

BREVARD COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES



**Tuscany Grill, Viera FL Christmas Luncheon
Thursday, December 12, 2024
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

CHAIR: Dr. John Potomski

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lisa Noble, Judy Healy, Patricia Seibert, Sandy Stauffer, Kia Quintana-Ramos, Marisol Martinez, Yvonne Minus, Tom Kammerdener, and Kerry Fink

GUESTS PRESENT: Rese Garson, Gary Appelsies, Deidra Shubert, Elana Pitcher, Susan Clegg, Joe Rowlette, Kelli McGuire, Tammy Fink

BREVARD COUNTY STAFF: Cindy Short and Kim Ervin

SUMMARY:

Call to Order/Introductions: Dr. Potomski welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 12:19 pm. Roll call occurred by everyone in attendance.

Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 14, 2024: Minutes were reviewed by all members once quorum was attained. Motion to approve minutes as presented made by **Lisa Noble**; seconded by **Tom Kammerdener**; approved as presented by consensus.

Guest speaker: Dr. Potomski introduced the first speaker, Rese Garson, from Assisted Living Locators here in Brevard. She gave her background from college and previous employment that led her to her current company. She spoke about their four-county territory, from Ft. Pierce to Brevard County. Due to the aging Boomer population of ten thousand per day over the next five years, the need for care for these seniors will be much more than in the past. The biggest issue currently is the number of seniors in Skilled Nursing who need to return home but can't without services for their various issues.

Mrs. Garson gave statistics for local seniors regarding these issues which include disabilities. She reminded everyone that not all seniors here in Florida have local family members who can help. Ms. Garson also spoke about the various ways to pay for nursing care. She added that the average social security monthly amount will not be enough to pay for nursing home care. She continued, providing information about local

skilled nursing care, their ratings, and the services available. Mrs. Garson said only 5 facilities in Brevard have secure units for those with dementia. She gave examples of issues she has helped families navigate through when their loved ones need help. There are a lot of online options, but she cautioned these may not be local, and not be able to help with the transition of care for their loved ones. She said we need to raise awareness to help these seniors by providing information to their families to help them navigate care for their loved ones. She added that by working together in the community, the agencies can help seniors transition to the care they need. **Dr. Potomski** thanked Mrs. Garson for her presentation and invited the next speaker to begin.

Dr. Potomski introduced the next speaker, Gary Appelsies, Director of Operations from Senior Resource Alliance in Orlando. Mr. Appelsies wanted to speak to the group about Elder Abuse Neglect and Exploitation. He came to discuss types of elder abuse and neglect, to bring awareness to the prevalence of this abuse, and how to identify the red flags and indicators of elder abuse and neglect. Most people think that financial abuse is the largest type however, neglect is the most prevalent. Mr. Appelsies gave several examples of the different types of abuse, the red flags to be aware of, and who the abusers are or can be. He added that the numbers are higher since most seniors don't report what is happening to them for various reasons.

Since neglect is the largest issue, he separated the types of neglect regarding self-neglect and those issues regarding an elder's care. Mr. Appelsies spoke about mandated reporters, and that everyone is considered a mandated reporter. He said to should look for signs (which he gave examples of), call for help (local law enforcement), report to Adult Protective Services helpline (state agency), and follow internal guidelines with your company or family. A mandated reporter only reports and does not prove the abuse. At the end of the presentation, there was a short quiz in which all people attending passed. Joe Rowlette asked about someone that may say "they just didn't want to deal with reporting the abuse"; Mr. Appelsies stated they must report what they see. Staff shared that they call law enforcement to provide the referral. Deidra Shubert stated you can give the report anonymously, but if something is missing the report may be dropped. **Dr. Potomski** thanked Mr. Appelsies for his good and comprehensive presentation.

Legislative Update: Deidra Shubert from Flourish Research provided an update regarding their visit to DC last April and Tallahassee in February. She shared the Bold Reauthorization Act was passed in Congress as a bipartisan effort, and the CDC is providing funding to help improve brain health in their communities. There were 2 other federal acts passed; the NAPA (National Alzheimer's Project Act) and the Alzheimer's Accountability Act. Both Acts help with research for aging and Alzheimer's. All three acts have been signed into law per Mrs. Shubert.

Also, the Rally in Tally event will be held March 10th and 11th for 2025, and Mrs. Shubert said their group will be taking a bus again. Go to www.alzimpact.org to sign up. If you attend, you will be able to meet with our representatives and the lobbyists.

Staff shared with everyone that Laura Moody of Rockledge, a former BCOA member, will serve as a Judge on 18th Judicial Circuit Court, and she was appointed by the Governor. **Dr. Potomski** also shared that **Will Scheiner** is now the State Attorney for District 18 since Phil Archer retired. **Yvonne Minus** made the motion to send an email and congratulations card to Will, seconded by **Sandy Stauffer**, approved by all.

Advocacy: **Dr. Potomski** spoke about the recent state and federal representative changes that have happened. He also shared that he has visited some of the commissioners to introduce himself and share senior issues here in Brevard.

BCOA Newsletter: Staff shared the newsletter article that was published in the December edition of Senior Life. Staff did not receive any articles for submission, so staff provided two articles for their review. The first article is for January, to remind everyone to donate blood; and the second, if they are good with the first, was an updated article from last year about health screenings and the importance of having them regularly for February.

The members reviewed both articles. After review, and following some discussion, **Judy Healy** made the motion to accept the first article “January is Blood Donation Month” as presented; seconded by **Yvonne Minus** and approved by consensus. The second article for February, “Early Detection Health Screenings” was discussed, and **Patricia Seibert** made the motion to accept as presented; **Tom Kammerdener** seconded, approved by all.

Staff Update: Staff, along with everyone present, thanked **Dr. Potomski** for the Christmas luncheon today. Staff shared that all BCOA meetings will be in the Space Coast room for 2025. Staff also shared that the HHS Director, Ian Golden, was promoted to Parks and Recreation Director, and Juanita Jackson was promoted to Interim Director of Housing and Human Services.

Member Updates: Kerry Fink began with his update from Helping Seniors of Brevard. He spoke about Joe Steckler and shared that Joe and his wife had moved to Maryland to be closer to his immediate family. **Yvonne Minus** shared with everyone that she had termed out of the Melbourne City Council, and she said she still wishes to continue with the BCOA since she is still part of the Space Coast League of Cities. **Lisa Noble** thanked everyone who participated in Elves for Elders, and they were blessed with so much for the seniors in need.

Public Comments: Deidra Shubert shared that Terry Stone said Merry Christmas to everyone, and that memory screenings are still happening. Ms. Shubert added that the blood test for biomarkers has been approved for standard of care, and testing should expand.

Upcoming Events: Senior Life Valentine Day Party and Senior Expo featuring wedding vow renewals, February 14, 2025, at the Nyami Nyami River Lodge in the Brevard Zoo.

Next Meeting: January 9, 2025, 3:00 pm, 2725 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Bldg. C
Space Coast room 2nd floor Melbourne, FL 32940.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:59 pm.