



**ADVISORY COUNCIL, March 25, 2013, 11:00 AM SPECIAL MEETING**

**Merrill Gardens North Bay, 2261 Tuolumne St., Vallejo, CA 94589**

**Minutes**

- I. The meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm by Chair Sharon Monck with the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - A. Members Present: Sharon Monck, Suzanne Blakeley, Constance Boulware, Betty Holland, Rodrigo Galindo Lauren Rolfe, Heather Stanton, Nieves Fernandez, Richard Lundin, Teri Ruggiero, Steven Rosensky,
  - B. Staff Present: Leanne Martinsen – AAA Executive Director, Harriett Dietz -- Planner, Anne Payne –Direct Services Supervisor.
  - C. Members Absent/Excused: Georgia Craddock, Lois Harper, Richard Sager, Rosemarie Wilson. Anita Ziebe.
  - D. Introduction of Guest: Marcia Hull.
- II. Consent Agenda
  - A. **Motion by Lauren Rolfe, seconded by Constance Boulware, to approve the agenda for the March 25, 2013 meeting, as presented, motion carried.**
- III. Community Input – Public Comment: Suzanne Blakeley distributed copies of recent newspaper articles regarding resources for older adults who can no longer drive and the impact of “chained CPI” and sequestration on Veterans. Rudy Galindo reported that he is participating in the Vallejo CERT class and another will be offered in October. Sharon Monck distributed flyers about the “Mini Medical School” series being offered in Solano County, and the “Taste of Merrill Gardens” event. Steve Rozensky reported that he learned a lot from recent experience advocating for the needs of his mother in Pennsylvania, and the Napa Red Cross is adding a training class for Home Health Aides. Lauren Rolfe reported that she had testified at an informational hearing in Sacramento regarding bills sponsored by Yamada and Lowenthal that propose fingerprinting or background checks for in-home caregivers. Constance Boulware reported that the renovations at the Rio Vista Senior Center are nearing completion and a grand re-opening is scheduled for April 15. Marcia Hull, who was the President of the Board of Directors at the Volunteer Center, made comments regarding the programs that provided telephone calls and home visits as well as minor home repairs for seniors. She stated that the program was near and dear to her heart, and she was able to see that it provided companionship and a

safety net for fragile seniors. The program was built around a volunteer coordinator who matched volunteers with seniors, who participated in activities together, warding off depression and isolation. This was not a routine medical check as is being provided by the "Wellness on Wheels" nurses through Community Action of Napa Valley (CANV). She stated that this is a necessary program and advocated for continued funding. Teri Ruggiero announced that the Solano IHSS Spring Conference will be held in Fairfield on April 24 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Presentations will include pressure sores (prevention and care), Prevention and Early Access for Seniors, HICAP and the Affordable Care Act, and Caregiver Burnout. Flyers will be distributed soon. Betty Holland reported that she had also been concerned about the needs of her parents living in Pennsylvania, and was frustrated by their reluctance to accept assistance. Several other members agreed that this was a topic that would be good for a future meeting.

- IV. Sharon Monck distributed a handout that included excerpts from California's Welfare & Institutions Code (Section 9400(c) and Section 9402) regarding the Advisory Council, and reviewed the role of the Advisory Council in providing advice and consultation on issues affecting the provision of services provided locally to older individuals. Leanne Martinsen indicated that she planned to provide a more in-depth presentation at the next regular meeting of the Advisory Council. Leanne Martinsen lead off the discussion by stating that we all care about older folks, and we look to the Advisory Council to help us set priorities for service, understanding that our resources are limited. One of the frustrations about this Request for Proposals (RFP) is that the available funding is an estimate, as we have not yet received the planning estimate/budget from CDA, which provides the categorical funding for next fiscal year, and we anticipate that there will be significant funding reductions, as these programs are federally funded and subject to sequestration. We are also bound by regulations that prohibit us from transferring funds between program categories (funding titles), and we are also obligated to fund services that are identified as priority, including Legal Assistance, Access, and In-Home services. In response to a question from Suzanne Blakeley, Sharon Monck stated that the Advisory Council's role is to advise the staff on the RFP process, and staff will make the presentation to the Board, who will make the decisions. Sharon also noted that the Board had just accepted the report of the independent auditors, which was an unqualified (i.e. favorable) report, indicating that the financial policies and practices are in order. Lauren Rolfe expressed her concern that the Advisory Council had been presented with a staff recommendation at their last meeting and it seemed as if the Council had not been given the opportunity to be advisory. In response to questions posed by Teri Ruggiero, Leanne Martinsen stated that if there are no responses, or if the application is not responsive or inadequate, the agency has options of putting it back out to RFP again, with additional efforts to recruit qualified providers, choosing to provide it as a direct service, or in some cases, perhaps choosing not to provide the service. Suzanne Blakeley stated that the Council wants what is best for older adults and want to support staff, unless they see that something is not working. Sharon Monck reiterated the importance of maintaining the advisory role, rather than allowing the situation to become adversarial (as has happened in the past), and apologized if any members had been offended. Leanne Martinsen stated that staff recommendations are not "cast in stone", but come to the Council in the same

