

**Minutes of North Carolina Coalition on Aging Meeting
Friday, February 28, 2020 (1:00 p.m.)**

Room 204, Taylor Hall (693 Palmer Drive on Dix Campus)

Note: The date, time, and location for the meeting was changed due to snow on the original meeting date of February 21.

Persons in Attendance:

Tracy Colvard – Board Chair, Association for Home and Hospice Care of NC
Allison Costanzo – Executive Director
Charmaine Fuller-Cooper – Chair Elect of Board, AARP
Chad Walker – Treasurer, Transition LifeCare
Mary Bethel – Interim Secretary, Board Member
Alan Winstead – Meals on Wheels NC/Wake Meals on Wheels
Bill Lamb – Friends of Residents in Long Term Care
Breea Hughes – Campbell Senior Law Clinic Intern
Jo Paul – NC SHIIP
Joseph Wheeler – SAGE Central NC
Josh Smith – AARP NC Intern (NC State)
Kay Castillo – NASW-NC
Kezia Scales – PHI
Lauren Zingraff – Friends of Residents
Marisette Hasan – The Carolinas Center
Martha Lamb – Individual Member/Cameron Commons/Friends of Residents in LTC
Mary Edwards - Advocate
Meike Wiest – LifeLinks/Nurse Care of North Carolina
Michelle Ries – NC Institute of Medicine (Speaker)
Nancy Warren – NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse
Pam Palmer – NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse/Triangle J COG Area Agency on Aging
Paola Learoyd – Randolph Cloud and Associates
Preston Craddock – Greene County Dept. of Social Services
Quanisha Collins – NC Housing Finance Agency
Richard Chady – NC Continuing Care Residents Association/Carol Woods
Roger Manus – Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging/Campbell Senior Law Clinic
Sarah Smith – NC Division of Aging and Adult Services
Steve Hahn – AARP NC
Wayne Campbell – NC Continuing Care Residents Association

Joining by Phone

Harold Barnette - Board Member, Institute for Family Caregiving
Ray Riordan – Board Member
Ames Simmons – Equality NC
Deborah Ferris – Thrive4Life
Glenda Reed – Wake County Human Services
Janice Tyler – Orange County Dept. on Aging/NC Association on Aging
Lisa Riegel – AARP NC
Rochelle Sparko – Center for Responsible Lending
Susie Surlis - Advocate
Timothy McDonald – Friends of Residents in Long Term Care Intern (NC State)

Opening remarks were provided by Tracy Colvard, Board Chair, and **introductions** of those in the room and on the phone were provided. He thanked everyone for being flexible with the rescheduling of the meeting due to the snow the previous week.

Approval of Minutes from January 24, 2020 Meeting – Chad Walker noted that a clarification is needed in the minutes on page six pertaining to his comment about people getting help with completing the Census form. He stated that someone in the household can fill out the form and there is also a call in option for completing the form. He also added that individuals who do not complete the form will receive two additional post card reminders before someone comes to their home to assist them. A motion was made by Jo Paul to approve the minutes with the clarification. The motion was seconded by Pam Palmer. The minutes were approved by all.

Treasurer’s Report – Chad Walker, Treasurer, reported a balance in the bank of \$48,517.89 (copy of report was distributed), and he reviewed the income and expenses. He reported that \$5,474.23 has been collected in membership dues. He reminded everyone to pay dues if they have not yet done this, and he called attention to the fact the Coalition has a hardship provision for those unable to pay the full dues amount. He noted that at this time the Financial Sustainability Committee is not active, however, Allison Costanzo, the Coalition’s Executive Director, is doing a lot of internal work to shore up our financial resources. He asked people to let him know of any leads or connections to potentially explore for financial support.

