

# BREVARD COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES



**Building C, Space Coast Room  
Thursday, September 12, 2024  
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**CHAIR:** Dr. John Potomski **Vice Chair:** William Scheiner-absent

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lisa Noble, Laura Anderson, Judy Healy, Tom Kammerdener, Bianca Sturchio, Kia Quintana-Ramos, Dorinda Hill, and Kerry Fink

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Joe Rowlette, Janet Price, and Rese Garson

**BREVARD COUNTY STAFF:** Cindy Short

## **SUMMARY:**

**Call to Order/Introductions:** Dr. Potomski called the meeting to order at 3:15 pm. Roll call occurred by everyone present.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes for August 8, 2024:** Minutes were reviewed by all members. Motion to approve minutes as presented made by **Judy Healy**; seconded by **Tom Kammerdener**; approved as presented by consensus.

**Guest speaker:** None

**Legislative update:** Staff gave the Legislative update by providing the dates for the upcoming sessions with the House and Senate and the regular session should begin in March. Staff also shared the income requirements for the Hometown Hero program that was spoken about at the August meeting; staff said the income requirements depend upon the county and loan type and that Florida Housing Finance Corporation is working with the lenders to assist those potential applicants.

**Advocacy:** Staff said since it is Falls Prevention month, they shared a booklet from the National Institute of Health regarding the importance of bone health. This concern is not just for women but men as well. **Dr. Potomski** said he agreed that bone health is very important and sometimes forgotten by family doctors until something happens later in life. **Dr. Potomski** gave examples of what happens to your bones as you age, and that your bones are constantly being broken down and built back up. He said that prevention

is the key, and the sooner the better. **Dr. Potomski** provided examples of what can happen to people if they don't take care of their bones and suggested to consider a bone density scan to find out where they stand. Discussion continued regarding the types of things people can do now. Suggestion was made to maybe consider for an article in January.

**Dr. Potomski** asked the group if they wanted to consider trying to have some kind of outreach to the candidates regarding issues that will affect seniors. Discussion among the members focused on the timing and how much time was left to organize and reach out to various organizations. **Kerry Fink** also shared different ways that Helping Seniors could get the information out to the public. **Kerry Fink** suggested coming up with a list of questions and they could get some information out in October via their Senior Scene magazine.

**BCOA Newsletter:** Staff shared the newsletter article that was published in the September edition of Senior Life. Staff explained that the article "**Falls and the Elderly**" will be in the October Senior Life since the Companion Care article was used for September. **Tom Kammerdener** shared information about another article in the newsletter regarding Jeanette White being named the Health and Wellness Advocate in Brevard County for Aging Matters! She teaches the Sit and Fit classes each Wednesday and Friday at the Martin Anderson Senior Center in Rockledge.

Staff also shared the November articles from Aging Solutions for Elves for Elders and Helping Seniors of Brevard for Senior Santa. **Judy Healy** made the motion to accept the November articles as presented; **Laura Anderson** seconded; approved by all. Staff asked the members to think about ideas for December and January articles.

**Staff Update:** Staff provided an update about the 2023 Profile of Older Americans, compiled by the Department of Elder Affairs and provided to staff by Terri Stone from Aging Matters. Staff shared some statistics with the group. Discussion continued about the statistic of seniors potentially eligible for SNAPS benefits versus those receiving the benefit, especially with the high cost of food now. **Bianca Sturchio** from DCF Adult Protective Services said when they go out to see seniors, they always screen seniors to see what services they would be eligible for, including SNAPS. Discussion continued among the members about the program and **Bianca Sturchio** said they work together with various agencies that also assist seniors with benefits. Suggestion was made to consider an article about the Rockledge office helping seniors sign up for benefits.

**Member Updates:** **Tom Kammerdener, Aging Matters of Brevard**, began by updating everyone regarding their annual Gala happening on October 5, 2024. This year it's called Havana Nights, and it will be held at the Space Coast Association of Realtors in Melbourne and begins at 6 pm.

**Lisa Noble, Aging Solutions**, said she had to opportunity to meet with Representative Anna Eskamani at the Central Florida Guardianship Association, and to speak with her about guardianship issues that our seniors are facing. Especially seniors with dementia who do not have a place to go. **Lisa Noble** said Ms. Eskamani seemed very receptive

to these issues and hopefully will address these important issues. Discussion continued regarding people with mental health issues, especially those seniors with dementia, and the best way to advocate for them.

**Dr. Potomski** spoke about the newsletter from Phil Archer's office, and some of the popular scams that are affecting seniors today. He also shared information about a Brain Health event happening tomorrow and encouraged everyone to grab a flyer if they want to attend. **Dr. Potomski** encouraged everyone to read the newsletter from Health First which has a lot of great information too. He also reminded everyone about the Medical Director's Symposium on November 13<sup>th</sup> beginning at 4:00pm for the exhibits and 6:00 pm for dinner and lectures. **Dr. Potomski** said there will be a table for BCOA and asked if the group wanted to be one of the sponsors. **Kia Quintana-Ramos** made the motion for BCOA to be a co-sponsor for the Symposium; **Laura Anderson** seconded; approved by consensus.

**Kia Quintana-Ramos, Florida Department of Health Brevard County**, shared information regarding the SNAP benefits; she said there is a community education piece to it, and she said part of the issue is that it has been moved around with various agencies. **Kia Quintana-Ramos** believes that Second Harvest is providing this piece now for seniors.

**Kerry Fink, Helping Seniors of Brevard** shared that they have a new President of Helping Seniors-Jennifer Martin. She is a long-time member of Helping Seniors. Joe Steckler is now President Emeritus. **Kerry Fink** added that Jennifer will be speaking on September 17<sup>th</sup> at a luncheon meeting with networking and business development.

For their Knowledge College event on September 26<sup>th</sup>, there will be someone to speak about Medicare and Medicaid changes from 11 am until 12pm. **Kerry Fink** added that the Helping Seniors of Brevard annual raffle drawing will be held Sunday afternoon beginning at 1pm October 27<sup>th</sup> at the American Muscle Car Museum.

**Dorinda Hill, Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation (BAFI)**, said the Association is having their Alzheimer's Space Coast Walk at the Cocoa Riverfront. The Walk to end Alzheimer's is happening on September 21<sup>st</sup> which is National Alzheimer's Day.

**Public Comments:** Rese Garson, from Assisted Living Locators, spoke about an insurance agent that will help seniors sign up for SNAPS benefit. Debbie Fisher at the Sharing Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Some of the skilled nursing facilities have memory care but don't admit those with dementia. She said there are many people in skilled nursing and shouldn't be there but there is no one helping to transition seniors appropriately. She suggested these facilities should help them begin the Medicaid process earlier so the senior will have access to resources when they are ready to leave. She added there are only 5 mental health facilities that have that license but are they appropriate: probably not. **Dr. Potomski** suggested she leave a brochure or card so we can learn more about her agency.

**Upcoming Events:** BCMDA Symposium, November 13, 2024, Hilton Melbourne.

**Next Meeting: October 10, 2024, 3:00 pm**, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way, Building C, Space Coast Room, Second Floor Viera, FL 32940.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 4:53 pm.