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Alcona - Alpena - Arenac - Cheboygan - Crawford - Iosco
Montmorency - Ogemaw - Oscoda - Otsego - Presque Isle - Roscommon

2375 Gordon Road Alpena, Michigan 49707 Phone: 989-356-3474 Fax: 989-358-6604 Toll Free: 800-219-2273 www.nemcsa.org

DATE: January 13, 2020
TO: All Regional Council on Aging Members
FROM: Connie McQuarrie, Secretary to the Council
RE: Annual Meeting/Election of Officers

The Annual Meeting of the Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging has been scheduled for **Monday, January 27, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. in the large conference room at NEMCSA.**

*The Nominating Committee will meet prior to the meeting at 12:30 p.m. in the back of the room.

Enclosures:

- Agenda
- Final 2019 Attendance Sheet
- Proposed 2020 Annual Meeting Schedule
- December 9, 2019 Minutes Sent Previously

This is our Annual Election of Officers. If you are interested in either the Chair or Vice Chair position please let me know as soon as possible. We will also entertain nominations from the floor at the meeting.

Please call me if you are unable to attend so that you may be marked excused (989) 358-4661. The seat of any member may be declared vacant after three unexcused absences.

Happy New Year!



Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
April 27, 2020 at 1:00 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President C. Proulx at 1:00 pm

Roll Call

Darlene Huff, Roberta Matelski, Terry Dutcher, Carol Wilder, Barbara Kaye, Merianne Tappan, Elaine Ableidinger, Corleen Proulx, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin and Madeline Hiller

Excused: Roger Schulte, Virginia Zygiel, Violet Ward

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Guests: Lisa Bolen (NEMCSA Ex. Director), Steve Betterly (AASA)

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Gina Bey, Yvette Smigelski, Connie McQuarrie, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Brooke Mainville, Sara Gusler

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

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Nominating Committee - D. Fay had nothing to report.

Director's Report

Greetings to all of our Advisory Council members! We are hopeful you all are healthy and safe. Since it has been a while since our last meeting and with Governor Whitmer's Executive Order to "Stay Home, Stay Safe", I thought it might be prudent to update you on what Region 9 is doing during these unprecedented times. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but I am sure many of you have been wondering how and what staff and our partners have been doing since the order went into effect. I offer the following bulleted quick bites on the current status:

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3. The agency has fast tracked the implementation and utilization of Microsoft TEAMS software to facilitate remote work. We will implement Zoom technology where appropriate such as today's meeting. This may be a good option for future meetings where travel is difficult due to bad weather. There have been some challenges, but we're getting used to the new system.
4. Care managers are conducting assessments, reassessments, care place development and program enrollments remotely.
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Caregiver Quarterly Newsletter – Brooke reviewed the front page of the first newsletter. This will be emailed to caregivers directly. COA Directors also received the information for caregivers to sign up with them or go online at www.nemcsa.org as well.

Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Programs - Many programs have been rescheduled. Watch for future dates.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers – The AAA will conduct its first online workshop starting on May 4th. We may continue online workshops in the future as well, especially during the winter months.

Kinship Handbook – Brooke created one for each county. COAs will receive a copy by email soon. It will also be available on our website under the Education tab. The handbook includes local information, resources, etc. You are encouraged to go online and take a look. Feedback is always appreciated.

Upcoming Workshops – An updated flyer was reviewed. Please reach out to Brooke if know anyone who may be interested in any of the workshops.

Advocacy Reports

Michigan Senior Advocates (MSAC) – No report.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the Council last met face to face. March – May meetings have been cancelled. There are four group looking into the causes, effects and correction for senior loneliness. They hope to put all of their resources together and present their finished document to the state and legislators in July and then out statewide to everyone else after that.

State Updates

State Commission on Aging – No report.

Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – Steve Betterly reported the State Commission on Aging continues to meet remotely. The May meeting has been cancelled. They have been doing limited work and have given AASA the authority to approve policy waivers to make grant adjustments on a case by case basis. AASA has issued over 40 waivers so far.

AIP 2021 Process – AASA is preparing some recommendations to extend the 2020 plan into 2021. The AIP will not be as big a process this year. The state is working on guidance to the field on how this will work.

Local Updates From Council Members

Corky – The MCCOA board has been meeting by phone. We received good news from a Lewiston board member who reported 80 handmade masks will be donated. I believe they are also having a pop-up food pantry on May 6th. A local business in Hillman is also making masks with shields and donating to various organizations. Today the board gave permission to apply for the PPE grant. The COA also bought 5 gallons of hand sanitizer from Traverse City and received 1 gallon from Montmorency County Emergency Management.

D. Fay – Due to difficulty with his audio, Laurie reported that he wanted to report that their COA Director, Denise Parrott is retiring the end of May. Christine Schleben, Assistant Director has been promoted to Director and a new Assistant Director has been hired.

C. Corwin – It has been an interesting couple of months. We are seeing to the basic needs of our seniors, but not as much as we'd like. We have received tremendous support from NEMCSA and the Region 9 AAA during this time. It would have been too daunting to find our way through this virus process without them. Corky – I believe that's true for all of us.

Laurie – A big shout out to all of our network partners in the region as well who have done some tremendous work. We have all worked to pull together to help each other out.

Action Items

MSAC Appointment – Laurie reported that she met someone at the AASA Listening Session held in March at the Alpena Senior Center who expressed interest in MSAC. Her name is Bonnie Altman. I want to have her attend one of our Regional Council meetings before enrolling in MSAC so she has an idea of what we do.

Question or Comments

No further questions.

Adjourn

A motion was made by M. Downs with support from M. Hiller to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned by Chair C. Proulx at 2:22 pm.

Our next meeting is scheduled for May 18th at 1:00 pm in conjunction with a public hearing on the FY 2021 AIP.

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We want to express our deep appreciation to retiring MMAP counselors in Montmorency County volunteer counselor Barbara Whalen who retired earlier this year, Otsego County Site Coordinator John Panci who will retire on May 1 and we welcome (former Emmet County) MMAP counselor Jake Rossow who will fill John's role in Otsego. Thank you to the COAs for your dedication and service to Region 9 MMAP.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Handouts were distributed previously. Brooke reported the Adult Day Care Best Practice Meeting has been rescheduled for June 5, 2020 and the Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Conference has been rescheduled for Friday, July 31, 2020. The Best Practices for Adult Day Services has been rescheduled for June 5, 2020.

Caregiver Quarterly Newsletter – Brooke reviewed the front page of the first newsletter. This will be emailed to caregivers directly. COA Directors also received the information for caregivers to sign up with them or go online at www.nemcsa.org as well.

Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Programs - Many programs have been rescheduled. Watch for future dates.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers – The AAA will conduct its first online workshop starting on May 4th. We may continue online workshops in the future as well, especially during the winter months.

Kinship Handbook – Brooke created one for each county. COAs will receive a copy by email soon. It will also be available on our website under the Education tab. The handbook includes local information, resources, etc. You are encouraged to go online and take a look. Feedback is always appreciated.

Upcoming Workshops – An updated flyer was reviewed. Please reach out to Brooke if know anyone who may be interested in any of the workshops.

Advocacy Reports

Michigan Senior Advocates (MSAC) – No report.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the Council last met face to face. March – May meetings have been cancelled. There are four group looking into the causes, effects and correction for senior loneliness. They hope to put all of their resources together and present their finished document to the state and legislators in July and then out statewide to everyone else after that.

State Updates

State Commission on Aging – No report.

Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – Steve Betterly reported the State Commission on Aging continues to meet remotely. The May meeting has been cancelled. They have been doing limited work and have given AASA the authority to approve policy waivers to make grant adjustments on a case by case basis. AASA has issued over 40 waivers so far.

AIP 2021 Process – AASA is preparing some recommendations to extend the 2020 plan into 2021. The AIP will not be as big a process this year. The state is working on guidance to the field on how this will work.