Activities and Updates Since January Meeting – Allison announced the following:

- Several efforts are underway to refresh the Coalition’s brand. A new logo has been developed, with the Board’s input, for the Coalition which is cleaner and sharper. She shared a copy of this and noted that it retains most of the features of the previous logo, including the state image and the circle noting unity and collaboration, but it is easier to see the name of the Coalition. Mary Bethel, former Executive Director, offered a comment that she frequently had people tell her they could not read the name of the Coalition on the

original logo. Allison also reported that she is working with a website designer to give the website a more modern look with added pictures. She asked folks to share pictures of Coalition activities or functions with her that could possibly be used on the site.

- She attended the Care4Carolina meeting this month. The Coalition is continuing to work through Care4Carolina to push for expanded access to health care.
- She also attended the last meeting of the NC Institute of Medicine's Serious Illness Task Force which is completing its report and recommendations.
- She is getting some "bounce backs" when she sends out e-mails to people on the Coalition's distribution list. She will send out a Google form to everyone on the Coalition's e-mail list asking for verification of their contact information. She asking that everyone check their e-mail settings and make sure they can accept e-mails from her.

Mary Bethel also provided several updates:

- The group that has been meeting to look at how to address the challenge of home owners, including older adults, not being able to pay their property taxes continues to meet. Current efforts focus on looking at what type of relief is being provided by other states and collecting stories of people in the state who are struggling to pay their property taxes. There will be information in the *Update* that will be sent out in the next several days about this story collection. Coalition members are asked to assist with sharing information about the need for stories and to have their constituents share stories if they struggle to pay their taxes.
- The fact sheet on the Coalition's priorities for the 2020 short legislative session is being updated. Because this is the second year of the biennium and considering the status of legislative efforts, it is probably best to keep the same legislative priorities in 2020 that the Coalition had in 2019. The current data/statistics on adult protective services and the Home and Community Care Block Grant will be added. Harold Barnette called attention to the priority to better address the needs of caregivers. Lisa Riegel stressed the importance of building on what has been done to share information about the needs of caregivers. Steve Hahn noted that AARP has collected caregiver stories for several years through their "I Heart Caregivers" campaign. Chad Walker echoed the importance of focusing on stories in our advocacy. Nancy Warren shared that the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services collects adult protective service stories through their annual survey of county departments of social services. Chad suggested that consideration be given to establishing a section on the Coalition's website for story collection. Marisette Hasan added that collecting video clips of stories would be helpful too.

Update from the NC Department of Health and Human Services and the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) – Sarah Smith with the Division of Aging and Adult Services shared information about a Help for Vulnerable Adults (HelpVul) grant that the Division has

received from the Administration of Community Living/Department of Justice. North Carolina is a pilot state for the grant along with Missouri and San Francisco. They are partnering with the NC Secretary of State's office, county departments of social services and other agencies in the state on this and there is involvement with national partners. The pilot will involve the use of a web based platform by financial institutions to report financial exploitation that also allows for financial records to be shared. Training on financial exploitation will also be provided to staff at county departments of social services. Preston Craddock with Greene County Department of Social Services noted that the web based reporting platform will allow for standardization and more sharing of information and should help eliminate having to get a subpoena to obtain financial records. In regard to adult protective services, Steve Hahn noted that June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and AARP is working with Secretary of State Elaine Marshall on some efforts relative to this.

Update on Federal and State Developments – Chair Tracy Colvard began my providing several updates related to state legislative efforts.

- The Medicaid expansion bill (HB 655 – NC Health Care for Working Families) proposed by several House leaders will not move in the General Assembly this year. Rep. Donnie Lambert (R- Forsyth), a chief sponsor and lead for the bill, has indicated he will not take it forward.
- The Voter I.D. legislation has been struck down again by the courts. Therefore, an I.D. will not be needed to vote in the March primary.
- There is speculation that not much will happen in the “short” legislative session scheduled to start on April 28. Short sessions are held in even-numbered years and traditionally have focused on adjusting the second year of a two-year budget. Since no budget bill was enacted for the first year of the biennium (FY20), it is uncertain whether the General Assembly will craft a budget bill for FY21 or continue spending under the FY19 levels and mini-budget bills that have been passed. There may be more clarity after the primary election. There has been significant media coverage lately about the challenges faced by programs (ex. public education and universities) due to no budget being passed.

