

Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging

May 14, 2018

Participants: Karen Brown (chair), Jim Riesberg, Donna Baros, Ben Moultrie, John Barry, Tony Tapia, Sarah Elliott, Christian Itin, Dale Elliott, Sharron Williams, Jayla Sanchez-Warren, Karin Stewart (phone), Steve Child (phone), Dave Norman (phone), Mindy Kemp (phone) and Jarett Hughes

Phone participants were unable to participate for the entirety of the meeting due a power outage at the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG)

Not in Attendance: Claire Anderson, Gabriel Kaplan, Natalie O'Donnell Wood (tried to call-in at 1:00pm), Josh Laipply, Coral Cosway, Jean Nofles, Maureen McDonald, John Zabawa (vice chair)

Public Participants: Wade Buchanan (Senior Advisor on Aging), Gretchen Cerveney (former Mayor of Wheat Ridge & member of the Colorado Commission on Aging), Barbara Wells (Colorado Consumer Health Initiative), Lisa Streisfeld (CDOT), and Melanie Taussig (Clear View Behavioral Health)

Action Items

- Explore and pursue 2019 Appropriation Request
- Send information on Homestead Exemption to SAPGA members
- Affordable Housing and Homestead Exemption forum planning with Colorado Senior Lobby
- Meet with Colorado Health Institute to discuss long-term care cost projections
- Explore funding opportunities/reimbursement for SAPGA members to attend the Aging Summit

Meeting Notes

Welcome

- Meeting called to order by chair Karen Brown at 12:05 pm
- Approval of agenda and April minutes with correction to spelling and address of meeting

Public Comment: Barbara Wells from the Colorado Consumer Health Initiative (CCHI) indicated that CCHI is involved in work pertaining to long-term care insurance. Also, Ben Moultrie - SAPGA member - offered comment on the Mobility Choice Blueprint. This project pertains to the DRCOG service area but is meant to provide a comprehensive framework of the current state and future of mobility in Denver metro area and Colorado. The project incorporates livability, equity, various technologies and innovations, environmental design and land use. It may be a valuable platform to raise awareness about mobility issues for older adults.

Update on Funding, Long-Term Care Research, and Project Support

SAPGA was able to secure \$55,000 through an appropriation amendment to the Long Bill to fund project support and potential long-term care (LTC) research. SAPGA will be meeting with Colorado Health Institute to discuss LTC research. These funds become available in July. SAPGA also will explore and pursue additional funding through a budget request to the state department in July for the upcoming fiscal year. A new Joint Budget Committee and new governor may complicate this state funding request. Collaborative grant requests with Community Resource Center and the Colorado Gerontological Society will be explored and if parties are still amenable, pursued in the upcoming Next 50 Initiative grant cycle (July - September).

Update from the Senior Advisor on Aging- Wade Buchanan

Navigating the gubernatorial change may be difficult. The new governor will want to keep the position within their office if Buchanan is to continue his work.

After four months in the new position, Buchanan has spent significant time traveling around the state and meeting with various stakeholders working to address the multitude of aging issues. There is considerable work and attention to these issues but the lack communication and networking among individuals and organizations engaged in this work is problematic. Breaking down these barriers while encouraging collaboration and fostering working relationships among traditionally isolated groups is critical.

One of the important outcomes associated with improved communication must be significant efforts at increasing the visibility and knowledge of aging issues. Awareness and education about aging and later life can help avoid crises. People typically find out about certain issues, programs, and services once they are in immediate need of them. This is far from ideal for families and older adults. Appropriate understanding of and planning for particular issues can reduce trauma, lead to the effective use of resources, help control costs, and improve outcomes for Coloradans.

Central to this education, problem solving, and culture change are our communities. Intentional planning, of all sorts (e.g., land use and design, financial and retirement), is important to allowing older adults to remain safe and healthy in their communities. In this regard, it is important to consider geographic, ethnic, and cultural factors. Age friendliness, lifelong community living, and intentional planning at the state level are future directions for Buchanan's work. SAPGA can play a significant role addressing these problems and reaching these goals in concert with the work Buchanan is doing

Aging Summit

The Colorado Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A) is planning a large gathering in Breckenridge on October 18 & 19. SAPGA members, representatives from state agencies, elected officials, and various other stakeholders have been invited to attend. The goal of this gathering is to foster collaboration and networking among individuals and organizations working in the aging space.

Affordable Housing and Homestead Exemption Forum

Reconfiguration of the Homestead Exemption is a topic that has garnered attention from the Governor's Office, the Joint Budget Committee, and the General Assembly as a whole since its inception more than 18 years ago. It is important that any reform to the Homestead Exemption be done with the best interests of older adults in mind. Affordable housing is an issue Colorado Senior Lobby (CSL) views as a top priority in coming years. CSL and SAPGA will explore an educational forum to discuss affordable housing and the future of the Homestead Exemption. It is important to CSL and SAPGA that stakeholder input inform this new direction of the Homestead Exemption and that any monies not directed towards the property tax exemption be dedicated towards programs and services that assist older adults (e.g., PTC rebate).

Break 1:20 - 1:40

Conversations on Aging – Healthcare Solution Review

SAPGA used valuable resources conducting regional Conversations on Aging in 2017. Part of that public input process involved ideation on problems and potential solutions. By filtering through recommended solutions SAPGA may be able to incorporate them into its 2018 update to the *Action Plan*. The SAPGA members in attendance separated into two groups to review and prioritize the proposed solutions offered through the public that attended the regional meetings. (Groups were facilitated by Brown and Hughes).

Group One - Jarett Hughes

- 1) Reduce drug costs and increase pricing transparency.
- 2) Encourage alternative wellness services and therapies to be covered under insurance. This should include home and community-based services, navigator assistance, and transition services.
- 3) Create mechanisms to increase the number of providers who accept Medicare and Medicaid in order to improve access and availability of services
- 4) Provide options for health insurance for those who do not qualify for Medicaid but cannot afford private insurance.

Group Two - Karen Brown

- Improve education and understanding of Medicaid (e.g., reduce stigma, inheritance concerns) and Medicare
- Create and/or expand the network of navigators to help maneuver the health care system
- Create incentives/requirements for doctors to follow patients into care facilities
- Education on how to prevent health issues and/or maintain health
- Identify the disparities in availability of health care services in rural areas versus urban areas
- Improve treatment and placements options for older adults with behavioral health issues

Website Overview

Due to power loss at DRCOG an overview of the website was postponed for a later date.

Meeting Adjourned at 2:53