

## Monroe County Commission on Aging

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Terri L. Hamad, Director

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### Monroe County Commission on Aging

Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2006

Monroe County Commission on Aging Conference Room

Chairman Martin Kaufman called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m.

**Member's present:** Noel Dentner, Paul Iacoangeli, Aleta Jackson, Martin Kaufman, Paul Simonton, John Sledge, Gerald Stone and Loyd Sype.

**Member excused:** Nancy Hamman

The Pledge of Allegiance and silent prayer were lead by Chairman Martin Kaufman.

#### Approval of the Agenda:

Noel Dentner motioned to approve the agenda November 20, 2006 as presented, seconded by Aleta Jackson. **Motion carried.**

#### Guest Present:

Sharon Williams, CEO, and Peter Fales, Board Chairman, Caring Alternatives, Inc. and Floreine Mentel, Area Agency on Aging 1-B Board of Directors/County Commissioner.

Chairman Kaufman stated that there would not be any exchanges or conversations with the guests during the budget discussion or commission member's time. The guests can speak at public time at the beginning or the end of meeting and will limit comments to five minutes for each guest. In addition, he would like to institute that the Chairman must recognize each board member before they speak.

#### Public Time:

There was no public comments at this time.

#### Budget Discussion – Caring Alternatives, Inc.

Ms. Hamad reiterated that there were two applications that the Commission previously recommended to the County Board of Commissioners for approval, they are Elder Abuse Prevention at \$2,475 and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program at \$667 to support the required local match for these programs for fiscal year 2007. The remaining applications that are to be discussed today are Home Companion, Medication Set-up and Older Adult Counseling, which Older Adult Counseling is a new request this year. The amount being requested for Home Companion is \$134,522 with units requested for that program ranging from 14,000 to 18,000, the Medication Set-up request is \$30,000 to do 3,000 units on a fee-for-service basis, which is currently how the program is funded, and for Older Adult Counseling, the new application, a request of \$23,450 to do 583 units.

Ms. Hamad commented that after the November 2, 2006 Special Meeting, the board requested her to review the documents that Caring Alternatives was going to provide. Upon doing so, Ms.

Hamad found some inconsistencies and reported that on the amended 990 and the statement of activities from the audit total of expenses of \$600,682 are the same. The net assets or fund balance at the end of the year shows \$291,138 that also shows the same on the audit, however where it varies is under the total revenue on the 990, which shows \$617,454 and the audit shows \$598,102, which is a difference of \$19,352.

Ms. Hamad commented that she did receive the complied income statements for 2005 and what she noticed under department 700, which is the Medication Set-up Program, is that it shows a program income of \$2,678.70, however when she reviewed the Commissions Monthly Programmatic Year-End Report from 2005 it shows \$11,812.94 in program income.

In addition, upon review of the client list received from Caring Alternatives, Ms. Hamad noticed a discrepancy in the number of clients served, which would be a cumulative total between January and September just as the September Programmatic Report is a cumulative total. In Home Companion, the client list shows 90 and the Programmatic Report shows 96. On Medication Set-up, the Programmatic Report shows 170 clients served where the client list shows 155 during the same period.

Paul Simonton commented that on the application for the Medication Set-up Program he noticed a discrepancy in the total of clients served on the first page, which shows 134 however, when he adds them up he comes up with 131, which makes him wonder how many clients they actually served for 2005.

Mr. Simonton inquired on the billing rate for the Medication Set-up Program. Ms. Hamad stated that it is \$40.00. In addition, she stated that the \$30,000 allocated for 2006 is already expended out.

Ms. Hamad commented that in looking at some of the complied financials from Caring Alternatives she is able to do that since they broke out program income from the South County and the main office. However, the one that she cannot explain is the difference of the total revenue and the 990, which has now been amended, or the difference in the client count. If there is an inconsistency in the reporting it leads the Commission to question which figure is correct and going off the newest and most accurate information that she received there are still questions in her mind which figure is the most accurate.

Ms. Jackson also inquired if the Commission had received all of the documentation requested at the last meeting from Caring Alternatives and in its entirety.

Ms. Jackson inquired if the client list was received. Ms. Hamad stated yes however, it consisted only of the client's name where it should include the addresses of the clients. The Commission requested names and addresses from all the agencies and have received that from all the other agencies.

Ms. Jackson is concerned that the information the Commission requested did not come post haste. As she recalls from the last meeting there was some confusion as to exactly what the Commission was asking for, however she felt by the end of the meeting the confusion had been cleared up and Ms. Williams understood what it was the Commission needed. With that said, she is having a hard time convincing herself that it is okay for the Commission to accept what Caring Alternatives provided regardless of what the Commission asked for.

