

## **Minutes of North Carolina Coalition on Aging Meeting**

**Friday, August 28, 2020 (10:00 a.m.)**

**(Zoom Conference Call due to cancellation of in-person meetings because of COVID-19)**

### **Records Indicated at Least 72 People Were On the Call Including:**

Tracy Colvard – Board Chair, Association for Home and Hospice Care of NC  
Chad Walker – Treasurer, Transitions LifeCare  
Mary Bethel – Secretary, Board Member  
Harold Barnette – Board Member, Institute for Family Caregiving  
Martha Fowler – Board Member, State Employees Association of North Carolina  
Janice Tyler – Board Member, Orange County Dept. on Aging/NC Association on Aging  
Heather Burkhardt – Coalition on Aging Executive Director  
Alan Winstead – Meals on Wheels Wake County/Meals on Wheels NC  
Althea Taylor Jones – Individual Member/Senior Tar Heel Legislature  
Ames Simmons – Equality NC  
Ana Pardo – NC Justice Center  
Autumn Cox – Triangle J Area Agency on Aging  
Betsy White – Access Dental Care  
Bill Lamb – Friends of Residents  
Carol Kelly – NC Guardianship Association  
Chris Brandenburg – AARP NC  
Daryl Davis Fulmer – NC Retired Governmental Employees Association  
David Rhew – NC Public Transportation Association  
Dick Chady – NC Third Age/Individual Member  
Elaine Whitford – Center for Volunteer Caregiving  
Ellen Schneider – UNC Center for Aging and Health  
Glenda Reed – Wake County Human Services  
Haley Williford – Community and Senior Services of Johnston County  
Janeen Gordon – Durham Co. Dept. of Social Services  
Jeff Horton – NC Senior Living Association  
Jenni Edwards  
Jennifer Link – Triangle J Area Agency on Aging  
Jillian Hardin – Brunswick Senior Resources  
Joyce Massey-Smith – NC Division of Aging and Adult Services  
Karen Appert – Southern Gerontological Society  
Kari Barsness – Individual Member/Barsness Policy Solutions  
Kenneth Johnson  
Kezia Scales - PHI  
Laura Schlabach – Individual Member  
Lauren Zingraff – Friends of Residents  
Leslie Jones – NC Division of Aging and Adult Services

Leslie Roseboro – LeadingAge NC  
Liisa Ogburn – Aging Advisors NC  
Lisa Riegel – AARP NC  
Lisa Tyndall – Individual Member  
Lynette Tolson – NC PACE Association  
Margaret Toman – Friends of Residents  
Mark Hensley – AARP NC  
Marty Lamb – Friends of Residents/Individual Member  
Mary Warren – Triangle J Area Agency on Aging  
Morgan Whitman Gramann – NC Alliance for Health  
Nancy Ruffner – Navigate NC  
Nancy Warren – NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse  
Natasha Vos – NC Center for Health and Wellness, UNC Asheville  
Neal Davis – Community and Senior Services of Johnston County  
Nicolle Miller – NC Center for Health and Wellness, UNC Asheville  
Nimish Bhatt – Universal Institute of Successful Aging of Carolinas/Carolinas Asian-American Chamber of Commerce/Carolina International School  
Pam Palmer – NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse/Triangle J COG Area Agency on Aging  
Paola Learoyd – Randolph Cloud and Associates/We Work for Health  
Pat Martin - Community and Senior Services of Johnston County  
Preston Craddock – Greene County Department of Social Services  
Richard Rogers – NC Retired Governmental Employees Association  
Rick Messemer – Individual Member  
Sean Lanham  
Ted Fitzgerald – NC State Board of Elections/Meeting Speaker  
Tommy Goldsmith – NC Health News  
Tony Davis – NC Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Valerie Arendt – NASW – NC  
Willetha Barnette – Institute for Family Caregiving  
Two Interpreters

**Opening Remarks and Introductions** – Tracy Colvard, Board Chair

- The meeting started at 10:04 a.m.
- He introduced Heather Burkhardt as the new Executive Director for the Coalition and provided information on her 25 years of experience in aging in North Carolina. He noted that she wants to hear from members.
- He shared that over 120 applications were received for the Executive Director position.