Local Updates From Council Members

Corky – The MCCOA board has been meeting by phone. We received good news from a Lewiston board member who reported 80 handmade masks will be donated. I believe they are also having a pop-up food pantry on May 6th. A local business in Hillman is also making masks with shields and donating to various organizations. Today the board gave permission to apply for the PPE grant. The COA also bought 5 gallons of hand sanitizer from Traverse City and received 1 gallon from Montmorency County Emergency Management.

D. Fay – Due to difficulty with his audio, Laurie reported that he wanted to report that their COA Director, Denise Parrott is retiring the end of May. Christine Schleben, Assistant Director has been promoted to Director and a new Assistant Director has been hired.

C. Corwin – It has been an interesting couple of months. We are seeing to the basic needs of our seniors, but not as much as we'd like. We have received tremendous support from NEMCSA and the Region 9 AAA during this time. It would have been too daunting to find our way through this virus process without them. Corky – I believe that's true for all of us.

Laurie – A big shout out to all of our network partners in the region as well who have done some tremendous work. We have all worked to pull together to help each other out.

Action Items

MSAC Appointment – Laurie reported that she met someone at the AASA Listening Session held in March at the Alpena Senior Center who expressed interest in MSAC. Her name is Bonnie Altman. I want to have her attend one of our Regional Council meetings before enrolling in MSAC so she has an idea of what we do.

Question or Comments

No further questions.

Adjourn

A motion was made by M. Downs with support from M. Hiller to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned by Chair C. Proulx at 2:22 pm.

Our next meeting is scheduled for May 18th at 1:00 pm in conjunction with a public hearing on the FY 2021 AIP.

**Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging and
Public Hearing - FY 2021 Annual Implementation Plan
May 18, 2020 at 1:00 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Corky Proulx at 1:03 pm.

Roll Call

D. Huff, R. Matelski, C. Wilder, B. Kaye, T. Dutcher, C. Proulx, D. Burdine, E. Howell, D. Fay, C. Corwin, and M. Hiller

Excused: V. Zygiel, E. Ableidinger, M. Downs, R. Schulte, J. Mathis

Unexcused: M. Tappan, V. Ward

Guests: Bonnie Altman, Cyndi Albrecht (AASA), Debbie Cooley, Colleen Motley, Emil Bellenbaum, Andrea Hepburn, Reagan Moffit, Anna Rogers, Lorelei King, Sandy Woods, Tom Pettit

Aging Staff: Laurie Sauer, Connie McQuarrie, Kelly Robinette, Yvette Smigelski, Kitty Glomski, Brooke Mainville, Sara Gusler

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by B. Kaye with support from C. Wilder to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by B. Kaye with support from T. Dutcher to approve the minutes of April 27, 2020. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee

No report.

Meeting Closed – A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from C. Corwin to close the Regional Council on Aging meeting. Motion carried. A motion was made by B. Kaye with support from T. Dutcher to open the public hearing. Motion carried.

Public Hearing – FY 2021 Annual Implementation Plan

Roll Call

Darlene Huff, Roberta Matelski, Carol Wilder, Barbara Kaye, Terry Dutcher, Corky Proulx, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin, Madeline Hiller, Cindy Albrecht, Andrea Hepburn, Colleen Motley, Emil Bellenbaum, Debbie Cooley, Regan Moffit, Bonnie Altman, Anna Rogers, Lorelei King, Sandy Woods, Tom Pettit, Laurie Sauer, Gina Bey, Yvette Smigelski, Kitty Glomski, Kelly Robinette, Sara Gusler, Brooke Mainville, Connie McQuarrie, and Becky Hawks.

Laurie Sauer, AAA Director, gave a PowerPoint presentation. The Region 9 Area Agency on Aging is one of 16 in the state. Our region encompasses twelve counties. Each AAA must submit a three-year plan to the Administration on Community Living and to the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA). Plans must be approved by the Michigan Commission on Aging. Yearly updates are made to the plan. Today is the annual process for the Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Implementation Plan (AIP).

The AIP includes: An Executive Summary, Local Government Review, Direct Service Requests, Approved Program Development Objectives, FY 2021 Program Development Objectives, Plan Highlights, Advocacy and Budget. The Older Americans Act was established in 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson. The Act is reauthorized every five years and establishes the national framework for AAAs. In March, a new act was reauthorized for another five years with increased funding levels of 7% the first year and 6% for the remaining years.

A needs survey was conducted with 530 completed. Results show that 43% live alone, 43% live with a spouse and 11% live with a family member or friend. 33% of those who took the survey were between the ages of 70-79. The majority live in Alpena county. The bulk of our funds are spent on meals, in home services and respite care with 89% reporting that congregate meals are important and 93% for home delivered meals. We expect the survey numbers to grow for adult day services. It is still a relatively new concept and we only have it available in six of our twelve counties. We continue to reach out with our Evidence Based programs. The Matter of Balance is highly recognized. These are fall prevention workshops. All of the programs on this list are not available in each county. Caregiving and the need for dementia care is growing. The AAA provides the Creating Confident Caregivers (CCC) program which specifically targets dementia caregivers and Powerful Tools for Caregivers. Powerful Tools is a new program we started last year. We are currently holding a virtual class. We hope to increase awareness that help is available for caregivers.

Additional needs include lawn care, snow removal, as well as help finding and accessing health care and supportive services. It is difficult finding funding for these services. These services are available to clients in our MI Choice Waiver program. Transportation is also an ongoing need in the region. 83% said it is important to have available transportation to attend medical appointments or participate in community activities with 44% saying they lack transportation. We continue to try to address this need by working with local transit authorities and the use of volunteers, and our Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

The core functions of the AAA are to concentrate resources to develop capacity; develop a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system; provide planning, program development, administration and monitoring, and advocate for vulnerable populations.

We work closely with our community partners including the County Councils and Commissions on Aging. They all receive millage dollars to serve older adults. They have leveraged \$795,736 with \$114,943 to provide Outreach, \$285,492 for Transportation, and \$395,301 for Information and Assistance. These funds are in addition to what the AAA provides.

The Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) is required to set state goals. With the pandemic situation, the state has carried over the goals from the previous plan year into this year. Updates will be made as we receive more guidance. The Region 9 AAA has set goals to align with the four state specified goals as follows:

State Goal #1 - Advocate, inform, and empower those we serve.

Region 9 Goals:

- A. Advocate for senior programs and engage in dialog with the aging network, constituents and elected officials.
- B. Host an annual legislative town hall-style meeting with state and federal elected officials. We may not be able to do this unless restrictions are lifted before the end of the year. Virtual meetings may be an option.

State Goal #1 – Advocate, inform, and empower those we serve.

Region 9 Goals:

- A. Promote caregiver wellness and empowerment by providing education to enhance the caregiver experience.
- B. Host a caregiver wellness and empowerment conference to provide a supportive and educational environment for learning and skill enhancement. A conference is scheduled for July with speakers covering a variety of topics. Information on the conference can be found on our website: www.nemcsa.org.

State Goal #2 - Help older adults maintain their health and independence at home and in their community.

Region 9 Goals:

- A. Increase capacity to provide non-emergency medical transportation within the PSA.
 - Recruit volunteer drivers for Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)
- B. Expand opportunities for seniors to participate in Evidence-Based Disease Prevention (EBDP) programs
 - Increase number of classes and trained leaders
 - Increase number of seniors accessing dementia resources

State Goal #2 – Promote independent living and self-choice in developing care programs by offering long term care supports and services

Region 9 Goals

- A. Ensure a person-centered approach to all seeking services. We require all partner and AAA staff to be trained.

State Goal #3 – Promote elder and vulnerable adult rights and justice

Region 9 Goals:

- A. Provide education on Medicare and Medicare-Fraud awareness
Provide New to Medicare classes and education on scams
- B. Increase public awareness of signs of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation among senior populations. This year we are exploring having a virtual presence.