Chairman Kaufman commented that the Commission has been asking and asking for information from Caring Alternatives and requested that each board member think about how long this has taken and the information whether the Commission received the responses to the inquires in full and is it satisfactory to each of them.

Paul Iacoangeli is concerned about the fixed rate, under fee-for-service that the Commission is being charged in comparison to if the Commission was to recommend the grant for the

Medication Set-up Program since the Commission is paying more money. He remembers at a former meeting that the Commission was told that any program income that was generated goes into the program. He is uncomfortable with that \$40.00 unit rate just because the program is on a fee-for-service.

Ms. Jackson commented that if the Commission was just looking at the quality of the service and if they thought that there was a problem, this would be easy. However, it is not easy because the programs are excellent, however the Commission is having a financial/administrative issue and that she is personally having a hard time just accepting things as they are but on the other hand, she is having an equally hard time saying that she would not want to fund these great programs.

Mr. Simonton disagrees that any concerns Ms. Jackson has are petty because and the Commission has a responsibility to these funds and the discrepancies are not just a few dollars. For him there is no decision on deciding on starting a new application (Older Adult Counseling) for an agency when the Commission cannot even get the information that they have asked for on the existing programs.

Noel Dentner commented that he is greatly concerned with the large financial discrepancy of \$19,352 and the Commission has gone into detail asking for information and have not received it thoroughly.

Chairman Kaufman commented that the Commissions' first obligation is to spend the funds prudently; they are responsible to the County Board of Commissioner's and the tax payers, and the senior's, and last but not least the providers of this service.

Ms. Hamad requested that the Commission hold off on making any funding decision with respect to the Older Adult Counseling application since there maybe more applications received for this program and there has not been a formal RFP put out for this program.

Mr. Simonton motioned to take the Older Adult Counseling application from Caring Alternatives, Inc. off the table for the reasons stated above. Supported by Noel Dentner. **Motion carried.**

Gerald Stone commented that the Commission is not going to be able to accomplish anything until they receive satisfactory answers to all of their concerns.

Mr. Simonton commented that this is straightforward and does not seem complicated to him at all. The reason the Commission held this special budget workshop is because they did not receive what they feel was needed to make a decision and that they were assured that they would receive the information needed and are here again today and still do not have that information. In addition, he personally does not feel that there is enough information for him to make a funding decision.

John Sledge commented that he also is concerned that the Commission is not receiving the answers needed to make a funding decision.

Mr. Dentner motioned to deny granting funding for Home Companion and Medication Set-up to Caring Alternatives until the Commission receives sufficient information to make a funding decision and anything the Commission on Aging Director sees that are contradictory in the reports. Supported by Gerald Stone.

Mr. Simonton commented that the Commission cannot be held hostage because through no fault of their lack of asking for the information and have not received it and now they are coming upon the eleventh hour and does not feel personally responsible for the delay. In addition, if the Commission passes this motion he believes that would get Caring Alternatives to get it together and does not see any reason why the Commission could not review that information at the December meeting. The Commission knows exactly what it is they want and their concerns especially with the \$19,352, count and client addresses. He feels that this is a reasonable request

and believes that it can be meet in time for the December meeting but it cannot be resolved by trying to figure out another way of dealing with it.

**Roll call:**

Gerald Stone – Yes

John Sledge – Yes

Noel Dentner – Yes

Aleta Jackson – Yes

Martin Kaufman – Yes

Paul Iacoangeli – Yes

Paul Simonton – Yes

Loyd Sype – Abstained

**Motion carried. One abstention.**

Mr. Iacoangeli inquired that what happens to the clients starting January 2007 if the client information is not received.

Chairman Kaufman commented that the Commission will wait for the response for the December meeting where they will decide if the response and information provided is or is not acceptable for them to make a decision.

Ms. Jackson commented that she is assuming that Caring Alternatives has been serving these clients for twenty some years and she would want to continue doing so she would do what ever she can to provide the Commission with the information. What has Ms. Jackson concerned is that the Commission already has the explanation of Mr. Iacoangeli concern of the \$40.00 billing rate for the Medication Set-up Program and the Commission is still uncomfortable with that.

Chairman Kaufman is also uncomfortable with the two fees for the Medication Set-up Program and has always struck him as a punitive behavior.

Mr. Dentner suggested that the Commission immediately send a letter to Caring Alternatives expressing the Commissions' exact questions of difference that they have so that they would have a reply by the December meeting to be able to make a decision then, because he does not want to see clients go without services.

Chairman Kaufman commented that if the Commission does not approve the budget for Caring Alternatives for one reason or another they would then need to think about what they are going to do about the service in 2007.

Mr. Sledge inquired if this does not get resolved at the December meeting, could the Commission allocate a certain amount of dollars to keep the agency going. In addition, he is unclear of the total amount of dollars and units involved.

