

Aging Advisory Council Meeting  
Messiah Senior Center  
December 9, 2015

Members present: Ray Humphrey, Joe Sohmer, Barbara Barger, Marge Scott, Carolyn Bullock, Lois Stryker, Nancy Watson, Sharon Cashwell, Linda Hess and David Heiney

Staff present: Frederick Shrimp

Ray Humphrey called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

Ray Humphrey asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 12 meeting. David Heiney made a motion to approve. Marge Scott seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shrimp informed the council that although nothing is guaranteed, it appears the legislature and the governor may be able to reach a compromise. The house does not agree with the spending and tax increases that were part of a tentative compromise framework a few weeks ago. Therefore it is unclear how much longer it will take to have a signed budget. If the legislature passes a budget that does not meet the governor's proposal, he can again veto the entire budget or just veto areas of disagreement. If the governor uses the line item veto, it is likely that he will approve the aging budget and we can work toward returning to normal. It could take two to four weeks before our funding starts to flow.

Mr. Shrimp reviewed the steps taken due to the state budget impasse. Without a budget the state cannot forward funds to STEP for Aging services. As we said at the last meeting, due to the budget impasse, we have laid-off 4 staff, the Mill Hall center was temporarily consolidated into the Clinton County Community Center, provider agencies will not be paid, center rentals will not be paid, staff mileage will not be paid, volunteer mileage will not be paid unless requested, and waiting list were started for home support and home modifications. In addition, we have reduced the hours of center coordinators and instead of assessing to put people on a waiting list for home support and home modifications, we have stopped taking referrals for home support and home modifications due to open caseworker positions that will not be filled until after the budget impasse. We are taking names and will contact those inquirers when funding is available. Home support and home modifications are not considered core services and can only be provided as funding is available. STEP is borrowing money to continue services and our provider agencies are borrowing money to provide services. STEP and our provider agencies are doing all we can to lessen the impact on the older adults we serve.

Mr. Shrimp provided an update on Managed Long Term Care Support Services (MLTCSS). The state is still moving forward on starting MLTCSS in 2017 in the South West part of PA, 2018 in the South East of PA and statewide in 2019. The Department of Human Resources (DHS) had decided to remove the Level of Care assessment function from the AAAs and put out to bid for a statewide provider. The AAAs enlisted the help of some legislatures. The chairpersons of the Aging Committees in the House and Senate wrote a letter to the Secretary of DHS supporting the AAAs. DHS has since decided that it would stick with the plan for a statewide provider, but it would seek to contract with the AAAs by contracting with a corporation formed by the Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging. If this happens, we will be a subcontractor to that corporation instead of receiving funding from DHS. On the issue of service coordination for the aging waiver program, that still will depend on whether we can reach an agreement with the managed care companies to provide that service.

Mr. Shrimp reported that Paula Edler will retire on the 14<sup>th</sup> after 40 years with the aging program of STEP. Jennifer Smith has been hired as her replacement. Mary Lou Bonner has also retired after 40 years with STEP. Mary Lou's last position was providing intake, receptionist and clerical duties at the Clinton County Community Center (CCCC).

Mr. Shrimp stated that open enrollment for Medicare Part D ended on December 7. Over 200 people were served by the Apprise counselors. Ray Humphrey added how rewarding it is to help people during open enrollment.

Mr. Shrimp reported that Phil Landers (Lycoming) and Alice Bryerton (Clinton), local directors of AARP Tax-Aide were honored as volunteers of the year by STEP. Both will be leading the volunteers for the 2016 tax season. The program is at the CCCC and Lincoln centers.

Mr. Shrimp reported that the grand opening for The RiverWalk Center will be in January. We still expect to move from Messiah to the RiverWalk Center before the end of the year.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM for all the members to visit The RiverWalk Center.

Submitted by,

Reviewed by,

Frederick Shrimp  
Aging Director

Marge Scott  
Secretary