

## Monroe County Commission on Aging

29 Washington Street, (Stoner-Kemmerling Building) Monroe, MI 48161  
Telephones: 734.240.7363 734.240.7358 \* 734.240.7364 \* Toll Free: 1.888.354.5500 ext. 7363 \* Fax 734.240.7360  
E-Mail: [terri\\_hamad@monroemi.org](mailto:terri_hamad@monroemi.org) \* [vicki\\_terrasi@monroemi.org](mailto:vicki_terrasi@monroemi.org) \* [tammy\\_quigley@monroemi.org](mailto:tammy_quigley@monroemi.org)  
Visit Our Website: [www.co.monroe.mi.us](http://www.co.monroe.mi.us)

Terri L. Hamad, Director  
Vicky L. Terrasi, Assistant  
Tammy L. Quigley, Clerk

### Monroe County Commission on Aging Regular Board Meeting Minutes March 14, 2007 Milan Senior Center

Vice-Chairman Paul Iacoangeli called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

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

**Member's excused:** Nancy Hamman, Aleta Jackson and Loyd Sype

Vice-Chairman Paul Iacoangeli led the Pledge of Allegiance and silent prayer.

#### **Approval of the Agenda:**

Noel Dentner motioned to approve the March 14, 2007 agenda as presented. Supported by Gerald Stone. **Motion carried.**

**Guests Present:** Janet Crego, Home Care Director, and Diane Tackett Director Resource Advocacy/Chore/Home Injury Control, Monroe County Opportunity Program, Gerilyn Powers, Regional Supervisor, Area Agency on Aging 1-B, Rhonda Ziethlow, Assistant Director, Christine Croley, HR/Fiscal Director, and Bonnie Weber, Healthy Aging Alliance Director, The Monroe Center, Bridget Kyser, Service Coordinator, Caring Alternatives, Nancy Young, Director, Faith in Action for Monroe County, Janette Stark, Citizen, and Floreine Mentel, County Commissioner and Area Agency on Aging 1-B Board of Directors.

#### **Public Time/Milan Seniors:**

Commissioner Mentel expressed her concern regarding a Medicare Advantage Company in the Monroe area, Advantra Freedom, which is under Coventry Health Care that is contracted with Medicare. Advantra Freedom representatives have been going to senior centers and high-rises leaving flyers that are misleading senior's into thinking that they could keep their primary insurance carrier however that is not the case. Their rates range from \$0 to \$200 in premiums per month. In addition, they tell people that there are no co payments, which in fact they are. They are not allowed to go door-to-door so they are setting up appointments at the individuals homes and do not show up. Then a few days later they call again and say that they are in the neighborhood and ask to stop by. Once the representative is in the individual's homes the individuals are told that they do not receive any material until they sign up for the plan. The other issue is that through intimidation they get the senior to sign up for the plan which happens to be the only way the individual can get the representative to leave.

Commissioner Mentel also expressed to the Commission to be sure that The Healthy Aging Alliance Pilot is not a duplication of services before they make a funding a decision.

Diane Tackett added to Commissioner Mentel's concerns regarding Advantra Freedom that once the individual signs up for the plan they may not be able to see the same doctor each time they go to the

doctor's office. In addition, she reiterated that the company would not show any material unless the individual signs up for the plan.

Rhonda Ziethlow commented on her experience with Advantra Freedom and the senior's who live at Mabel Kehres. This is not a professional service; they have a yahoo address and the flyers have misspellings. They are not doing anything illegal however, it is unethical and they bully.

#### **Approval of the Regular Commission Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2007**

Motion made by Gerald Stone, supported by Paul Simonton to approve the regular commission minutes of February 21, 2007 as corrected. **Motion carried.**

#### **Approval of the Financial Statements:**

Ms. Hamad presented the Financial Report. Motion to accept and place on file by Paul Simonton, supported by Noel Dentner. **Motion carried.**

#### **Commission Members Report:**

Paul Simonton reported that the County is trying to get a grant to purchase the Sister Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SSIHM) property to make a large green space, and park with a bike and walking paths. The County Commissioners and the City Council have both endorsed the proposal and requested that the Commission write a letter supporting Monroe County's application to the DNR for the acquisition of the 160- acre parcel belonging to the (SSIHM), which needs to be submitted by March 20, 2007.

Noel Dentner motioned to request that Ms. Hamad draft a letter of support to the DNR for the Sister Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SSIHM) 160- acre parcel for the above-mentioned project. Supported by Gerald Stone. **Motion carried.**

#### **Correspondence:**

The Commission reviewed the list of correspondence.