State Goal #4 – Conduct responsible, quality management and coordination of Michigan’s aging Network

Region 9 Goal

- A. Foster development of new collaborations and enhance current partnerships to build the aging continuum
- B. Improve the quality and effectiveness of services provided through the regional aging network and Region 9 Area Agency on Aging partners

The AAA provides five direct services: Long Term Care Ombudsman, Outreach for Kinship Care, Care Management, Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAAP) and Dementia Consultation. There is not enough money to fund twelve entities appropriately in the region. The Ombudsman and MMAAP rely on volunteers, and we are always looking for new ones if you are interested or know someone who may be.

Purchase of service is available primarily for Care Management clients for Medication Management, Specialized Respite, and Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS). The area plan budget of \$5,128,912 is broken down with 2% in purchase of services, 15% in direct services, and 83% in contracted services. All services are contingent upon funding. Funding amounts are anticipated and will likely change.

Advocacy Strategy is also very important. The AAA holds membership at the local, state, and federal levels, and has representation on four advisory councils. The AAA will continue to support a coordinated system of information, referral and access to services with support for MMAAP, Long Term Care Ombudsman, and Senior Corps Programs which include the Foster Grandparent Program, Senior Companion Program, and Retired Senior Volunteer Program, the Michigan Senior Advocates, and other senior organizations. We also support Community Based Care Programs, long-term care rebalancing, and provide legislative advocacy and education.

COVID-19 - Some of the things we have been doing during the pandemic include; remote workstations, policy revisions and additions, implementation of the Microsoft Teams software, well check calls, distribution of Q boxes, cards for nursing home residents, care plan reviews and service prioritizations, technical assistance to the field, personal protective equipment (PPE) acquisition and distribution, engage volunteers in mask making, and we are a USDA food box partner. What other needs are out in the community?

C. Proulx – The biggest need I see is for handyman help. It's difficult to find someone to do those small, odd jobs. We may need volunteers or funds. Laurie – We hear this every year. Funding is an obstacle and it is difficult finding someone to do the work. We have been talking with Habitat for a possible solution.

C. Proulx – Maybe approach churches or veterans' groups or maybe high school seniors in shop class. Laurie – We tend to explore all avenues when we have a need to fund.

T. Dutcher – One of the problems we see in the construction industry is to do a job of \$600 or more you need a license. They charge for labor and materials. Additionally, if they come back for multiple jobs, those may go over \$600. It is very difficult to find those who are unlicensed. Shop classes at schools are a good idea. I have also been approached by the Kindness Movement. It is a platform for sharing and collaboration.

B. Altman – What I'm hearing from seniors is that they need to know the people are safe and cost effective that are providing the work at their homes. Maybe a police check so that a senior knows a person or company is safe to use. Also, Southwest Michigan is getting broadband services. We need to advocate for this in our region. More and more seniors will be staying

connected in this way using portals and Kindles. Maybe 1/3 of our exercise classes at the center could meet virtually to maintain distancing. In the winter there will be an increased need for something like Foster Grandmothers or someone in charge of calling folks for a small stipend for well checks to seniors and maybe give a topic of information per call, say Alzheimer's or KIT (Keep in Touch). Laurie – We are hoping to add friendly reassurance calls to our services this year. The idea to use volunteers to keep in touch with seniors virtually is unique.

C. Proulx – Regarding loneliness, maybe think about pets for older persons. Maybe a program for those living at home where they can make a contract with the animal shelter to foster a pet. The shelter would provide vet care, food, etc. There would be very little expense for the senior. The Animal would go back to shelter when the senior was no longer able to care for it. Laurie – We are hearing a lot about robotic pets. C. Proulx – No, that would be like giving someone a doll to keep them occupied. That's the point of having someone else responsible for the animal. I don't feel a robot would work.

T. Dutcher – As an insurance agent I can tell you that both home and auto are going up. Is there any help for seniors on a fixed income? Laurie – No there is not. Auto insurance is supposed to come down. T. Dutcher – It's not likely. Portions are as long as you lower your coverage for personal injury protection. Personal injury protection will go down 10% but there will be 4.5% overall additionally in coverages going up. Beginning in July, the standard coverage will be \$250,000 and \$500,000. If the state decides to raise the coverage, why would anyone want to go with less? I predict there will be more lawsuits because you can choose a cap for your personal protection coverage. You must prove your Medicare or Medicaid will be primary if you get in an auto accident. The average retired person doesn't have that kind of money sitting around. There are a lot of stipulations and options. Insurance companies are losing money so they will raise other costs.

C. Proulx – I would suggest we contact a few different insurance representatives to give a talk to this council and have something in writing explaining the options to give to seniors. Laurie – I guess I would point that back at T. Dutcher. Corky – Yes, but I would like one or two for different opinions.

Coronavirus Questions, Needs or Ideas:

C. Corwin – Aging is an area of loss, it's defined by the loss of mobility, health, friends, etc. We don't have any programs that deal with loss. Many seniors feel they are just waiting to die. We are trying to address this through the State Advisory Council senior isolation paper. Maybe as a region we could make counseling or some other kind of options available.

B. Altman – Anxiety and feelings of loneliness are normal, but simple things can help. Brief ads in the newspaper or short TV clips that say something like “if you feel this, try this”. Simple mental health tips.

R. Moffit – The Internet for seniors is important. Seniors need to be taught how to use technology. Show them how to set up email and use Zoom or video chat to connect with people. Laurie – I agree. We certainly can look to develop something. This links in with the need for broadband.

Deadline for AIP Submission

Deadline for written and/or electronic testimony is June 12, 2020. Send testimony or written

comments to: Region 9 Area Agency on Aging, Attn: Laurie Sauer, Director, 2375 Gordon Rd. Alpena, MI 49707, Email: SauerL@nemcsa.org

There being no further questions or comments, a motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from B. Kay to close the public hearing. Motion carried.

A motion was made by T. Dutcher with support from B. Kaye to reopen the Regional Council on Aging meeting. Motion carried.

Director's Report

Coronavirus Update – As of today, cases in our region are up 4% from 405 to 419. Hot spots are Alpena, Crawford, Iosco, and Otsego. Montmorency and Presque Isle are holding steady with their numbers.

Families First and CARES Act Funding – We have received some guidance for the use of these funds. The AAA received from Families First, \$85,960 for C-1 and \$171,919 for C-2. SGAs will go out to the COAs today. We received from the CARES Act: \$794,700 plus \$27,710 for the Long Term Care Ombudsman program.

Q Boxes – Distribution continues. We have received 350 total and would like to equally distribute 29 per county. Alpena and Crawford received their maximum already. Cheboygan and Roscommon are close, we continue to have low responses in Arenac, Montmorency, Oscoda, Otsego, and Presque Isle. Iosco and Ogemaw are picking up, but they still have some available boxes. We have another 100 boxes coming in June. Recipients must be age 60 and over and not receiving home delivered meals, food stamps, commodities or participating in any other food programs. Those in need can register on our website or call either Kelly or Laurie.

Fresh Food Boxes – A USDA grant to distribute fresh food boxes will be starting soon. There is a variety of four seasonal boxes to be delivered weekly. Six COAs have agreed to be distribution sites, Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Montmorency, Otsego, and Roscommon.

PPE – We received a large shipment of personal protective equipment over a week ago that we are distributing as quickly as possible to our partners. We're not sure when more will come. Thank you to Cindy Albrecht from AASA for helping with the arrangements.

Strategic Planning Survey – NEMCSA will be sending out a survey to begin the process of gathering information. Please encourage your COA and let other community organizations know about it and encourage them to complete it.

Census – Please encourage family and friends to complete the census. Numbers in Michigan are still low.

Re-Opening Strategies – NEMCSA is working on re-opening strategies for the office and our partners as well. We are also starting to consider restarts to more services. Stay tuned. The governor is expected to announce more openings for the state.

Direct Care Workers – Workers are to receive a \$2 per hour wage increase for April, May, and June. This is for Medicaid behavioral health and long term care programs only. The new stimulus package includes a \$3 per hour increase. This would not be on top of the \$2, but \$3 total. We are advocating for the increase for all direct care workers.