manner as a motion, as an opening for discussion and feedback. Harriett Dietz commented that it was good to know that everyone was working together, because there has been a perception that some Advisory Council members may have felt that they could direct staff, so staff had requested that the Chair provide clarification of the roles. Constance Boulware indicated that this started with the Council's concern about providers who were not meeting performance goals, and that the Council had asked staff for information, and this had not been resolved before the RFP proposed changes were presented to the Council. Heather Stanton stated her concern that the proposed changes to the RFP would eliminate funding for two services (phone calls and home visits), that the agency has supported for more than 10 years. She noted that the subsequent memo referenced the "Wellness on Wheels" program, and the calls and visits for this program have been reported with the other friendly visitor's contacts, and she could not support a recommendation to the Board that this agency no longer supports friendly visits and telephone calls. Suzanne Blakeley questioned the community input that staff utilized, that she would prefer to see an actual study. In response, Harriett Dietz stated that the development of the Area Plan for 2012-2016 involved reviewing various surveys done by other organizations and numerous community input forums. Since the Area Plan was submitted nearly a year ago, staff has collected information on an ongoing basis from Advisory Council meetings and numerous other community organizations (HAPI, Solano Senior Coalition, Napa Commission on Aging, etc.). There are many priorities, and we understand that CANV does not intend to continue providing volunteer transportation after the end of this fiscal year. There was a discussion regarding the amount currently contracted for assisted transportation, telephone calls and home visits in Napa County (about \$20,000), and the consensus that dividing that amount to offer a contract for \$10,000 would not be reasonable, given the requirements for contracted providers. Through our continued community-based planning efforts we hope to find ways to support local efforts to meet the needs of isolated seniors. She explained that the CDA data dictionary defined transportation and assisted transportation, as well as mobility management, which was proposed as a one-year contract to provide technical assistance (including volunteer management and fund development) and mentoring to a new provider that may not have prior extensive experience in providing transportation services under the AAoA. She also said that we expect that any transportation contractor would provide those services integrated with other services. Lauren Rolfe stated that it would be helpful to know more about how the AAA or other providers might reorganize or reallocate resources to meet the needs. Constance Boulware stated that rather than get involved with specific provider issues, the RFP should reflect what services we want to provide, and encourage providers to apply. Harriett Dietz also discussed the recommendation that the Title IIIB funds be redirected to Legal Assistance in Solano County, as the AAoA would not be continuing the Assisted Transportation program as a direct service in Vallejo. Lauren Rolfe asked whether we could ask a provider that was funded for a specific service to track other services that they provide. Heather Stanton stated that she didn't feel that we had sufficient information to recommend the elimination of funding for friendly volunteer services, and transferring those funds to transportation services. Constance Boulware stated that she was in support of the proposed change in Solano County funding allocation, and that she would like to see us do something

well, and move forward. Steve Rozensky reported that CANV had provided transportation for Veterans served by the Red Cross. Harriett discussed options for the Council's recommendations, whether they choose to support the staff recommendation, or make a different recommendation to the Board. Harriett also indicated that she intended to follow with some of the potential applicants before the April Advisory Council meeting. Teri Ruggiero suggested that the Council postpone the vote on recommendations until the April 4 meeting. Steve Rozensky asked about the current contractor, and Teri Ruggiero stated that this was an issue for the program monitoring committee, separate from the RFP. Lauren Rolfe stated it would be helpful to know how friendly visitor services will continue to be provided if AAoA funding is not supporting them. Suzanne Blakeley also commented that student interns could be helpful, and augment staff in monitoring and planning.

V. Action Items:

A. **Motion by Lauren Rolfe, seconded by Dr. Lundin that the Council postpone the decision regarding recommendations to the Board of Directors on the RFP, until the April 4 meeting.**

B. Other recommendations to the Board of Directors, none at this time.

VI. The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 PM, with thanks to Sharon and Merrill Gardens North Bay for the hospitality.