



JOINT MEETING
WASHOE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD (WCSSAB)
CITY OF RENO SENIOR CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SCAC)
Draft Minutes

Wednesday – October 5, 2016
3:00 P.M. - McKinley Arts & Culture Center
925 Riverside Drive, Reno NV 89503

The joint meeting of the WCSSAB and SCAC was held in the McKinley Arts & Culture Center, 925 Riverside Drive, Reno, Nevada and conducted the following business:

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by SCAC Chair Donna Clontz at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

Members Present: **WCSSAB:** Dr. Larry Weiss, Gary Whitfield, Connie McMullen, Marsy Kupfersmith, Sandra Dexter, Barbara Korosa, Wayne Alexander, Garth Elliott, Ken Romeo, Alternate Donna Clontz for Dennis Chin, Alternate Stanley Ann Dowdy, Advisor Victoria Edmondson

City of Reno SCAC: Donna Clontz, Stanley Ann Dowdy, Wendy Boszak, Mac Rossi, Marsy Kupfersmith, Robert Mulvana, Vanessa Dixon (arrived late)

Members Absent: **WCSSAB:** Dennis Chin

City of Reno SCAC: CJ Bawden, Linda Musselman

Staff Present: **WCSSAB:** Ken Retterath, Sandra Vasquez, Diana Carter

City of Reno SCAC: Darryl Feemster, Manager, Youth and Seniors Division, Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS); Leslie Smith, PRCS

Staff Absent: **City of Reno SCAC:** Andy Bass, Director, PRCS

2. Public Comment

Mickey Lufkin discussed community issues including unaffordable and unavailable housing for senior citizens on fixed incomes.

Rhea Simpson is concerned about unaffordable senior housing in her area. There is a complex near where she lives and there are a lot of seniors who live there. The rent is going up and seniors are being forced to move.

Lafayette Afoa is a long-time resident. He wants to learn more about what can be done to help senior citizens in the community and what services are available for seniors.

3. Approval of Agenda: October 5, 2016 (For Possible Action)

MEMBER DOWDY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 5, 2016, FOR SCAC, SECONDED BY MEMBER ROSSI. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SIX (6) SCAC MEMBERS PRESENT (MEMBER DIXON ARRIVED LATE).

MEMBER ELLIOTT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 5, 2016, FOR WCSSAB, SECONDED BY MEMBER WHITFIELD. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH TEN (10) MEMBERS PRESENT.

4. Approval of Minutes: July 7, 2016 (For Possible Action)

MEMBER BOSZAK MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE JULY 7, 2016, MINUTES FOR SCAC, SECONDED BY MEMBER DIXON. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SEVEN (7) SCAC MEMBERS PRESENT.

MEMBER MCMULLEN MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE JULY 7, 2016, MINUTES FOR WCSSAB, SECONDED BY MEMBER ALEXANDER. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH EIGHT (8) IN FAVOR AND TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS BY MEMBERS ELLIOTT AND BARBARA KOROSA.

5. Presentation regarding senior homelessness and housing issues – Amy Jones, Reno Housing Authority and Dwight Pace, Nevada Housing Division

Chair Clontz introduced Dwight Pace of the Nevada Housing Division and Amy Jones of the Reno Housing Authority. There is a growing concern about senior homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in the community. Today's joint meeting is to address housing issues.

Mr. Pace discussed rising rents and the increased opportunities for home buying. He presented information on the following programs offered by the Nevada Housing Division: Home Is Possible; Home Is Possible for Heroes; and Mortgage Credit Certificate.

The Home Is Possible (HIP) program is a down payment assistance program. This program has helped about 8,000 families and about 500 veterans get into housing and continues to expand. The program allows non-repayable money up to 5% of the loan value to be used toward the down payment or closing costs. There is no taxpayer money being used in this program. It is a public-private partnership created to assist people to become homebuyers and to keep them in their homes after purchase. A homebuyer education course is required. The program is statewide and participants do not have to be first-time homebuyers. There are income requirements and purchase price restrictions.

The Home Is Possible for Heroes (HIP-H) program is for veterans, active military, National Guard members and surviving spouses. It is also a public-private partnership. This program allows homebuyers to receive a below-market fixed interest rate. The program requirements for HIP and HIP-H are the same.

The Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) is an IRS-driven program that offers federal tax savings. This program allows first-time homebuyers to save money through a tax credit. There are county price limits and income limits.

Additional information regarding the HIP, HIP-H and MCC programs is available at homeispossiblenv.org.

Amy Jones, Executive Director of the Reno Housing Authority (RHA), presented information on the programs offered by the Reno Housing Authority and how they relate to senior housing.

RHA was founded in 1943. There are currently 751 public housing units within eight different complexes. They also manage and oversee more than 150 scattered sites that include single family homes, duplexes and condominiums. RHA administers the Housing Choice Vouchers Program, Public Housing Program, and HUD-VASH Program.