State Furloughs – Furloughing of AASA staff begins today. Half of the staff will be off on Mondays and the other half on Fridays for a period of ten weeks. Steve Betterly is in the Monday group, so Cindy Albrecht is attending the meeting today on his behalf.

AAA Annual Report – A copy of the 2019 AAA Annual Report was provided in your handout materials.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Jim Mathis no report.

Region 9 Directors Report – Merianne no report.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Report – Sara reported the Elder Abuse Prevention Grant is being used to develop one 5-minute and one 30-second video by Olive Animation. They will be used for public service announcements on tv, radio as well as on various websites, and for use at conferences, speaking engagements, etc. The 30-second video has a storyboard. The focus is on senior isolation.

Ombudsman Updates – Three of our counties have nursing homes with the coronavirus. Ongoing policy changes due to the spread of COVID-19 significantly impacts resident's rights. She continues to receive complaints regarding general services such as supplies and food. Nursing facilities continue to receive deliveries of personal protective equipment from the police and National Guard. She has been giving out the mental health call line and working with a few homes to be sure residents have access to telehealth for mental health.

National Webinar – Sara will be presenting on dementia awareness and law enforcement as well as bias in medical settings at the 44th Annual Consumer Voice National Conference on October 25-28, 2020 in Arlington Virginia. This conference is provided by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long Term Care. On June 10th Sara will be a panelist on the webinar “Cultural and Linguistic Competence: What it means for Ombudsman Programs” regarding bias in medical settings. This webinar is being put on by the National LTC Ombudsman Resource Center and the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long Term Care.

Corky – Why are there complaints of low supplies and food? Sara – I don't know what it stemmed from, but I am still working with the residents on that. They do feel the supply is better now. The complaints were specifically about no selection just soup and sandwiches and oatmeal for breakfast. Another complaint was they felt the meat they were getting was old or spoiled. Another complaint was about having to use paper plates and the food being cold by the time it's delivered to their room.

PREVNT Grant – The courses for dementia awareness for law enforcement are being rescheduled now for July and going forward. We expect to host lower numbers to comply with social distancing. Your COA still has time to send me an informational video.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty reported MMAP counselors are still working. A lot of them are working remotely and one has been laid off. The big urgency for counselors is that it is more difficult for people to get services with both DHHS and Social Security offices closed to the public. Scammers have also been very active. Kitty continues to provide daily support to the counselors themselves. She held her first Zoom meeting with the site coordinators. A total of seven participated and it worked well. She is hoping to hold them monthly. A conversation meeting regarding counselor certification is also planned. A process to conduct New to Medicare meetings is being discussed as well as discussions with the state office on what open enrollment in the fall might look like this year due to the pandemic.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke reported she has a Best Practices meeting with the adult day care centers in our region scheduled for June 5, 2020. The Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Conference is scheduled to be held in Roscommon on July 31, 2020. We have a great lineup of speakers and vendors. Please consider attending.

A copy of our first Caregiver Quarterly Newsletter can be found on our website www.nemcsa.org. Click on senior services and then caregiver. Many of the Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Programs have been rescheduled. Powerful Tools for Caregivers is on its third week of virtual workshops. It is going very well. The Kinship Handbook for Grandparents is also available to view on our website.

Advocacy Reports

MSAC – No report.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported they are completing work on their report, due to be released in July.

State Updates

Ageing and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – Cindy Albrecht reported Steve Betterly is on layoff status today. AASA appreciates all the work NEMCSA has done during the pandemic.

Local Updates From Council Members

D. Fay – We are in a transition period with a new director and assistant director. Denise is retiring at the end of the month. Our home delivered meal count is up. Our board is very proud of the great job our staff has been doing during the pandemic.

Action Items

Endorsement of the FY 2021 Annual Implementation Plan - A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from M. Hiller to endorse the Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Implementation Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

Question or Comments

M. Hiller – Who is going to help the seniors center re-open? Laurie – We are waiting for guidance from the state. AASA is working on a tool specific to older adults. The governor's order will come into play as well with regards to social gatherings. The Ogemaw COA already

has their dining room planned out to meet social distancing requirements. They are limiting two people per table for couples and limits for others. I can get a picture out to you all. The COAs are eager to get going but cautious to do it correctly.

Are the local COAs required to hold their monthly meetings during the pandemic? Laurie – That depends on your by-laws and how many you're required to hold per year. I believe they have all been trying to continue having meetings via Zoom or conference calls.

Corky – MCCOA meets every other month. The last time was by phone, so some are allowed by phone.

D. Cooley - Is it difficult to set up a Zoom meeting? Laurie – We have Brooke doing ours. I don't think it's difficult. There is a free version with limited time and number of participants.

D. Cooley - What about the senior center in Houghton Lake? Our center is full on most days, how would you go about spacing? Laurie – I'm sure Tom is looking at various ways. Perhaps alternate days and times. They will have to restrict the number of people that can gather. In talking with Tom, he is giving it a lot of thought and being quite mindful.

D. Fay – We had our second board meeting via Zoom this morning. It was brought up that up to 15 people can congregate, is that true? Laurie – I can't verify that; I have not heard the Governor's directive today. You can check www.michigan.gov/coronavirus for latest information.

Adjourn

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 27, 2020 at 1:00 pm via Zoom. A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from T. Dutcher to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:52 pm by Chair C. Proulx.

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
July 27, 2020 at 1:00 pm
Virtual TEAMS Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President C. Proulx at 1:06 pm

Roll Call

Roger Schulte, Darlene Huff, Cindy Sabin, Lorelei King, Carol Wilder, Barbara Kaye, Merianne Tappan, Corleen Proulx, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Chuck Corwin, and Madeline Hiller

Excused: Roberta Matelski

Unexcused: Terry Dutcher, Elaine Ableidinger, Violet Ward, and Jim Mathis

Guests: Steve Betterly (AASA)

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Gina Bey, Yvette Smigelski, Connie McQuarrie, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Brooke Mainville, Sara Gusler, Becky Hawks

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

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by M. Hiller with support from R. Schulte to approve the minutes of May 18, 2020. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee - D. Fay reported Arenac Delegate, Virginia Zygiel has resigned due to health reasons. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from D. Huff to accept the resignation and send Virginia a letter of appreciation. Motion carried.

There are also two new nominations; Cindy Sabin to complete the term left vacant from Virginia and Lorelei King has been appointed Delegate for Crawford County. A motion was made by D. Fay with support from D. Huff to accept the nominations. Motion carried.

Speaker – Gina Bey, Associate AAA Director – MI Choice Waiver and Care Management Programs

Gina reported her primary focus as Associate Director are the Care Management and MI Choice Waiver programs. All staff continue to work remotely. A couple of exceptions have been made in the case of adult protective services referrals and transitions from nursing homes. In these cases, the client is being seen in person. Otherwise, most visits are being done remotely via Microsoft Teams or by telephone. All staff are focusing on protecting clients and themselves during the pandemic. Visits to residential settings such as adult foster care homes, nursing homes, etc. are still off limits to our staff.

C. Sabin - Have the staff been appropriately trained on PPE? There are proper ways to put on and take off PPE. Gina – Yes. All of our case managers and nurses receive annual training on bloodborne pathogens which includes the proper use of gloves, masks, etc. as well as the importance of hand washing. I am very confident they are observing the precautions and are comfortable when working out in the field.

C. Sabin – People wear gloves and then touch everything in the store or wear a mask without covering their nose. They may as well not even bother. Gina – Agreed.

CQAR - On July 3rd we received a list of the files up for this year's Clinical Quality Assurance Review for MI Choice programs. The files are sent to an independent review team that audits our files to be sure we meet the required program criteria and guidelines. Last year we received a total score of 4.0, this is the highest score you can get. We are all very proud of that; we worked hard.