**Minutes from June 26, 2020, Coaliton Meeting**

- Minutes were sent to members prior to the meeting.
- No changes to the minutes were suggested.

**Treasurer's Report** - Chad Walker, Treasurer

- There is a balance of \$44,887 in the bank.
- Those who have not paid their dues for the year were reminded to do so. Mary Bethel will be in contact with agencies/organizations that have not paid per our records.

**Activities and Updates Since June Meeting** – Heather Burkhardt, Executive Director, and Mary Bethel, Board Secretary

- The Coalition has signed an MOU with PHI to be part of a multi-year three state advocacy initiative to strengthen the direct care workforce in the state. The kickoff for the initiative was held on August 19.
- The Coalition has had a small ad in NC Health News to increase awareness about the Coalition as well as to support NC Health News in its reporting.
- Charmaine Fuller Cooper, the Chair Elect of the Coalition's Board, is co-chair of the Olmstead Committee for the state and plans are in the works for the Coalition to sponsor an Olmsted listening session in October.
- The report from the NC Institute of Medicine's Task Force on Serious Illness Care has been released and a new Serious Illness Coalition has been formed to help address the recommendations in the report.
- Aging advocacy groups have been weighing in with the NC Dept. of Health and Human Services about COVID issues pertaining to long term care including testing and visitation by family members as well as disaster preparedness by facilities. The Department has started weekly calls with advocates to receive input from them and to provide updates on developments related to these issues.
- A lot of attention is being paid to the shortage of direct care staff in all care settings in the state. The Coalition is a part of several efforts to look at this challenge.
- The Coalition has communicated with some of our elected officials in D.C. about our concerns relative to ensuring there is not a disruption in the operations of the U.S. Postal Service as many older adults receive their prescription medications through the mail and also depend on the Postal Service to help them stay connected to family and friends.
- The Coalition is starting two new committees – supporting family caregiving and addressing health disparities. More information will be forthcoming on these.

**Update from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS)** – Joyce Massey-Smith, Director, NC Division of Aging and Adult Services

- DAAS has received a grant from the Aging and Disability Resource Center to increase virtual access to caregiver support.
- The Division has a major focus on addressing social isolation. They are looking at things such as animatronics and virtual programming through senior centers. They are working with the NC State Vet School on a pet food initiative and are working with Virginia Tech

and Georgia Tech to look at social isolation and suicide intervention. They are also reaching out to other Divisions within the Department of Health and Human Services to share how caregivers are impacted by social isolation.

- The Divisions of Aging/Social Services have received over \$8 million to support county departments of social services to support effective adult protective service interventions.
- The General Assembly approved \$25 million for adult care homes that receive State-County Special Assistance. This is a one-time payment to these facilities to offset the increased cost of serving residents during the COVID-19 emergency (provision in HB 1043)
- The Division is partnering with the FBI on cybercrime efforts.
- The Division is part of the DHHS team looking at guidance relative to visitation in long term care facilities. They are particularly concerned about persons in facilities who do not have caregivers.
- DHHS has a Diversity and Inclusion Council. It has developed conversation around health disparities and social justice. A gender identity workgroup has been formed.
- The Division has gotten preliminary approval to replace its ARMS (reimbursement) system. They are looking to move to a reimbursement system plus a client tracking and outcome system.

#### **Update on State and Federal Legislation**

- Tracy Colvard shared that the Governor has released his budget proposal.
- The General Assembly comes back in session on September 2. The focus of the session will be on how to spend the rest of the COVID funding.
- Governor Cooper is still pushing for Medicaid expansion.
- Mary Bethel reported that the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 8015 (Delivering for America Act) on August 22. This bill prohibits the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) from making changes to operations or levels of service from those that were in effect on January 1, 2020, establishes requirements for the processing of election mail, and provides additional funding for the Postal Service Fund.
- Heather noted that Congress is at an impasse on approving any additional stimulus funding.