Chairman Kaufman commented that it is not just the dollars, it is also the principal of getting what the Commission has a legitimate right to request.

Loyd Sype commented that he agreed with Mr. Dentner to have Ms. Hamad put it in writing what the Commission wants from Caring Alternatives.

Mr. Dentner recommended that the Chairman review the letter to be sure that everything is covered in the letter before it is sent to Caring Alternatives.

Mr. Sledge commented that four meetings later the Commission on Aging is still in the dark and if the Commission runs out of time extending funding may be a good option to keep the program running and the clients served.

Mr. Dentner agreed with Mr. Sledge's comment to extend funding if the Commission does not receive the answers needed in December that if the Commission is happy to extend funding on a limited time period possibly two months, and no longer than that, to get the information needed to make a decision on the 2007 funding.

Mr. Iacoangeli commented that the Commission has been extending the deadline for the past six months.

Mr. Stone commented that it is not the money, it is the answers to the questions that the Commission has requested is the issue and if the Commission does not get the answers to the questions then they are not going to receive the money.

Mr. Simonton commented that he is hopeful that Caring Alternatives will provide the information needed for the Commission to make a discussion at the December meeting.

**Commission Members' Time:**

Mr. Stone reported that he has been summons to jury duty from December 4, 2006 to January 13, 2007.

**Public Time:**

Ms. Williams commented that when they left the last special meeting she does not recall the clients name list issue being on the agenda that was referenced earlier as one of the things to be submitted for this meeting. The question on the \$19,352 between the revised audit and the tax return is all that she knows is that the audits and the accountants report from her year-end tax returns did balance and will need more information from her accountant. The issue on the client count is that you need to look at the same period to make sure that is in tact. When she did submit a list of names to Ms. Hamad, she had full information as to why she submitted the list in that matter and explained that that was a very crude internal tracking of clients and is generated off a billing document. They are in the process of working on a database that will keep a nice handy count but they do not have that yet. The unit rate fixed cost issue is their rates, there are variances between programs based on who delivers those services or who gets the services and what is needed or how much they are purchasing. In reference to the RN, it is \$40.00 for private pay out of pocket so if the Commission buys a unit that is what the rate is. Clients pay different varying amounts of program income, which is tracked and tagged to the program only, and not their other sources, it goes to that program. Now that the \$30,000 is depleted for the Medication Set-up Program, the program income now supports the ongoing service because it is added on top of it. All the programs that are funded through the Commission have always been designed to grow the program so the program income is always on top of the grant to expand services but it also changes the cost of the service. If more program income is generated the county's dollar just got cheaper for what the Commission. She will explain this clearly when she responds to the Commissions' questions in writing.

The private pay component of her agency, several hundred of thousands of dollars, are all kept separate, each division or department represents a fund source or a revenue screen meaning such as department 700 is the Medication Set-up Program. The discrepancy Ms. Hamad referenced earlier between the report and the income statement, Ms. Williams stated, that if the two lines that represent program income were added together the Commission would see that they total the report because they come from different sources, they are tracked and they are both program income and totaled together so the numbers should match.

Ms. Hamad commented that the staff request was pulled from the Board of Commissioners consent agenda due to the lack of support from the County Board. The Commission is back up on for approval at the November 28, 2006 meeting at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Hamad feels that it would help immensely if members of the Commission could be there and/or talk to their Commissioner before the meeting.

Commissioner Mentel commented that the county does not want to add any extra staff to the county payroll even though the money is separate. There were not enough votes for it to pass since there were three County Commissioners absent at that meeting.

Ms. Jackson commented that it is her understanding that many of the County Commissioners feel that the Commission is jumping over the union because the Commission is asking for an Assistant Director to be added to a director in a two-man office. County Commissioner Oley does

not have a problem supporting the full-time position as an Administrative Assistant position, it is his opinion that the Commission is jumping over the whole union issue which obviously a good number of the County Commissioners do not want to be charged with an operation such as doing that.

Ms. Hamad commented that the County Board does not realize that there is an addition of another staff person with the request, which would be a third staff person. If the second person in command has to act in the stead of the director it can be a very peculiar situation when that person is in the union managing other people that could potentially be in the union at some point. In addition, she does not foresee the Commissions need for staff getting less, she sees it as being more as the population is growing.

Ms. Williams reported that at Caring Alternatives last board meeting they made a decision to pull their application for Older Adult Counseling.

**Adjournment:**

Gerald Stone motioned to adjourn, supported by Paul Simonton. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

The next regular board meeting will be on Wednesday, December 13, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. at the Lake Erie Transit Commission, 1105 West Seventh Street, Monroe, MI.

*Vicky L. Ferrasi*

Recording Secretary