NCQA – On July 21st, we reapplied for our 3-year accreditation with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). This is the gold standard for quality. It is up for renewal. The majority of the

information has been uploaded, but we still have a few more steps to go. They will conduct a virtual site visit in September.

Direct Care Worker Increase – The \$2 increase for direct care workers for the months of April, May, and June was paid. The money goes directly to the worker as an incentive to continue working. Another check will be going out for July through September.

C. Corwin – When are the payments going to start? Gina - Those have already been implemented for the waiver program. For non-Medicaid, Laurie will address.

Director's Report

Laurie first welcomed our two new council members: Lorelei King and Cindy Sabin. She then reported on the following:

CQAR – Laurie reviewed the 2019 MI Choice Clinical Quality Assurance Review handout that was distributed previously. She pointed out there are 17 focus areas for the review in addition to many more standards. We scored the highest rating in all areas of review. She is very proud of our program staff. It takes a lot of effort to score a 4.0. This demonstrates how committed our staff is and the exceptional work they do. The NCQA process is also an enormous undertaking. Our staff are working hard for the seniors in our region.

Direct Care Worker Increase – This will be happening for care workers working with our COAs as well. AASA will be issuing some guidance within a few weeks. We may handle it a little differently than with the MI Choice programs as our contracts with the COAs are cost based.

Coronavirus – As you all know, the numbers continue to rise with Alpena, Arenac, Crawford, Iosco, and Otsego having the higher numbers in the region. All staff will continue to work remotely. Some of the COAs are working toward reopening with a couple expected to open in early August with protections in place for staff and participants. Some have pushed their reopening date to September but with some uncertainty. All have been required to submit their reopening plans to the AAA for review. We are not approving them, just reviewing to be sure protective measures are in place.

Q-Boxes – We continue to offer the quarantine boxes of shelf-stable foods. Requests from Alcona, Arenac, Montmorency, Otsego, and Presque Isle counties remain low.

C. Sabin – What is in the boxes? Laurie – Noodles, canned fruit and vegetables, oatmeal and other shelf stable foods. People can sign up on the NEMCSA website. It is on the scrolling bar. If you don't have access to the internet, call me or Kelly Robinette (989-358-4628).

USDA Fresh Food Boxes – Boxes are still being distributed in Alpena, Cheboygan, Crawford, Ogemaw, and Otsego counties. Montmorency and Roscommon stopped getting them. We are down to 300 boxes coming to the region with an ending date of late August. These contain fresh fruits, vegetables or dairy.

PPE – AASA sent another shipment of gowns, shields, shoe coverings, and gloves that are available to our providers by request. We expect more to come. We also received a large shipment of cloth masks. If any of your COAs are in need of any of these items, please call us.

Older Michigianians Day – A new date has been set for next year on May 13, 2021. This year a Senior Action Day was held on June 24th in place of Older Michigianians Day. Hundreds wrote letters and made phone calls to their legislators in support of Older Americans Act funding, which was timely due to budget negotiations taking place. Our region's legislators did not get many calls. We need to work on that.

State Budget - Most budget gaps for AASA funded programs were filled with federal CARES funds, but a \$2.2 billion shortfall remained. MDHHS received a \$36.46 reduction in funding with AASA impacted

with a \$140,000 cut in its operating budget and the senior volunteer program budgets were reduced by \$1.7 million. More information is to come, but that is a significant hit.

Volunteer Programs – Also of note, the volunteer programs were rolled into the aging division a few years back and will now move to being overseen by Dorothy Pintar, School Success Director effective August 1st. There have been other leadership changes made in the Client Services Division as well.

Disaster Relief Funds – Many counties experienced flooding due to the dam failure in Midland including Arena, Iosco, and Ogemaw. Disaster relief was granted at the federal level so funds should be available soon.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – Good news for participants. Since most of our host partners are not open yet, participants were granted an extension of emergency leave. They will continue to be paid through September 30, 2020. Currently we have three participants who went back to work.

Legal Services Representative - Jim Mathis has resigned as our representative from this council on the Legal Services Board. We will need a replacement. C. Proulx agreed to be our representative. We will notify Legal Services of Northern Michigan.

MSAC – Bonnie Altman had expressed interest but has since declined the appointment. We need a replacement. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please let us know.

Miscellaneous – Our Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Implementation Plan is to be submitted to the Commission on Services to the Aging in August. At our last meeting you requested to have at least two speakers on the auto insurance changes. We have Terry Dutcher from this Council. Does anyone have ideas for other speakers? Yes, Elizabeth Fortino from Roscommon State Farm is interested in speaking and C. Proulx will check with her insurance agent in Montmorency. Lastly, ending on a good note, Brooke will report on an exciting new project she is working on.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – No report. Will forward new appointment of C. Proulx for their next meeting.

Region 9 Directors Report – Merianne reported the directors have not met but they are communicating by phone and email about preparing to open their sites.

C. Proulx – Do you have a plan for congregate meal sites? Merianne – We tried opening for two weeks in June but only had three people. Then we had a virus outbreak in the Amish community, so we closed back down. We will offer takeout meals Monday through Friday beginning August 3rd. Participants are also welcome to stay and eat outside under an awning we had installed.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Report – Sara reported on the following:

Elder Abuse Prevention Grant – She is still waiting for Olive Animation to incorporate our specified language and send the results back for our review. This again is for the 5-minute public service announcements and the 30-second video with the focus on senior isolation.

Nursing Home Visitation – The Governor issued Executive Order 2020-136 on June 26, 2020. This order puts temporary restrictions on entry into healthcare facilities, residential care facilities, congregate care facilities, and juvenile justice facilities. The order provides further guidance relative to visitation restrictions for the range of residential care facilities, namely homes for the aged, nursing homes, adult foster care facilities, hospice facilities, substance abuse disorder residential facilities, independent living facilities, and assisted living facilities in order to ensure continuation of essential public health services while also providing clarity on the circumstances under which visitation is allowed in these facilities.

Sara continues to receive a lot of calls about visitation. Many of the nursing homes are starting and then stopping visitation based on the Governor's orders which has caused some confusion. Several nursing homes have started outside visits with family. All homes should be able to do virtual or window visits. Compassionate visits are allowed in person for end of life.

Click here to view the order.



MDHHS_Epidemic_
order_-_nursing_hoi

Coronavirus Update - We still have a couple of nursing homes in our region with the coronavirus. To check on virus information related to cumulative cases and deaths of residents and staff in long term care go to: https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/0,9753,7-406-98163_98173-526911--,00.html.

Ombudsmen were notified by the state ombudsman office that they will be allowed to enter nursing homes. Sara hopes to hear Wednesday what the policies and procedures will be for visits. Currently, nursing homes do have to test everyone on a weekly basis unless they have consistent zero cases.

C. Corwin – Guardians have not had access to their clients. Have you gotten any clarification? Sara – No They are treated like any other visitor and cannot enter the nursing home.

C. Corwin – For those who visit to provide ADLs, maybe they should get their physician to write a prescription for the patient stating the need. It may carry some weight. Sara – It may, but the facility director still makes the ultimate decision.

Corkie – Is there any way DHHS will assist with direct orders? Sara – That is where advocacy comes in from the state. There is rarely an advocate committee with family members, the ombudsman, or advocacy agencies. LARA is the place to file a complaint.

PREVNT Grant Update – Sara is having difficulty scheduling the classes with law enforcement because businesses and libraries are closed. She will reach out to COAs this week for possible venue sites. Everyone is just uneasy. We need to provide the classes in a safe way.

SPOTS / Verify a License (VAL) Site – As of July 1, 2020 the nursing home public viewing site for CMS 2567 reports for federal surveys, enforcement letters, grids and POCs has been transitioned from SPOTS to the Verify a License website at LARA located at: <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-89512--,00.html>. The historical information will remain in SPOTS, but new surveys will be available on the VAL website. This is the same site State Licensing reports are posted on.