#### **“Voting in the November Elections: What You Need to Know” – Ted Fitzgerald, Training and Outreach Manager, NC State Board of Elections**

- Ted was introduced as the keynote speaker by Heather.
- A PowerPoint on his presentation was shared with Coalition members.
- Key issues Ted covered in the presentation included:
  - Voter registration
  - Voting options (absentee, early voting, and election day)
  - COVID-19 safety precautions for voting
  - Voter assistance
  - Multipartisan Assistance Teams (MAT)

**Report from Nominating Committee and Nominations for Board of Directors – Mary Bethel, Chair of the Nominating Committee**

- Mary reported that the terms of four members of the Board of Directors (Tracy Colvard, Charmaine Fuller Cooper, Chad Walker, and Janice Tyler) expire with the September annual meeting. All four are eligible for another two year term on the Board and have indicated they are willing to serve again if nominated and elected.
- Members of the Coalition were previously informed that nominations would be taken at this meeting for the four seats on the Board.
- Martha Fowler made a motion to nominate the current four Board members for an additional two year term. Ana Pardo seconded the nomination of Tracy Colvard and Alan Winstead seconded the nomination of Charmaine Fuller Cooper, Chad Walker, and Janice Tyler. Mary Warren made a motion that the nominations be closed. The motion was seconded by Neal Davis and the motion was approved by all Coalition members voting.
- A formal vote on the Board members will be taken at the annual meeting on September 25.

**Update on the Annual Meeting – Heather Burkhardt**

- Plans for the meeting that will be held virtually on September 25 are going well.
- Registration for the meeting is still open.
- Dr. Don Taylor from Duke will be the speaker
- Nominations for the Pioneer Award are still open
- Numerous Coalition members have signed on as sponsors for the meeting. There is still time to become a sponsor.

**Sharing by Coalition Members**

- Chad Walker (Transitions LifeCare) – The Caregiver Summit will be offered virtually this year on October 22. Go to [caregiversummit.org](http://caregiversummit.org) for information. Transitions Lifecare is offering a three part Zoom series on supportive conversations for loved-ones who can not see their relatives in long term care facilities. He recognized Janice Tyler on her birthday.
- Lynette Tolson (NC PACE Association) – She is the new Executive Director of the Association.
- Ames Simmons (Equality NC) – This week is the national week of action for transgender people on housing rules proposed by HUD. For information go to <http://housingsaveslives.org/>
- Chad Walker (Transitions LifeCare) – September 30 is the deadline for self-response for the census. North Carolina's response rate is low compared to the national rate.
- Nicolle Miller (NC Center for Health and Wellness, UNC Asheville) – She announced that they have received a three year grant from the Administration for Community Living. They will be working with Area Agencies on Aging to create a single contracting entity to get reimbursement for evidence based programs. Their first focus will be on falls prevention.

- Neal Davis (Community and Senior Services of Johnston County) – There is a lot of work going on to restore funding for the ROAP (public transportation) program. Rep. Donna White is advocating for this.
- Ana Pardo (NC Justice Center) – The Defenders of Justice Award program is on October 4. The Center has been working on unemployment insurance issues, and they have met with staff from Sens. Tillis’ and Burr’s offices to advocate for the expansion of emergency family leave and sick leave.
- Nancy Warren (NC Partnership to Address Adult Abuse) – The next virtual meeting of the Partnership is September 16 at 9:30 a.m. There is federal legislation pending to reauthorize the Elder Justice Act.

**Other Business** -

- None

**Adjourn** - There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Bethel, Secretary

Additional Coalition Meeting Dates for 2020 are as follows and will remain virtual until further notice: **September 25 (annual meeting), October 23, and December 4**