

BREVARD COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES



**Building C, Space Coast Room
Thursday, June 13, 2024
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

CHAIR: Dr. John Potomski **Vice Chair:** Will Scheiner (absent)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Noble, Laura Anderson, Sandy Stauffer, Tom Kammerdener, Judy Healy, Kia Quintana-Ramos, and Yvonne Minus

GUESTS PRESENT: Traci Graf, Karen Wernlund, Dan McDow, Janet Price and Joe Rowlette

SUMMARY:

BREVARD COUNTY STAFF: Cindy Short

Call to Order / Introductions: Dr. Potomski called the meeting to order at 3:12 pm. Roll call occurred by everyone present.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for May 9, 2024: Minutes were reviewed by all members. Motion to approve minutes as presented made by **Judy Healy**; seconded by **Yvonne Minus**; approved as presented by consensus.

Guest speaker: Dr. Potomski introduced Traci Graf, owner Avid Home Care Services, and Ms. Graf began by providing some background on her agency and why she started her business with services for those needing necessary home care. Ms. Graf said since she began her business in 2017, she is the only licensed, bonded, and insured agency with no hourly minimums in Brevard County. She added that services are provided based on need and ability to afford assistance, and her agency is not franchised nor part of a chain.

Avid Home Care services include skilled nursing, non-skilled nursing, and hospice care. Ms. Graf went on to explain the different services and some of the requirements these services entail. She said her services usually increase based on the needs of the clients.

Ms. Graf explained the difference between what her agency does versus other home care agencies, especially regarding the Agency for Health Care Administration. She

added there are many risks with private caregivers and explained what they are and why they matter. Ms. Graf said she doesn't hire anyone with a criminal background and why it matters to her and her agency. She provided information regarding service rates, why she does not charge hourly rates or utilize contracts, how her staff are paid, and her licensing credentials. She provided business cards for those who wanted one and said that their schedules are individualized and flexible. **Judy Healy** asked how far south do you travel? Ms. Graf said she doesn't have a set line, so she would go south. **Yvonne Minus** asked if a family has a problem with an agency, who do they contact? Traci said AHCA, or the Agency for Health Care Administration. **Yvonne Minus** explained how an accident happened in a health care setting to her family member. **Dr. Potomski** thanked Traci for coming in and speaking to the group.

Legislative update: Staff reported the Governor signed the budget but didn't have details to provide. Staff is hoping that Jason Maine may return and provide an update to the group when he is available.

Advocacy: Staff provided everyone a copy of the Point in Time Count report from the Brevard Homeless Coalition at the Housing Summit in May. Staff shared some of the stats from their count in January; the number of unsheltered homeless is up 2% from last year's count, or 1071 people. In our county, and only 5% of the total unsheltered population were families, so we are doing a good job helping families. But the number of adults over the age of 55 was 239, or 31% of the total counted.

Most notably was the increase in chronically homeless people- this increased by 71%. These numbers represent the people who have been homeless for a year or more and have a disabling condition that may prevent them from living independently and stably housed. The count showed there was also a direct connection between the number of homeless due to the decline in housing availability. **Dr. Potomski** spoke about an example of a homeless person that he is familiar with that will use the system to get the drugs he wants for his addiction, so the Behavioral Health numbers didn't surprise him.

BCOA Newsletter: Staff shared the newsletter article that was published in the June edition of Senior Life titled "**Brevard County Commits to Help the Community Protect and Prepare Themselves and Their Loved Ones Against Senior Scams**". Staff provided an article from Traci for the July newsletter "Senior Affordable Housing" for the group's review and approval. **Yvonne Minus** made the motion to accept the article, **Judy Healy** seconded, approved as presented. There was discussion about the next article for the August Senior Life and **Dr. Potomski** suggested the article for Hurricane Preparedness, especially with information about sheltering, and staff would provide that article. He added that he will be providing a Falls Prevention article for September since September is Falls Prevention month.

Staff Update: Staff gave the update regarding the Affordable Housing Summit and the success of the event. The speakers were great as well as the testimonies provided by the homeless people who made it out of homelessness. Staff also shared the results of the April DEA Take Back Day that happened on April 27th.

Member Updates: **Yvonne Minus** shared there will be a FPL Sponsored Political Hob Knob event happening on August 6th, from 4 to 7:30 at the West Cocoa Convention Center; there is a fee of \$35 for general admission, and there are VIP bundles available. She said the Chambers of Commerce will be there along with various other groups from throughout the county.

Judy Healy said the new Melbourne Chamber of Commerce is by the Melbourne/Orlando Airport now. She also shared that the format for the Hob Knob event is more of a social, not really a question and answer type of event.

Tom Kammerdener from Aging Matters of Brevard said each year the Department of Elder Affairs and FPL donate meal hurricane boxes for seniors in Brevard; he said that they will begin distributing to approximately 700 clients. He added that there will be a Car Fit event happening on June 18th from 9am until 12 pm at the Sunflower House in Merritt Island. Car Fit was developed by AAA & AARP, and the program helps people make sure they are safer in their vehicles. It's a free service for all.

Public Comments: Traci Graf spoke to the group about a project that she is trying to bring to the owners of the Canaveral hospital-to make it into an ALF and a homeless shelter for seniors. She said the site is owned by a hospital board, and she is hoping they will consider her idea. Ms. Graf gave some stats about the elderly homeless and the reasons come down to the increases in rents. **Dr. Potomski** suggested that maybe some of the vacant places throughout the county can be updated and considered as well. There was also discussion that the local housing trust fund hasn't been funded.

Joe Rowlette said the WEAAD event is sold out for tomorrow. He added there is a political event happening at the Titusville YMCA on August 2nd and there will be some of the beachside and northern cities there.

Upcoming Events: WEAAD Lunch and Learn, Friday, June 14, 2024, 11 am until 1:30 pm at Zon Beachside with speakers from Property Appraiser's office, Elder Law, and West Melbourne Police Department.

Next Meeting: July 11, 2024, 3:00pm, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Building C, Space Coast Room, Second Floor Viera, FL 32940.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 4:33 pm.