The Public Housing Program (PHP) assists families with housing in units owned by the RHA. Of the eight RHA public housing complexes, three are senior sites with about 300 units and five are family sites. RHA receives funding from HUD. Families pay a reduced amount for rent and the remainder is subsidized through federal funds. There is an open wait list for PHP.

The Housing Choice Vouchers Program (HCVP) assists families by subsidizing the cost of their rent. RHA has approximately 2,500 housing vouchers. Families pay a reduced amount for rent and the remainder is paid by RHA. The assistance is tied to the individual person instead of the unit. Participants in HCVP can take their vouchers to another state as long as there is a housing authority to administer the program. Currently, there is a closed wait list for HCVP.

Ms. Jones talked about the activities and services offered at the housing units managed by RHA. Between the units owned by RHA and the voucher program, there are approximately 3,500 subsidized and non-subsidized units. She provided a handout that is a partial listing of services that is given to RHA families.

The HUD-VASH Program (HUD-VASH) is administered by RHA directly through the Veterans Administration (VA). It has a case management component which is a program requirement. RHA has been allocated 278 vouchers for homeless veterans.

The RHA owns sites that are not public housing and they do not offer assistance for these units. However, the units have reduced rents. A management company runs most of them. There is a need for additional units and RHA is working to increase the number of units by working with local partners.

RHA is a moving-to-work agency, which means there is more flexibility when working with HUD regulations. For example, with regard to PHP and HCVP, RHA was able to move from an annual recertification of income for families with a stable income to an extended recertification period every three years. They also simplified rent calculations and established a minimum rent. They created a mobility program which allows individuals residing in public housing properties the opportunity to move into a unit owned by RHA in a low-poverty area. Self-sufficiency services are provided, such as job searches, resume writing and career planning. Onsite youth services are offered in PHP. This includes tutoring, youth camp and activities through the Junior Ski Program.

There was public comment and discussion about the improved condition of public housing, the safety aspect for families in public housing, Section 8 public housing and income guidelines.

6. Business (For Possible Action):

a. Discussion regarding senior homelessness and housing issues, including identification of issues and possible actions that the Reno Senior Citizen Advisory Committee and the Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board could take to address those issues (For Possible Action)

Chair Clontz asked Mr. Pace and Ms. Jones what the SCAC and WCSSAB can do to help get the word out about their programs. Mr. Pace offered to provide informational materials and stated that he can give a similar presentation to other interested groups as well. Ms. Jones suggested letting people know about the Reno Housing Authority wait lists and process. She also offered to speak to other interested groups.

Members were asked for their input on how to further help seniors with the issues they are facing. Member McMullen brought up the continued need for more housing and assistance programs for seniors. Member Boszak asked about a new senior housing facility that is opening in Sparks. It is Lincoln Way Senior Apartments and additional information on the facility was requested. Member Dowdy discussed the need for help in addressing transportation issues at senior housing locations. Member Kupfersmith discussed the possibility of lobbying to get more affordable senior housing. Ms. Edmondson discussed transportation issues and the need to reinstate ACCESS bus service to Cold Springs.

Katie Pace, Senator Heller's office, shared that the nvhousingsearch.org website is another resource and discussed the need to get more landlords on the website. She introduced her colleague, Stephanie Ferguson, who is also involved in housing issues.

Member Whitfield asked what can be done to help seniors get on the wait lists. Ms. Jones said that they would provide applications at the senior centers, if they are not already there, and help seniors to complete them. Member Weiss brought up the need for more service coordinators because of the kind of services they provide the community. Member Rossi discussed the idea of rent control within the housing programs and the two buses that have been donated by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) for use in Reno. Member Mulvana shared his idea to have lockers available to be used by the homeless in public spaces. Member Elliott discussed transportation needs, future developments coming into the area and concerns regarding homeless veterans. Member Dixon talked about the need for seniors with housing vouchers to receive help with moving. This is a service that seniors could use because they can't do it themselves. Member Korosa discussed a resource guide and addressed the benefits of allowing seniors to age in place.

Member Romeo asked what the grant forecast is for 2017-18. Ms. Jones responded that RHA receives approximately \$15 million annually from HUD for the voucher program and PHP. That funding is not increasing, and may be reduced in the future.

Chair Clontz discussed the resource guide that is being created by the VISTA Program staff. Some of the people in the audience were introduced: staff from the Governor's Office, City of Reno, Washoe County Sheriff's Office, Alta Vista Mental Health, Senator Heller's Office, Washoe County Social Services and Senior Services.

PUBLIC COMMENT: General discussion about the need for more funding for housing.