Sara encourages you to look at the information and survey results. Let others know they can see this information. You may see something that says, “Immediate Jeopardy”. This is an incident of harm. Only one nursing home was cited but it was removed before the survey was over. When conducting surveys, LARA looks at infection control, abuse, and neglect.

Please feel free to contact Sara with questions you may have related to any of the issues discussed at: guslers@nemcsa.org.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty reported that COAs have counselors working remotely and continue to be very active. They are getting a lot of referrals from DHHS since a letter was released pointing clients to call MMAP for more information. Other calls are mostly about Medicare and the new auto insurance coverage, Medicaid issues, medications, and insurance coverage for those with a job loss, nearing retirement and those that are planning to retire due to Covid-19. Other agencies (including DHHS) are telling clients to call the MMAP Hotline number 800-803-7174 for assistance. Cases are getting more complex to manage.

Meetings/Trainings – Kitty continues to hold regular Region 9 monthly planning meetings with site coordinators on the 1st Wednesday of each month. Counselors have gone through the annual

recertification process for MMAP. Crawford Counselors have teamed up and given two virtual New to Medicare presentations and an educational demo presentation for site coordinators using Zoom. The state office is holding virtual monthly meetings and webinars in lieu of in-person trainings. A remote Medicaid Training was held on July 15th. A Statewide Training on Changes to the Medicare Plan Finder is scheduled for July 29th. We are waiting to see if this process will go paperless.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke reported on Evidenced Based Disease Prevention Programs. Six participants completed the virtual Powerful Tools for Caregivers workshop that ended June 15th. All the reviews were good.

A virtual Powerful Tools for Caregivers started on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 and a Diabetes PATH Workshop is scheduled to begin on August 5, 2020. Twenty-five signed up for the Powerful Tools workshop so it was split into a morning and afternoon workshop. To date, no one has registered for the Diabetes PATH workshops. Information on available workshops can be found on our website on www.nemcsa.org

Facebook – Brooke recently launched the Region 9 AAA Facebook page. Go to Facebook and type in NEMCSA Region 9 AAA and like us. Follow us for lots of good information.

Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Virtual Conference – This is our 3rd annual event. Due to the virus, it will be a virtual event this year held in two parts: July 31, 2020 and August 14, 2020. The conference is free. Call Brooke or go online to register. Part 1 on July 31st will be from 10:00 am to Noon with keynote speaker Jill Gafner Livingston who will present on Caregiving Survival and Jennifer Schultz with Michigan Disability Network will present on adaptive services. Part 2 of the conference will be held on August 14th from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. Keynote speaker will again be Jill Gafner Livingston who will present on Caring for Someone with Dementia and Nicole Wethington with MSU Extension will present on Stress Less with Mindfulness. Conference information can be found on our website and Facebook page.

Brain Health Toolkit – Brooke wrote and received a grant for Roscommon County to provide Brain Health Toolkits. It is a mailer with items to get older adult minds active. Toolkits will either be mailed or delivered. We also have a caregiver box for those taking care of someone with dementia. The amount requested was just under \$4,000, we received just under \$2,000. Our request was based on the number of clients. We will either have to limit the number of boxes or the number of items placed in the boxes. We are waiting to hear on additional grant submissions to cover additional counties. Otsego County is not covered under the grant service area.

C. Proulx – I have to say you are doing wonderful job with the funds you did get.

Advocacy Reports

Michigan Senior Advocates (MSAC) – Currently vacant, no report.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the Council is continuing work on the draft for submission in early fall.

State Updates

State Commission on Aging – No report.

Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – Steve Betterly reported the state office has been very busy with the annual implementation plan development. Deadline for submission is August. The annual assessments are also due soon as well. AASA applied for additional Michigan Health Endowment Fund grants. A blanket waiver document is being reviewed. The Commission on Aging gave AASA

permission to make broad policy waivers for changes in units of service and other technical aspects. Over 60 policy waivers have been approved. Steve will put together a list of blanket waivers from individual waivers that have been granted that will work statewide. This is an unusual position for AASA; we are working to be responsive to the needs of the network. Steve thanked AAA staff and the COAs for their work in responding to the needs of seniors during the pandemic. The Commission on Services to the Aging board is now complete with three reappointments and two new appointments. On a sad note, some of you may know Don Ryan from Region 3A. We received word that he passed away this morning.

Local Updates From Council Members

There were none.

Laurie – I just wanted to add that we did receive a large shipment of cloth masks. We have 14 boxes of 500. Let me know if your COA needs them. The COAs were also given the option to request them on their own.

Action Items

AAA Director Evaluation – In accordance with the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency Operating Standards for Area Agencies on Aging, an annual evaluation is required for the AAA Director by their Board. The evaluation was sent previously for completion or members can click on the link in today's PowerPoint presentation and complete it now. There are five areas to evaluate: Multi-year and Annual Implementation Plans, Program Goals and Quality of Service, Ensure Compliance of Contracts with Federal, State and Local Entities, Community Relations, Advocacy, and Communications.

Endorsement of the Fiscal Year 2021 Funding Recommendations – Handouts were distributed before the meeting for review. Becky Hawks reviewed the recommendations for the Merit Award, Elder Abuse Prevention, Title IIIIE National Family Caregiver Support, and Evidence Based Disease Prevention Health Promotion programs. Following the recommendations of this Council and the approval of the NEMCSA Board of Directors, the AAA will negotiate participants and units with the applicants.

Merit Award – Seven applications were received. The AAA is required to spend 50% (\$119,530) of the expected award on the development of or on-going support of adult day centers. The remainder of service funds are being utilized to reimburse current providers of adult day care and respite throughout the region. available funding. Recommended funding of \$19,922 for on-going support for Sunrise Side Senior Services, Cheboygan COA, Ogemaw COA and Roscommon COA. Recommended funding of \$19,921 for on-going support for District Health Department #4 and Otsego COA. A motion was made by D. Huff with support from C. Wilder to approve the recommendations. Motion carried, no opposed.

Elder Abuse Prevention (EAP) – Three applications were received with \$6,625 in expected funding. Recommendation to fund the Ogemaw COA for \$600 for an Elder Abuse Prevention Program and Oscoda COA for \$700 and the Roscommon COA for \$1,464 to provide an Elder Abuse Prevention Seminar. \$3,861 remains unallocated.

C. Proulx – What happens to the unallocated funds? Becky – This year it was used for the videos Sara spoke about earlier. Laurie – Sometimes we put them out for rebid, but typically, we do projects throughout the Region.

C. Proulx – I'm surprised more applications weren't requested. Laurie – This is a unique year with the virus. We also have two new COA directors and some hesitation to take on new programs at this time.

A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from D. Huff to approve the recommendations for EAP. Motion carried, no opposed.

National Family Caregiver Support Program – Seventeen applications were received with funding expected at \$109,708. Recommended funding of \$91,050 with unallocated amounts of \$3,650 for Creating Confident Caregivers, \$7,508 both totally funded. for the Kinship Purchase of Service, and \$7,500 for EBDP for CG. \$25,000 allocated for Education Support. After fully funding EST required programs, \$12,346 remained unallocated. These funds were reallocated to respite, \$50,000 plus \$12,346 for a total of \$62,346 in funding for respite. All but Roscommon County were fully funded. A motion was made by M. Hiller with support by R. Schulte to approve the recommendations for NFCSP. Motion carried, no opposed.

M. Tappan - What was the amount of respite funding requested and received for Roscommon? Becky – They requested \$26,000 and will receive \$18,361.

Evidence Based Disease Prevention Health Promotion – Six applications were received with funding expected at \$24,000. Recommendation to fund the Crawford COA \$3,378 for Geri-Fit Strength Training, Montmorency COA \$2,700 for two Matter of Balance, Ogemaw COA \$2,000 for two Matter of Balance, Oscoda COA \$1,200 for two Matter of Balance, Otsego COA \$8,900 for four Matter of Balance and \$2,975 for four Walk with Ease, and Roscommon COA \$3,400 for four Matter of Balance. A motion was made by C. Wilder with support from D. Huff to approve the recommendations. Motion carried, no opposed. C. Corwin abstained from the vote.

