

North Carolina Partnership to Address Adult Abuse

11.07.18 Minutes

Present: Joanne Otuonye, Ayanda Meachem, Madeline Masters, Rosalyn Pettyford, Tiffany Smith, Pam Palmer, Amanda Little, Laura McCracken, Roxann Sizemore, Makkitia McKoy, Alex Castro, Jr., Shevel Mavins, Kevin Robertson, Bill Lamb, Kathryn Lanier, Nancy Warren, Joan Pellettier, and Laura Jett. Present by phone were Ty Whitaker and Angie Dorsey.

Meeting called to order at 9:30 by Nancy Warren, Chair.

Review of Minutes and Treasurer's Report

Minutes from the July 18th general meeting were submitted by Laura Jett, Secretary for approval. One change was noted with the misspelling of Joan Pellettier's name. Noting this change, a motion to approve was made by Kevin Robinson. The motion was seconded by Pam Palmer. With no further discussion, the minutes were approved.

Pam Palmer, Treasurer, provided the treasurer's report and update. There have been two new memberships. We have 12 organization members and 12 individual members. Our balance is \$9409.40. Joan Pellettier made a motion to approve the treasurer's report and this was seconded by Rosalyn Pettyford. With no further discussion, the report was approved.

Program

Shevel Mavins introduced our speaker, Alex Castro, representing the Orange County SALT program. Mr. Castro shared the following points concerning the SALT program:

- SALT stands for Seniors and Lawmen Together. Archie Daniels, a retired captain with the Orange County Sheriff's Office, is currently the leader of SALT.
- SALT provides visits to rural seniors by law enforcement officers. The need became greater than what the office could handle and volunteers began to assist through a partnership with OCRA (Orange County Rural Alliance), and Project Engage, a 13 week training program for volunteers.
- Volunteers are vetted by the Sheriff's department. In the training program, they learn about community resources so they can better assist the people they visit.
- Through this partnership, along with the Orange County Department of Aging, volunteers visit over 200 seniors. They have 11 routes and provide meals to 90 clients.
- Hot meals are delivered every Wednesday. Volunteers provided an additional sandwich meal each month and participants also receive a special holiday meal.
- Meals are prepared in a professional kitchen and they are able to accommodate special diets.
- This partnership also networks with a local church, caterer, and a restaurant to serve rural seniors of Orange County.
- There are no restrictions placed on who is served.
- SALT volunteers identify issues and assist with finding resources or organizations that can fill the needs identified.
- Handy Helpers is a volunteer program that builds ramps and assist with home modifications to make homes more accessible. They can also fix leaks and make other small home repairs. The funding comes from the community.
- The SALT program also partners with the food bank and with Meals on Wheels to purchase shelf stable meals. They are currently collaborating with UNC School of Business to receive assistance in creating a business plan.

After the presentation, the question of including information about Adult Protective Services and elder abuse in orientation was discussed. It was not certain if this is covered but discussed that it should be added. Nancy shared that the Department of Justice is having a Tribal and Rural Justice Summit next week and is asking for information on programs that work in rural areas. This is one that should be shared. Shevel will forward and share this information with Archie Daniels.

Committee Reports

After a short break, the partnership reconvened. Instead of breaking in to separate committees, the partnership remained in session to work on advocacy topics as a group.

The first topic of discussion was a handout from The Elder Justice Coalition. A continuing resolution was signed to fund programs at the FY 2018 levels. This will maintain the Elder Justice Initiative at \$12 million. There were opportunities to apply for Elder Justice Grants by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). North Carolina did not apply this year.

The Adult Protective Services Demographics and Outcomes factsheet for FY 2017-2018 was reviewed. There were a total of 30,128 reports received in the state and 15,563 were screened in. Older adults comprised the majority of the reports. Eighty six percent lived alone or with family members.

The National Center on Law and Elder Rights template “Financial Exploitation of Older Adults: A Guide for Civil Legal Aid Attorneys in State” was discussed. The process of the development of this guide as a North Carolina Resource was discussed. John Marron asked to take this forward as a partnership to collaborate with the Senior Fraud Task Force. Angie Dorsey stated that this achievable. Sections on capacity, screening, and the provided links would be very helpful. It would also be beneficial to partner with APS and add specific North Carolina links.

It was noted that the School of Government had a grant to contract with the clerks of Superior Court to make a manual on abuse for clerks. The Conference of District Attorneys also received a grant from Violence Against Women to make a prosecution manual for Elder Abuse.

Angie will take the lead to get a collaborative group together. Anyone interested should email Angie. Madelyn Masters volunteered to assist. Roxanne Sizemore will check with their director to see if they can assist. Shevel Mavins, Renee, Nancy Warren, and John Maron will also assist.

Providing a submission from the partnership to the North Carolina Coalition on Aging on an issue requiring legislative action was discussed. This is due to Mary Bethel on 11/9/2018.

The partnership brainstormed and the following ideas were generated for an initial draft:

Problem that needs legislative action: A lack of resources to meet the needs of abused, neglected, and exploited vulnerable adults as required by NCGA 108A. Lack of access to training, lack of mandated training, increasing caseloads, funding for staff, and funding for services.

Proposed Legislative Action: Authorize recurring funding to address the lack of resources and disparity.

Rationale: The number of APS reports is increasing; no state funding; stagnant SSBG funding; disparity among county resources and local funding; inconsistent caseload size; Article 6A is out of date and needs revision; Growing population of older adults and vulnerable adults; inadequate prevention and awareness funding.

Nancy asked that members email her any additional ideas and she will draft this and submit on behalf of the partnership.

Bill Lamb suggested that the partnership consider a second submission for the partnership for the funding of 13 additional Long Term Care Ombudsman. North Carolina is currently under staffed based on the standard published by the Instituted of Medicine for 1 Ombudsman for every 2000 beds. The proposal would be for the state to provide additional funding for these positions. Bill volunteered to draft this proposal for submission on behalf of the partnership.

A motion was made by Bill Lamb to approve submission of the two Legislative Action items discussed: authorize recurring funding to address the lack of resources and disparity; provide state funding for 13 additional ombudsman positions to bring NC to the current standard. The motion was seconded by Laura Jett. Further discussion was held clarifying the ombudsman mandate regarding abuse reporting. The motion carried.

Nancy Warren and Bill Lamb will develop the final language and drafts for submission.

Member Updates:

Kevin: Medicare Open Enrollment has begun and ends December 7th. Residents of North Carolina should have received their new cards at this time. SHIP saved seniors \$60 million last year. Providers can call the office for help.

Kathryn Lanier: SAFE in Long Term Care is hosting an anniversary event November 29th from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Glen Air. All are welcome to attend but should RSVP. Joan recommended having our flyer for the annual NCP3A Annual Conference available to hand out to attendees there.

Roxanne Sizemore: October 5th was the Financial Exploitation Conference in Buncombe County. It was well attended. They are working on their Senior Wish Tree for the holidays and are taking agency referrals of seniors. Community donates wrapped gifts for the identified individuals.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting is January 16th at Triangle J COG. Morgan Pollard will be our presenter with the topic of Sexual Abuse Prevention for People with Developmental Disabilities.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Jett, Secretary