Tracy asked for input from those in attendance as to whether the Coalition should do a Day at the Legislature this year. Bill Lamb stated that Friends of Residents would like to partner with the Coalition in anything the Coalition might do. Kay Castillo offered that a virtual advocacy day might be an option considering the uncertainty of things. Steve Hahn asked about the feasibility of inviting legislators to tour local aging programs. Chad Walker suggested that it might be good to tie our efforts into the observation of Older Americans Month in May. Roger Manus added that having a tour of facilities and programs for older adults in the Triangle might be convenient for legislators. Tracy thanked everyone for the input and said this will be considered by the Board in making a decision about what to do.

Steve Hahn shared that Duke Energy is asking for over a 14% rate hike and the NC Utilities Commission will meet on Monday at 7:00 p.m. in the Dobbs Building in Raleigh to hear from the public on this. The Public Staff for the Commission is recommending a 7% increase.

It was announced that complete copies (with all the appendices) of the State Aging Services Plan are available from the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

Chad Walker reminded everyone of the importance of the upcoming Census and that there is a Complete Count Committee in each county. AARP has a good article on scams associated with the Census and what to look for. Kay Castillo stated that the NC Department of Health and Human Services has reported that the state receives \$1800 for each person counted. Chad added that Kenneth Wilkins with the Census who spoke with the Coalition the end of last year said our state missed a fourteenth seat in the U.S. House of Representatives by 2000 people.

Allison reported that the public charge rule (Coalition has been following this) went into effect this week.

A question was raised as to whether the Healthy Opportunity pilots that will test the impact of providing selected evidence-based interventions to Medicaid recipients are still moving forward. Several Coalition members in the know stated that they are still on track. Another question was asked about what impact any potential block grant of the Medicaid funding might have on seniors. The response was that what is potentially being discussed would not impact older adults. Mary Lamb also inquired about Medicaid paying retroactively for a recipient's hospital bill. The response was that nothing has changed relative to Medicaid payment.

Additional updates shared included:

- The Social Security Administration has released a PSA on fraud and scams.
- The U.S. Preventative Services Task Force has declined to endorse cognitive screening for older adults citing insufficient scientific evidence of the practice's benefits and harms. The Task Force calls for more studies.
- The Trump administration has released its proposed budget for next year. There are cuts to some programs and some programs such as the Social Services Block Grant (per Nancy Warren) are slated for elimination. Kay Castillo noted that groups like hers (NASW-NC) are working on efforts to increase rates as well as to address cuts to some services.
- Jo Paul shared that SHIP is aware of attempts by fraudsters to get people they call to answer "yes" or "no" to questions which can then be distorted for fraudulent reasons.
- Steve Hahn announced that next Friday the Secretary of the NC Department of Revenue, Ronald Penny, and Secretary of State Elaine Marshall will provide a program for AARP

on how seniors can protect themselves.

Speakers – Michelle Reis, Project Director, with the NC Institute of Medicine provided an update to the Coalition on the current and recent work of the Institute. She began by noting that the Institute of Medicine is a quasi-state agency chartered in 1983 by the NC General Assembly to:

- Be concerned with the health of the people of North Carolina.
- Monitor and study health matters.
- Respond authoritatively when found advisable.
- Respond to requests from the General Assembly as well as outside sources for analysis and advice when this will aid in forming a basis for health policy decisions.

The Institute undertakes a number of studies and initiatives each year. Following context/background presentation and discussion, task forces convened by the Institute are asked to develop draft recommendations for action. The Institute also publishes the *NC Medical Journal* which has a circulation of over 170,000.