The endorsement by the Council will be forwarded to the NEMCSA Board of Directors for final approval.

*All actual awards will be based on funding allocations to the region.

Question or Comments

No further questions

Adjourn

A motion was made by D. Huff with support from R. Schulte to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned by Chair C. Proulx at 2:34 pm. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 28th.

Northeast Michigan Regional Council on Aging
September 28, 2020 at 1:00 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

The meeting was called to order by President C. Proulx at 1:00

Roll Call

Roberta Matelski, Carol Wilder, Terry Dutcher, Corleen Proulx, David Burdine, Eileen Howell, Chuck Corwin, and Madeline Hiller

Excused: Roger Schulte, Mitzi Downs, Dennis Fay, Elaine Ableidinger, Barbara Kaye

Unexcused: Darlene Huff, Cyndi Sabin, Lorelei King, Merianne Tappan, Violet Ward

Guests: Elizabeth Fortino, Connie Messina, Lisa Bolen

AAA Staff: Laurie Sauer, Yvette Smigelski, Connie McQuarrie, Kelly Robinette, Kitty Glomski, Brooke Mainville, Becky Hawks

Approval of Agenda – A motion was made by M. Hiller with support from R. Matelski to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes – A motion was made by C. Wilder with support from T. Dutcher to approve the minutes of July 27, 2020. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee – M. Hiller reported Jim Mathis, Otsego Delegate, resigned his position on the Council. She asked for a motion to accept his resignation and send a letter of appreciation. A motion was made by C. Proulx with support from C. Wilder. Motion carried. Connie Messina, Otsego Board Member, attended the meeting today as a possible replacement. M. Hiller also reported we continue to have the following vacancies on the council: Alpena Delegate and Member-at-Large for Alcona, Arenac, Cheboygan, Oscoda, and Otsego counties. Current members from those counties were asked to seek out possible members in their communities. The positions will also be advertised in the COA newsletters or local newspapers where a newsletter is not available.

Speakers – Auto Insurance Changes – Terry Dutcher for Farmers Insurance and Elizabeth Fortino for State Farm.

Handouts were distributed previously. Terry reported the new auto insurance law took effect July 1, 2020. Legislators wanted to reduce the cost of high auto insurance premiums by providing medical limit options. Seniors have the option to completely opt-out from no-fault allowable expense Personal Injury Protection (PIP) benefits if they have both Medicare Part A and B. Personal Injury Protection is about 45% of your policy cost. Before the new law, we had unlimited benefits for life under Michigan's No-Fault Insurance, which included PIP, medical and work loss coverage. That has all changed. Your choices for PIP now include unlimited, the level you have now, a \$500,000 limit and a \$250,000 limit. Options with Medicaid/Medicare or qualified health coverage are to opt out (if have Medicare Part A & B), \$250,000 limit which excludes all PIP medical benefits, or \$50,000 limit for those with Medicaid only. Terry reviewed a table of covered items and if they are covered by Auto No-Fault or Medicare. He also discussed that if you take the \$500,000 liability to cover other people, then you should have the same for yourself. He recommends you have a million-dollar umbrella. As an adviser, that's what you should be told whether you take it or not.

Elizabeth Fortino reported that she also recommends clients to pick up a million-dollar liability policy. The scary parts to insurance coverage are when you have passengers in the vehicle. If they don't have auto insurance or you're not on Medicare or Medicaid or have any other insurance, the only option for the passengers will be to sue you. Some of these changes were not thought out thoroughly. I expect to see an increase in these types of lawsuits and changes to this new law. If you don't have enough coverage for the amount you're being sued for, you could lose your home, have your wages garnished, etc. We don't

recommend you lower your coverage. All insurance companies are working hard to have everyone get the forms signed that indicate you were made aware of these changes. Your policy will automatically default if you do nothing. One good change from the new law is for those who carry PLPD. If you are in an accident and it's not your fault before you could collect up to \$1,000 for repairs, now it's \$3,000. Michigan is still a no-fault state. This has all been a difficult process with Covid going on. Many insurance offices are closed, or clients don't want to come in, so they have nothing visually to look at making it hard to explain the changes. Be sure to talk to your insurer. Some do not allow changes before a policy renewal.

C. Corwin – The last time I checked, only four states had no-fault. Michigan is a significant minority. How are the other states dealing with this? Terry – I don't know how other states are handling things. Michigan is either the highest or second highest as far as the cost of insurance. In New Jersey there were some medical providers that were not quite up to par with their credentials. After a person was in an accident and healed and allowed back to work, the medical provider would contact the client and send them back in for a series of tests and back charge the insurance companies for the cost. Michigan has a \$5 million fraud division. In speaking with various representatives and senators, they said they were going after those without insurance so there's a lot of gaps in what's going on.

C. Corwin - I was involved at one point in reviewing fraud and abuse in the medical system. The majority of health professionals are not out to fraud the Medicare system. This new law comes down to how lucky you feel in taking the lower coverage. Terry - It is a cost factor because 45% of your rate is medical coverage.

L. Sauer – There was also a change that they cannot raise insurance based on certain factors. Is that true? Elizabeth – They take your credit into factor. Every company is different in what they use to factor your score. Some look to see if you pay your bills on time. There were certain discounts afforded to teachers, etc. that cannot be applied now.

Director's Report

FY 2021 AIP – Good news, our annual plan was approved by the State Commission on Aging.

AAA Staff – We have a few staff changes taking place. The Intake Specialist in Alpena recently resigned and took a job at the college and a nurse in our West Branch office has resigned to spend more time with family. We also currently have our Intake Specialist in the West Branch office out on maternity leave. This puts a bit more pressure on existing staff. Also, the Oscoda County COA Director, Merianne Tappan, submitted her resignation. Her last day will be in December.

Census Deadline – The census numbers are critical for demographic information and funding. A federal judge extended the deadline to October 31st so please encourage everyone to do the brief survey. Results will impact our corner of the world.

AASA Updates – AASA put forth a major policy change for criminal background checks beginning October 1, 2020. AAAs, subcontractors, and our vendors must run the ICHAT and national and state sex offender checks prior to new hires and every three years thereafter. Checks on existing staff must be done within 90 days of October 1st. There are some mandatory exclusions now but there will be no grandfathering in or statutes of limitations. Some COAs may lose staff as a result. AASA is also working to bring back the No Wrong Door Initiative in hopes to improve access to information and referrals. We are not sure of the details to date. There is also a new project to distribute boxes with personal care items. Funding will be distributed using the Intra-State Funding Formula. We are slated to receive \$10,190. More Q boxes and fresh food boxes are likely. Distributions of PPE is over. If we have another spike in virus numbers, we will have to find other sources.

New State Plan on Aging – The new state plan will be released on October 1st. An information session will be held this Thursday from 10 am to 11:30 am. For more information and to listen to it, go to www.michigan.gov/OSA. This will affect our plans for the coming years.

Futures for Frontliner Tuition Program – The governor launched a tuition-free college assistance program for those providing essential frontline services during COVID-19 and includes those working in healthcare, food service, public works, transportation, IT, etc. This is a good opportunity for folks to advance their education. More information can be found at <https://www.michigan.gov/frontliners>

Increase for Direct Care Workers – The \$2 an hour increase has been extended through December. There is no additional money to support the extension. We are waiting to hear if AASA will allow Cares Act Funds to be used.

State Budget – Budget talks are complete, but no news on how aging fared. We expect flat funding and should know within the next few weeks. No word on the federal budget but another stimulus package is in the works.

Annual Assessments – AAA staff have been busy with assessments and year-end closure. Most of the assessments are done remotely. Supports Coordinators are conducting theirs over the phone as well. They have only seen clients to obtain signatures.