#### **Directors Report:**

Ms. Hamad reported that the copier/fax is currently located in the office between Ms. Hamad and Ms. Terrasi. The office staff would like to rearrange the office space by moving the copier/fax into the file room so that the new clerk could occupy that office. Ms. Hamad presented the cabling proposal from Wiltec Technologies of \$410.00 to run the fax data jack in the other room. The proposal includes a data run cost as well, which is not needed and will reduce the cost approximately \$100.00 or more. Ms. Hamad requested the Commissions' approval to rearrange the office space as mentioned above at a cost of no more than \$300.00 out of the Maintenance/Equipment line item to cover the cost of the data jack.

Noel Dentner motioned that the Commission authorize the staff to proceed with the necessary rearrangements of the office for the data jack but not to exceed the proposed cost of \$410.00 with the funding out of the Maintenance/Equipment line item. Supported by John Sledge. Motion carried.

In addition, Ms. Hamad reported that at the County Board of Commissioner's meeting held March 13, 2007 approved the Commission on Aging By-Law Provision as well as the Emergency Fuel Poverty Guidelines.

Furthermore, Ms. Hamad reported that Mr. Aaron Simonton e-mailed her requesting the Commission on Aging to support efforts to urge Congress to increase Older Americans Act (OAA) funding by 10% in FY 2008 and recommend to the county Board that a resolution be passed supporting the increase. It has been a long time since there has been a significant increase in OAA funding and Ms. Hamad is requesting the Commissions' permission to write a letter of support for the increase in funding.

Ms. Hamad will forward a letter to Congress to support the OAA increase on behalf of the Commission.

## **Unfinished Business:**

### **A. Strategic Planning Committee Report of March 01, 2007:**

Paul Iacoangeli reported that the committee discussed the Legal Advisor's comments on the Commission on Aging Rules and Regulations and Operating Guidelines documents. After a significant amount of discussion on the comments and how the committee would like to apply the legal advice, Ms. Hamad commented that despite all the work on the guidelines there needs to be a foundation document built that describes how to do business with the Commission. The document would be in writing, citing the commission's expectations, and would provide a format for agencies to go by. Ms. Hamad will work on the "Doing Business with the Monroe County Commission on Aging" document and bring it back to the committee at the April meeting for review.

Ms. Hamad reported that the Service Definitions were distributed to the agencies with respect to the programs they run and the office has received great comments on them all week.

Gerald Stone reported that the Bedford Health Van has concerns regarding the wording on the Specialized Transportation Service Definition with respect to the minimum requirements for emergencies and drivers training. Ms. Hamad is going to ask SMART what their criteria is of a driver and to assist her on the wording for the Specialized Transportation Service Definition.

### **B. Non-Compliant Reporting Agencies:**

Ms. Terrasi reported that all of the Commission on Aging funded agencies are in compliance for the month of January 2007.

Chairman Martin Kaufman arrived at 1:45 p.m. and presided over the remainder of the meeting.

### **C. The Monroe Center Pilot Update:**

Bonnie Weber provided a summary documentation for January and February of 2007. Ms. Weber reported that it is estimated that approximately 20% of the service they provided occurred off site (The Monroe Center). Services were provided at the Monroe Center, in consumer homes, the hospital, Ivor Lindsay, Lotus Manor, and Frenchtown Senior Citizens Center. Two hundred and twenty-six duplicated Brief Service events and 16 Intensively Served unduplicated consumers received 189 service events occurring during January and February 2007. In other words, 12% were directly in person with the consumer, 23% indirectly - by phone, 36% collateral - with landlord, neighbor, relative, etc. and 39% were contacts with other professional agencies on the consumer's behalf. They are currently having difficulty getting unduplicated numbers served for both the Cancer Connection and the Supports Coordination, since both Programs may at times serve the same consumers. They are continuing to hone our forms, procedures and tracking in order to conform to various agencies' reporting needs.

Mr. Stone questioned if they have been in contact with the Toledo Hospitals. Ms. Weber commented that they have received referrals from the Toledo area Hospitals.

Mr. Dentner questioned if they were charging for these services. Ms. Weber commented not as of yet; however, they are looking at a fee-scale chart for the future.

Paul Iacoangeli commented with respect to the program income that when the Commission first was presented with the plan the plan included some program income to sustain the program and now it seems that is not the case. Ms. Ziethlow commented that it is in development. However, the program has been only running two months with good statistics. Ms. Ziethlow was under the understanding that they would be able to run with this pilot for six months and institute this policy because they cannot make something pay for itself in two months.

Mr. Iacoangeli commented that the program is doing some of the work for Mercy Memorial Hospital by patient discharge and doing many referrals to other agencies and questioned what is so unique about this program that is different than Faith In Action for Monroe County, Area Agency on Aging 1-B and Monroe

County Opportunity Program. Ms. Ziethlow commented that there may be duplications in services but this pilot is grown out of the people that came to them and the amount of request's they have for services. If they are connecting people to services as the other agencies are doing, the same does not mean that they are the same events. In addition, Ms. Ziethlow commented that the quality might be that the center is grand central as far as networking and navigating a variety of services.