Some of the recent works of the Institute have focused on:

- Accountable Care Communities (2019)
- Metrics to Drive Improvements in Health: A Report of the Task Force on Health Care Analytics (2017)
- Claims to Improve Health in North Carolina: A Report from the NCIOM Task Force on All-Payer Claims Database (2017)
- Transforming North Carolina's Mental Health and Substance Use Systems: A Report from the NCIOM Task Force on Mental Health and Substance Use (2016)
- Dementia-Capable North Carolina: A Strategic Plan for Addressing Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementia (2016)
- Patient and Family Engagement: A Partnership for Culture Change (2015)
- Task Force on Essentials for Childhood: Safe, Stable, and Nurturing Relationships and Environments to Prevent Child Maltreatment (2015)

The majority of her presentation was directed to discussing the most recent work of the Institute which included the following:

- Task Force for Serious Illness. Several Coalition members have been members of this Task Force that held its last meeting in January. The report from the Task Force will be completed this spring. The *NC Medical Journal* in July/August will focus on serious illness. The Coalition has agreed to take the lead on a recommendation from the Task Force to convene stakeholders to develop resources (programmatic, policy, etc.) which will support employed caregivers.
- North Carolina Healthy People 2030 which is an update of the 2020 goals and will be the health improvement plan for the state.

- Task Force on Health Services for Individuals Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The report for this should be out in a month. A Coalition has been created to implement the recommendations.
- Legislative Health Policy Fellows Program which encompasses a three day class for legislators on health care and health policy issues as well as the development of tools and issue briefs geared to legislators to enhance their knowledge of health issues. Thirty legislators have completed the program.
- Task Force on Essentials for Childhood (ongoing and current efforts to address Task Force recommendations). Michelle noted that funding support is being provided to partner organizations for ongoing work in the promotion and implementation of family friendly workplace policies. The NC Early Childhood Foundation/Family Forward NC is working on employer-based initiatives to support companies in implementing such policies and may be of assistance to the Coalition in our effort to address the recommendation from the Task Force on Serious Illness for which we have agreed to take the lead.

Upcoming focus areas for the Institute will include the State Health Improvement Plan, Healthy Aging, and Maternal Health.

(A copy of the PowerPoint used by Michelle in her presentation was e-mailed to everyone on the Coalition's distribution list on March 3, 2020).

Sharing by Coalition Members

- Kay Castillo announced that March is Social Work Month. NASW-NC will hold an annual Ethics Conference during the month. They will present an award in honor of Blair Barton-Percival, the Director of the Area Agency on Aging at the Piedmont Triad Regional Council and a social worker, who lost his life to cancer last year.
- Breea Hughes shared that the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, the Division of Aging and Adult Services, and Social Service programs will be partnering on an Adult Protective Services summit that will be held in June.
- Kezia Scales reported that PHI wants to collect stories from direct care workers in North Carolina as part of a national campaign.
- Marisette Hasan noted that April is National Health Care Decisions Month.
- Mary Bethel shared in the absence of Roger Manus who had to leave early that Roger, as chair of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, met recently with Charles Perusse, State Budget Director, to discuss the need for funding for services to support older adults and their families. She also reminded everyone since Joseph Wheeler had to leave the meeting early that the Pride Life Expo will be in Raleigh at McKimmon Center on April 4. It will include a senior showcase.
- Bill Lamb announced that Friends of Residents will hold a concert on April 26 to celebrate their new Executive Director (Lauren Zingraff). They are collecting stories of residents

and their need for an increase in the personal needs allowance.

Other Business – Additional Coalition Meeting Dates for 2020 are as follows:

Marcy 27	May 29	September 25 (annual meeting)
April 24	June 26	October 23
	August 28	December 4

Meeting Location, Time, and Call-In Number: All meetings except for the September annual meeting will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in room 104 of the Brown Building on the Dix Campus (801 Biggs Drive) in Raleigh. The call in number for those who are not available to attend in person is (1) 425-436-6365; passcode: 335101. The location of the September meeting is the NC State University Club.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Bethel, Interim Secretary