Senior Center Re-Openings – A couple of the COAs have tried outdoor dining. One is opening to 50% capacity on October 12th, others are working on opening with limited capacity. Several are having success with Zoom classes.

Legislative Virtual Town Hall Meeting – The tentative date is set for October 23. Representative Sue Allor and Senator Wayne Schmidt are interested in participating.

Virtual Focus Group – We continue to work on scheduling a focus group for minorities, immigrants, and the LGBTQ community to increase our efforts to reach these groups for their input on senior issues and services.

MSAC Delegate – Ending on good news, we have submitted Pat Rondeau to act as our delegate on the Michigan Senior Advocates Council. Pat has a long history of work with the aging community. She will join our council meetings for a report once she is approved and attending meetings.

Program Reports

Legal Services Board – Corkie reported the board last met by conference call. Steps are being taken to meet the high demand of eviction cases. They are working on staff pay increases with most within 3%. They currently have 77 open landlord/tenant cases and 289 domestic violence cases. Another attorney will be placed in the Alpena office to work on domestic cases. They received a few grants, Telework for \$21,000, Cares Act for \$200,000 and for \$188,000.

Region 9 Directors Report – No report.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Report – Laurie reported for Sara on the following:

Program Updates – The ability of nursing home residents to receive visitors is opening up. Masks must be worn, social distancing practiced, and a trained staff person must be visible. However, the State Department disagrees with the indoor visits, so all of our nursing homes continue to allow only outdoor visits at this time. Facilities can stop them at any time if there is a spike in virus cases. The National Conference originally scheduled to be held in November has been changed to a virtual conference in December. Sara will present on bias.

PREVNT – Sara has started the project to educate law enforcement on dementia awareness. She is doing one today. She has been getting good reviews from law enforcement particularly county and city sheriff departments. She is working to make it more appropriate for the state police.

Elder Abuse Prevention Video Project – Work continues with Olive Animations to complete the videos. The person we were working with had some medical issues which changed our timeline. We are hoping for completion in a month.

Planning and Volunteer Coordinator Report – Kitty reported to be aware of a beneficiary phone survey being conducted by Medicare. This is not a scam. Surveys are being conducted in Cheboygan, Montmorency, and Roscommon counties. Beneficiaries that receive calls and that have questions, may contact 1-800-Medicare to verify they are on the list to be called. Participation in the survey is optional. This is a national survey, only eight Michigan counties were selected to participate; three of the eight counties are in Region 9.

Open Enrollment starts October 15th and runs through December 7th for Medicare Part D. All counseling will be done remotely by telephone, Zoom, email, or US mail.

MMAP welcomes five new counselors that have completed their initial MMAP training: Darlene Huff (Alpena); Jean Horrocks and Bill Stypick (Presque Isle); Shawna Morris (Alcona); Michelle Miller (Otsego). MMAP paid farewell respects to volunteer counselor Larry Calder who passed away September 10th and Barb Whalen who passed away last week.

MDHHS is sending letters to clients about D-SNP Advantage Plans for Medicare/Medicaid dual enrolled recipients only. Kitty continues to hold Region 9 monthly Zoom planning meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at 9:00 am. She also held a "How to Use Zoom Basic" training for the counselors to use for Zoom counseling sessions. A survey was conducted to see which counselors remain active and to update their information.

MMAP is asking COA partners to evaluate the ease of access to MMAP by phone to be sure it is user-friendly, hearing-aid friendly, and the messaging is clear for beneficiaries. MMAP also requests that their standardized message be used. It was given to all counselors. There is a two-day "Standard of Promptness" to return MMAP client calls which are monitored through the 800 number phone records and SHIPtools documentation.

Upcoming Workshops for Counselors include: A required Statewide Training Day for All Regional and Site Coordinators on Tuesday, October 6th from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. For all Counselors, a Region 9 Open Enrollment Zoom Meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 7th from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Followed by a MMAP Meeting from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm. A CMS Getting Ready for Open Enrollment is scheduled for all counselors for October 8th from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.

C. Proulx – Is the new plan for just those under Medicare? Kitty both Medicare and full Medicaid. Dual enrolled only.

Maddie – I have a friend who was already contacted for the Medicare survey. He was on the phone for an hour and 45 minutes. He felt good about having the interview. Kitty – That's good to hear and just a reminder, Medicare will never call and ask for personal information or money.

C. Proulx – The survey is by phone only? Kitty – Yes. It used to be done in person.

Special Projects Coordinator Report – Brooke reported on the Evidence Based Disease Prevention Programs. She is partnering with Region 7 to provide an evening Powerful Tools for Caregivers from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Brooke and Kelly have a Diabetes PATH Workshop scheduled for Tuesday, November 3rd from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

Region 9 AAA Facebook Page – It is highly recommended that you check it out, search for information, follow us, and let others know. The information on the state plan meeting is on there as well.

Caregiver Empowerment and Wellness Virtual Conference – Overall both days went very well. The participant rate was low, but we did get caregivers signed up for the newsletter and other resources.

Developing Dementia Dexterity Grant (DDD) – The grant just ended, but we may continue with the services, dementia consultations and brain health presentations.

Adult Day Assessments – These are also being done remotely. It went very well, all six are finished.

AAA Website – Brooke has been working on updates to our website – Brooke gave a quick demo. It has a new look which is easier to use and contains a lot of great information and resources. She asked for a few volunteers to have you test it for ease of use and accessibility. She will email a list of questions to see if you could find certain information and see how long it took you to do so. C. Proulx, C. Wilder, and C. Messina volunteered. Everyone is encouraged to go to the site and take a look.

Services Coordinator Report – Kelly reported during Covid we had two counties who did not do drive up congregate meals. Participant numbers ranged from 0 meals a week to 200. We have one COA opening up congregate for two days a week. She conducted her annual assessments remotely this year and made two site visits. The seniors she spoke with really miss the socialization. Home delivered meal clients were contacted in each county. Many were amazed the meals were still being delivered. She received no complaints or concerns.

Covid Webinars – Kelly has participated in several webinars to keep informed as senior centers begin to open back up. Participants want to see procedures in place for keeping them safe as far as masks, sanitizing, etc.

C. Proulx – What do they do for drive up congregate? Kelly – They call ahead and receive a time for curbside pickup.

M. Hiller – I had an instance where I had to go to the school. I had to fill out a questionnaire, have my temperature taken and use hand sanitizer. Are we requiring this at the senior centers? Kelly – The two I visited did require this, all of them have safety measures in place.

Corkie – We have to follow guidelines at MCCOA.

Advocacy Reports

Michigan Senior Advocates (MSAC) – We hope to have Pat Rondeau attending our meetings soon.

State Advisory Council – C. Corwin reported the Council is continuing to work on their project.

State Updates

State Commission on Aging – No report.

Aging and Adult Services Agency (AASA) – No report.

Local Updates From Council Members

Nothing to report.

Action Items

None

Question or Comments

No further questions

Adjourn

A motion was made by C. Corwin with support from M. Hiller to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned by Chair C. Proulx at 2:15 pm. Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 26th.

Nominating Committee met prior to at 12:30 pm.

Laurie, Connie, Brooke, Corkie and Maddie were in attendance.

Vacancies on the council were discussed. Notice in COA newsletters. What enticed you to join. Help us to build our ad. Maddie was taking over for a board member and was approached by C. Corwin. She also knew Carol from the Lions who suggested it also. "Personal contact from someone they knew. Otherwise she would never have heard about NEMCSA, the AAA or RAC. Corkie got involved as a COA board member.

Any connections to VA offices that we could draw. Maddie can contact someone that goes to the VA coffee hours. Corkie, we have a county rep at the county building I could give info too. Laurie, he may be interested. Maddie – How about contacting the chambers. They get involved in a lot of things.

Will put ad for 2 counties without newsletters. Laurie – Arenac and Oscoda may not have Chambers. Maddie will check.

Laurie – if you can also touch base with reps from these counties to see if they can make contacts to try and find members.