No action was taken.

b. Update and discussion of Center for Healthy Aging VISTA Program – Larry Weiss

Member Weiss discussed resource guides that will be available in a couple of weeks. Also, they are in the process of developing a senior health advocate program using senior volunteers to help other seniors obtain the services they need in a timely manner. Approximately 20 volunteers have already solicited to participate as advocates.

c. Update and discussion regarding candidate forums and advocacy for senior issues with policymakers including identification of issues and dates for future advocacy training and workshops (For Possible Action) – Donna Clontz and Connie McMullen

Chair Clontz shared that two candidate forums have already been held and another one will be this Friday. Also, advocacy training will be the topic of the next joint meeting in January.

Member McMullen stated that a big problem at the legislature is that they don't hear from seniors. More advocacy is needed at the state level and seniors need to know what the issues are. February 23, 2017 will be Senior Issues Day at the Legislature. It is sponsored by the Commission on Aging. It is a good opportunity to find out what is going on at the Legislature and to tell your representatives your concerns.

CHAIR CLONTZ MADE A MOTION, FOR SCAC, THAT THE NEXT JOINT MEETING TO BE HELD IN JANUARY WILL BE AN ADVOCACY WORKSHOP MEETING, SECONDED BY MEMBER KUPFERSMITH. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SEVEN (7) MEMBERS PRESENT.

MEMBER WHITFIELD MADE A MOTION, FOR WCSSAB, THAT THE NEXT JOINT MEETING TO BE HELD IN JANUARY WILL BE AN ADVOCACY WORKSHOP MEETING, SECONDED BY MEMBER MCMULLEN. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH TEN (10) MEMBERS PRESENT.

7. City of Reno Staff Report – Andy Bass, Director, Parks, Recreation and Community Services

Darryl Feemster, Manager, Youth and Seniors Division, PRCS, expanded on the topic of the two vans being donated by RTC. If a senior who lives in a housing area within the City of Reno gets a group of five or more people together who want to participate in an event offered by the City, they should call the Seniors Division of PRCS and the department will provide transportation to the event. The department can't do it for every individual person because it is not cost effective, but for a group of five or more that are enrolled in an activity, PRCS will provide transportation within the City of Reno. PRCS is expecting the arrival of two vans from RTC by the end of January. They need to be painted and cleaned up prior to use. Transportation remains a major issue for seniors.

The Senior Connect publication is sent out to approximately 4,000 people every month electronically, through mail, or through delivery to agencies or organizations throughout the community.

Chair Clontz mentioned that the City of Sparks is also interested in a plan to transport Sparks seniors to events.

8. Washoe County Staff Report – Ken Retterath, Division Director, Washoe County Social Services (WCSS)

Director Retterath announced that WCSS is in the process of integrating with Washoe County Social Services Department and it will be called the Human Services Department. He will be the Division Director of the combined Senior Services Division and Adult Services Division. He asked if members have had an opportunity to visit the new TADS (Temporary Assistance for Displaced Seniors) center. Alta Vista Mental Health was awarded the Request for Proposal to run TADS and WCSS will have an office onsite. Director Retterath asked that direct donations of clothes and toiletries not be given to TADS at this time, but instead be given to local charities such as Catholic Charities or the Salvation Army. The center is new and right now they are looking at targeted donations as seniors arrive at the center.

9. Member Announcements

Member Boszak reported that the Governor's Commission on Women has been reactivated and they have put out a survey.

Ms. Edmondson said that she attended an RTC Board Meeting and advocated for the ACCESS buses to be restored to Cold Springs. There isn't enough adequate transportation in the North Valleys and more development is coming. The matter of the expansion of Highway 395 has been moved from the 10-year plan to the 5-year plan. She plans to go to the State Transportation Board to advocate for funds for Northern Nevada. She reported that over 1,000 people showed up to the water hearing at the Legislature. Due to the expected growth in the foreseeable future, the Cold Springs Citizen Advisory Board will be restarted.

Member Elliott was invited to the Senior Candidates Forum and wanted to say thank you for the platform.

Chair Clontz announced a free caregiver training on understanding dementia on October 13th and 27th. There are flyers available. The Sanford Center offers community education talks every month. The next one is October 11th.

10. Identification of Agenda Items for Future Meetings (For Possible Action)

The following topics will be included in future joint meetings: Advocacy workshop; follow-up on the housing topic; and RTC information on transportation.

11. Public Comment

Member Kupfersmith thanked the presenters at today's joint meeting.

12. Adjournment (For Possible Action)

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

MEMBER KUPFERSMITH MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN, FOR SCAC, SECONDED BY MEMBER DIXON. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH SEVEN (7) MEMBERS PRESENT.

MEMBER ELLIOTT MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN, FOR WCSSAB, SECONDED BY MEMBER ALEXANDER. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY WITH TEN (10) MEMBERS PRESENT.