resource Center grant proposals went out to five COAs, Alcona, Alpena, Iosco, Otsego, and Roscommon. The AAA used grant funds to develop a self-care module and support group collaborative for general, kinship, professional, and dementia groups.

Aging Opioid Grant – All COAs will receive posters, magnets, and a supply of flyers for home delivered meal clients. This grant ends September 30<sup>th</sup>.

Brooke reviewed scheduled dates for webinars, MOB, Powerful Tools for Caregivers and PATH.

**Nutrition Services Coordinator Report – Tyler Sluck** – Tyler started his new position with the AAA on July 9<sup>th</sup>. He grew up in Roscommon County. He is working with meal sites on using the congregate database as a tool for information, etc., and ensures the COAs are operating to the state nutrition standards. He also bridges the gap between the COA director and staff, Janet our registered dietician, Marla Price at DHHS in Lansing, and Gordon Food Service. He recently completed the MOB Master Trainer course in July and August and has facilitated a course with Brooke. He got to see firsthand how it impacted the participants in the class. Tyler did his first home delivered meal assessment in Montmorency last week. He attended the Nutrition Summit this month and is scheduled to take a ServSafe certification course in October. He is learning and happy to be here. C. Corwin shared that it would be great if he came to the COA for lunch and put a face to the program, and C. Jachcik would love to have a regional cookoff with the COA cooks.

### **Advocacy Reports**

**MSAC – Lorelei King** - Lorelei reported the group is on recess for the summer but continue advocating with legislators virtually. They have a workgroup on guardianship and are working with Senator Chang who is a member of the Appropriations Committee. The guardianship

bills passed in the house and are still in the senate. In order to keep the language in the bills going forward, they are no longer asking to set up the special office to do the guardianship. A highlight of HR4909 is that family members will be considered first for guardianship and that the guardian ad litem be fair so family members can be involved in decisions being made by the guardian. HR4911 provides the four-page check off form. We need to have better language in the bill. Lawyers say they don't hear about any issues and physicians believe the issue is being blown out of proportion. Please send her any guardianship stories.

C. Corwin – How much pushback are you getting from guardians? Lorelei – A lot. They feel we are taking away their job. Right now, we have Senator Chang on our side, but she can only push so much without some stories. It can be old stories as well. C – How are you defining family input? Lorelei – I need to find out, it's not clear.

**State Advisory Council** – We hope to have a report at our next meeting.

### **State Updates**

**ACLS Bureau Brenda Ross** – Brenda reported she is the state aging representative for our region. She works in Cyndi Masterson's area. She will share our discussion with those in the division driving the change with MMAP. We are learning about this change along with you. The ACLS Bureau met with ADvancing States this morning and were advised that a continuing resolution will be passed by the House this Wednesday with funding extending to December 20<sup>th</sup>. MMAP was the hot topic at the AIP meeting. The CSA approved the senior volunteer programs, the adjustment to the Adult Day Operating Standard, and the increase in funding for the LTC Ombudsman Program. The state is working on changes and updates needed as a result of changes to the OAA regulations. She will share information as timelines are revealed.

### **Local Updates from Council Members**

D. Fay – Our transportation millage passed.

M. Downs – Our health fair in Posen was well attended.

L. King – Our head cook retired, we received a small grant to provide Get Fit Programs, and we are hosting a vaccine clinic. The new center is drawing people in, congregate meals are up.

C. Yachcik – We host the mobile Secretary of State unit, it's been very successful. Our vaccine clinic is today. We are always concerned about medical transportation. We are down one home care provider. Discussion was held about the differences in having multiple centers. Our county likes it that way. Dale is the director for all 4. We have one board, and each center has their own board. We have a space at the Hale office for Tammy Toth to do MMAP. We recently started a new program with center based impaired students. They help with meal prep and clean up. These are cognitively impaired students up to age 26 that are in a special needs program. They come with coaches and are not paid.

R. Odenwald – Both Senator John Damoose and Representative Cam Cavitt are on the Appropriations Committee. Both are very willing to listen. I wouldn't hesitate to contact them directly. Mr. Pappas is in Damoose's district.

A. Beach – Ogemaw’s millage passed.

**Action Items**

Date for November/December meeting – Options were discussed. It was decided to hold the next meeting on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> same place same time. Motion by M. Downs with support from D. Huff to approve the meeting date. Motion carried.

**Questions or Comments**

None

**Adjourn**

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from M. Downs to adjourn the meeting at 3:25 pm. Motion carried. Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 pm.