

**Advisory Council on Aging Planning Committee
May 4, 2021, Minutes of the Meeting**

Call to Order: Kevin Donovan called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Present: Kevin Donovan, Debbie Card, Jim Donnelly, Jill Kleiner, Dennis Yee

Absent: Susan Frederick, Arthur Kee

Guest: Nhang Luong, Ruth Atkin

Staff Present: Glenda Pacha, Anthony Macias

Approval of Today's Agenda: Approval of agenda motioned by Jim; Debbie second; approved by all.

Approval of April Minutes: Dennis moved to approve, Jim moved second, approved as written.

AAA Report – AAA Staff

- Anthony reported out that staff is excited to have new AAA Program Manager arrive on June 1, 2021
- AAA staff have begun the contract process for FY 2021-22.

Contractor's Presentation: Senior Information and Assistance, Nhang Luong, Program Manager

- I&A provides information, referrals to resources, and support in problem solving to help older adults remain independent. Integrated call center- applications for IHSS and APS reports are provided to allow for more comprehensive services. Staffed by six full-time social workers and four part-time retiree social workers.
- Majority of calls are for Home care (40% IHSS) referrals; then Housing (biggest unmet need); Food insecurity; legal; insurance calls that are then referred to HICAP.
- Funding: \$427,470 (Title IIIB) and \$80,803 (CARES Act). Funding is not usually this high; usual three way split amongst AAA, IHSS, and APS programs.
- Serve older adults 60+ and individuals with disabilities as defined by Older Americans Act and California Code of Regulations. Frail adults defined as needing assistance with two or more ADL's.
- 70-80% of calls answered on time (no wait); APS is nearly 100%; IHSS is 80%; very good job at customer services. The other percentages returned calls in which calls are held in queue. 100% calls answered by end of day. APS also has a 24-hour line with 211.
- I&A has partnership with Contra Costa Crisis Center/211 to share resource information and database. We also have a partnership to assess and sign-up eligible individuals for Great Plates Delivered.
- Social Workers work with case managers and other professionals to coordinate services/resources for clients we have in common.

- Social Workers who speak Tagalog and Spanish, maintain resource materials in various languages, additionally they utilize Language Line interpreters communicate with limited English speakers.
- Affordable housing continues to be an unmet need.
- There are plans to transition I&A to Aging & Disability Resource Connections (ADRC).

Contractor's Presentation: Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program (HICAP),
Ruth Atkin, Program Manager

- HICAP provides free and impartial education, counseling and advocacy for Medicare beneficiaries. To counsel on long-term care (LTC) insurance policies; part of State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIP); Administration of Community living (ACL).
- Volunteers train to become Medi-Care counselor first; then additional education to become LTC insurance counselors;
- Funded through the federal SHIP grant and designated State funds. In FY 2020-21 the county general fund contributes \$98 K to support HICAP.
- HICAP representative attends the East and West county Senior Coalitions.
- Senior centers, the library system and various adult education departments are HICAP's primary partners. HICAP also works closely with senior housing service coordinators.
- Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) outreach worker for people have been identified low income through census track; additional funding for this from Fed Govt.
- Targeted outreach made to outlying areas through literature distribution to various places, including mobile home parks, laundromats, gas station convenience stores, soup kitchens, food pantries, various ministries. EHSD contracts with Language Line for interpretation and translation services.
- Medigap is Medicare Supplement Insurance that helps fill "gaps" in Medicare and sold by private companies. Original Medicare pays for much, but not all, of the cost for covered health care services and supplies. Part B is outpatient medical services
- Talked about various issues that come up and which are difficult to solve but have been by HICAP. Annual potential savings of \$1.9 million with the 2019/2020 reaching potential savings of \$3.8 million. During COVID savings were lower.
- Funding has not kept pace with the numbers of people becoming eligible for Medicare, as 10,000 people per day age into Medicare.
- Potential 60-90Billion dollars in M/Care fraud; Durable Medical Equipment is a major way to de-fraud Medi-Care
- Senior Medi-Care Patrol (SMP) works closely with HICAP and law enforcement (office of inspector general)
- A manager and one other full-time employee and two part time consultants staff HICAP.
- The corps of 39 volunteers who undergo rigorous training to become registered Medicare counselors enjoy a high degree of camaraderie and engagement. It is not uncommon for volunteers to stay with the program for 10-20 years.
- The pandemic has interfered with the ability for counselors to interact with each other and support each other.

- Volunteering for HICAP is an intellectually stimulating commitment because regulations change, plan options change, and the health care environment changes.

Discussion

- Discussion and acknowledged great presenters and discussions with Nhang and Ruth. Mini guide offered by I&A given out by Jim at senior centers. If we are concerned by blind spot in services there is an opportunity in Nhang's team identify areas we need to be aware of. Census numbers about people over 50, 60 and 65 over; different ages for type of services..

Community Connect and ACOA – Debbie Card

- Program is going strong; 4 CMCT with IHSS that qualify for both program; IHSS in process of filling all SW vacancies. More funding to expand the CMCT program to include more IHSS clients would be great in the future.
- Presentation to ACOA toward latter part of the year. Debbie is the contact who will be working with getting presenters for both ACOA meeting and Planning Committee meeting.

Items for Executive Committee:

- None.

Next Meeting:

- Next Meeting: Thursday, June 1, 2021 9:30-11:30, location: Zoom
- Contra Costa Senior Legal Services
- Update from Ombudsman Services

Public Comment:

- None

Adjourn 11:30 a.m.