

# Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging

## September 10, 2018

**Participants:** Karen Brown (chair), John Zabawa (vice chair), Steve Grund, John Emerson, Sarah Elliott, Jim Riesberg, Jean Nofles, Maureen McDonald, Jim Collins, Tony Tapia, Mindy Gates, Josh Laipply, Natalie O'Donnell Wood, Karin Stewart, Chris Lee, Gabriel Kaplan, Kathleen Hall (phone), Steve Child (phone), Dave Norman (phone), and Jarett Hughes

**Not in Attendance:** Coral Cosway, Jayla Sanchez-Warren, Christian Itin, and John Barry

**Public Participants:** Wade Buchanan (Governor's Office), Andrea Kuwik (Bell Policy Center), Ben Moultrie, Gretchen Cerveny, George Maxey, Miguel Lovato (Daniel's Fund), Rich Mauro (DRCOG), and Margaret Franckhauser (Next 50 Initiative)

### Action Items

- Complete Nominations Form for Executive Committee
- Revise housing recommendations to finalize in October
- Review potential recommendations for Homestead Exemption
- Review HB18-1198 concerning the establishment of best practices for state boards and commissions and potential amendments to bylaws
- Complete conflict of interest forms

### Meeting Notes

#### *Welcome, Roll Call, and Approval of Minutes*

- Meeting called to order by Karen Brown at 12:00pm with a quorum present
- August meeting minutes approved
- September agenda approved with comment by Jim Riesberg on Nominations Committee

#### *Nominations Committee*

Jim Riesberg will chair the Nominations Committee and Mindy Gates volunteers to participate as well. Jim distributed a Nominations Form to be completed by members to gauge personal interest in a leadership role and to gather their recommendations for positions. The Executive Committee slate must be made available to members by October 29 with an election on December 10.

#### *Introduction of New Members*

New commissioners had the opportunity to introduce themselves to the full Planning Group and sitting members had the chance to introduce themselves and offer comment about their work in the aging space.

*Romaine Pacheco – Boards and Commissions Director, Governor's Office*

Romaine Pacheco joined to offer comment on conflict of interest, serving at the pleasure of the Governor, the Colorado Open Record's Act and the Open Meetings Law. Romaine also alerted SAPGA members to HB18-1198 which creates changes to boards and commissions concerning the establishment of best practices to be into effect by January 1, 2019 by each board and commission. Mindy Gates offered to support SAPGA in a review of its bylaws to ensure they comply.

### *Homestead Exemption Forum Overview*

SAPGA, along with Colorado Senior Lobby and Colorado Gerontological Society, held a public input forum on August 14 dealing with the Senior Property Tax Exemption. There were nearly 160 participants with 82 surveys gathered. Not all surveys were completed in their entirety. Just over 60% of those surveyed received the property tax exemption (N= 76). About 73% said keeping the exemption as currently structured was either quite important or very important (N=79). Beyond keeping the exemption as is (37 votes), the most popular new directions included eliminating the 10-year residency(26 votes), redirecting money to other senior services (17 votes), and means-testing (15 votes) with a total of 113 total votes (attendees were allowed multiple responses). There was significant interest in learning more about the Property Tax Work Off (34 votes) and Property Tax Deferral (19 votes) programs along with affordable housing (38 votes).

### *Discussion of Housing Goals and Housing Draft Update*

SAPGA members were asked to prioritize five potential goals via an electronic survey for the upcoming Action Plan and discussion of the preliminary survey results was had in the full meeting. Members conceptually approved the following goals:

- The state, in partnership with the private sector and local governments, should make efforts to ensure a supply of affordable, accessible, and manageable housing to meet the needs of people aged 65 and over.
- To improve the understanding of options that exist for senior living, the state, along with the private and non-profit sectors, should create and/or enhance access to information on living options for older adults.
- The state, along with local governments and the private sector, should develop partnerships to promote and develop the expansion of community wide-efforts to make all of Colorado an Age-Friendly state.
- The state, along with other senior housing experts, should further assess and analyze existing affordable, accessible, and manageable housing stock for older adults including intergenerational, rental, existing home ownership, assisted, independent, assisted memory and new living environments county by county and statewide.