Ms. Weber commented that most senior centers do not provide a supports coordination and that is not equivalent to advocacy.

Mr. Iacoangeli commented that he was expecting to be blown away with statistic and information to substantiate the program however he is still not at that point. Ms. Ziethlow commented that the center has always done the care management part of it (Intensively Served). Now they are referring people when in the past they did not have anyone to do that. Due to the quantity of calls they receive, they shifted money to this area because that is where they were seeing a need. Ms. Ziethlow commented that with two months worth of work she is happy with the statistic.

Ms. Hamad commented that it looks as though the Commission is taking the Hospital's responsibility to do discharge planning. The hospital receives funding by their insurance providers to fund case management and discharge planning for them and they are liable to provide discharge planning to their patients.

Mr. Simonton commented that discharge planning has been the hospital's responsibility all along. However, they are not providing it well. They are very disconnected about providing the service to the community because they are not connected to the community and they do not look at things in the same way as human service providers. This is why there are so many readmits.

Mr. Simonton commented that The Monroe Center has had only two months to put together something that has never been done before and it is unrealistic to expect them to have all the answers. The Older Americans Act mandates this type of program and that is the mission of a senior center. Mr. Simonton commented that there is some duplication and in his opinion, the other agencies are doing the duplication because senior centers were doing it in the past.

Mr. Iacoangeli commented that the Commission should have decided first what the goals and objectives were regarding care management long before the pilot program began.

Noel Dentner motioned to extend the Healthy Aging Alliance Pilot three months to be able to look at a full six months worth of data with the final report due at the Commission on Aging office no later than June 7, 2007 by 5:00 p.m. Supported by Gerald Stone. **Motion carried.**

**New Business:**

No new business to discuss at this time.

**Public Time:**

Chris Croley commented that the Healthy Aging Alliance pilot employees are committed to Monroe County and the seniors of Monroe County. The seniors will go to the place that they trust. In addition, the center is working hard to connect with all the providers and to assure that they are committed to provide the seniors with the services.

Bridget Kyser commented that as of January 2007 with the loss of funding from the Commission, many of the clients lowered or decreased their service to remain with Caring Alternatives. The agency cannot do a sliding fee-scale for services however; Caring Alternatives provides many of the services that have been mentioned in the pilot program. With the proper funding, any agency could provide the services that the Monroe Center is piloting. Caring Alternatives is still in business and providing services. They have decreased their rate to \$15.50 from \$18.00, which only covers the cost of getting the worker in the home. She is concerned that the Commission could be in jeopardy of losing all the other agencies that provide a valuable service in Monroe County if you have a big conglomerate that is going to provide all the services.

Caring Alternatives provides 24-hour care seven days per week and that there is no other non-profit agency in Monroe County that offers that type of service.

Chairman Martin Kaufman commented that is an important point to keep in mind. If over time by chance The Monroe Center is very successful at developing what they want to develop, it is quite possible that the other services in the county would either be diminished or lost, which could hurt the Commission's versatility in the county.

Diane Tackett reported that Medicare is increasing the Part B premiums 15% in fiscal year 2008 and Blue Cross is looking to increase their Part B premiums 51%.

Commissioner Mentel thanked the Commission for providing a letter of support to the DNR for the SSIHM property. Commissioner Mentel shares the same concerns as Ms. Kyser regarding losing any or all the other agencies that provide a valuable service in Monroe County because of duplication of service.

Ms. Ziethlow commented that she hopes that this does not hurt any agencies and that they are actually making more referrals then ever to all of the agencies meaning that their services are required more then ever. They are not providing the service unless there is a gap in service so they are hoping that this will increase the services for all the other agencies as they continue to refer to them. Their services are more into the Wellness area by keeping seniors well through health education, fitness, food services, companionship, socialization and recreation. These are the real programs that the Monroe Center provides. The other things they provide are information and referral. The Healthy Aging Alliance is trying to actually make more and more referrals to services as they are needed.

Chairman Kaufman commented that if all the duplication were eliminated in the county it could place the Commission on Aging in a vulnerable position if the main agency suffers a major problem.

Janet Crego also thanked the Commission for the support letter to the DNR since she went by the IHM the other day and thought what an eyesore when once it was so beautiful.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by Noel Dentner, supported by Paul Iacoangeli. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

The next regular board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 11, 2007 at 1:00 p.m. at the Dundee Senior Center, 284 Monroe Street, Dundee, MI 48131

*Vicky L. Terrasi*

Vicky L. Terrasi, Recording Secretary