There were concerns over the language used with regards to the responsibility of the state. Instead of framing goals as the sole responsibility of the state, members favored making the responsibilities multifaceted. This includes roles for local governments, non-profits, and the private sector. Housing projects are often developed and implemented at the county and city level.

The point was made that SAPGA should be careful to not try and “reinvent the wheel”. There are groups that have been working on affordable housing for quite some time and it is beneficial to understand their efforts and how we may leverage their work, support and resources.

Defining the meaning of “affordable” was brought up as being important. It was noted that some “affordable” units are priced in the \$300,000 range. For a low-income person, \$300,000 is not likely affordable. Then, there are significant differences between what is “affordable” on the Front Range versus the rest of Colorado. It is important to acknowledge these regional differences and establish some clarification around priority target audiences and definitions of affordable.

It was suggested that including information or language indicating the downstream/long-term costs of older adults not having appropriate and affordable housing is important. What is the impact of doing nothing on costs to individuals, the state and society as a whole?

*Bonnie Silva – Deputy Director, Office of Community Living, Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)*

Bonnie Silva provided a brief overview of [Colorado’s Medicaid LTSS](#). Since most adults aged 65 and older receive Medicare, Medicaid is primarily used to provide LTSS not provided under Medicare. Medicaid’s LTSS programs include home and community-based services (HCBS) waivers, Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), nursing facilities, long-term home health, private duty nursing, and hospice.

Within the HCBS, the Elderly, Blind, and Disabled (EBD) Waiver is by far the largest. Of the near 45,000 people enrolled in in HCBS Waivers, nearly 27,000 are enrolled in the EBD Waiver. Total waiver costs account for about 44% of all Medicaid spending. Eligibility for HCBS programs involves financial considerations, required levels of care, and the specific waiver targeting criteria (e.g., blind, spinal injury). According to HCPF data, only 3% of Medicaid beneficiaries are aged 65 and older but this percentage accounts for 17% of expenditures.

HCPF is beginning work to develop a Strategic Roadmap for Medicaid older adult policies looking out three to five years. This will involve work with a contractor to host stakeholder strategy sessions with a broad group of participants and the hiring of an Older Adult Policy Advisor to focus on all programs and services for older adults.

*Doug Farmer – President & CEO, Colorado Health Care Association & Center for Assisted Living (CHCA)*

Doug Farmer offered perspective on LTSS as viewed from the [CHCA](#) - the private and nonprofit long-term care organization he directs. CHCA provides education, information, and advocacy for nursing home and assisted living communities in Colorado. Membership includes 85% of Colorado’s nursing homes and about 15% of assisted living communities.

There are roughly 235 nursing homes in Colorado with more than 21,000 beds and 671 licensed assisted living communities with about 20,000 beds with occupancy about 80%. In recent years, there has been an increased focus on post-acute care which is characterized by short-term, rehabilitation

stays. This is not traditional long-term care and most new developments are focused on this type of care mainly because cost reimbursements are considerably higher than Medicaid LTSS.

More than 70% of nursing homes are paid for by Medicaid (long-term stays) or Medicare (post-acute care/short-term stays). Colorado's pay for performance funding mechanisms is unique, providing financial incentives for certain quality outcomes. Colorado is in the top tier nationally in terms of quality measures. The majority of assisted living is private pay with only 19% of residents nationwide utilizing Medicaid.

Skilled nursing is the most regulated profession in America with assisted living regulation growing rapidly. As acuity increases in care settings, regulation increases. Increased regulations lead to time constraints. The more time nurses and physicians spend on paperwork is less time they can spend providing care and engaging with residents. It would be more effective if regulations were aimed at quality outcomes instead of work inputs. Work force and human capital concerns are significant. The work is labor intensive and requires those who are well-suited to caregiving. Bringing in entry level employees and retaining them is important as many administrators start in these positions. This is important organizationally, creating continuity and administrators who fully understand the scope of work involved in caregiving or nutrition or program planning. While new developments and increased care options is positive, it further stretches out the caregiving workforce.

*Bob Murphy – Colorado State Director AARP*

Bob Murphy presented Karen Brown (chair) with the AARP Andrus Award for Community Service. This award recognizes outstanding individuals who are sharing their experience, talents, and skills to enrich the lives of others. Bob also invited SAPGA members to a press conference on September 18 at the Colorado State Capitol to announce Colorado's age-friendly state initiative.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.