

**Commonwealth Council on Aging**  
**April 9, 2014**  
DARS/Virginia Division for the Aging  
1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100, Henrico, VA 23229

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present**

Beth Barber  
Robert Blancato  
Mitchell Davis  
David Farnum  
Joni Goldwasser  
Richard Lindsay, MD  
Brenda Nelum  
Nancy New  
Valerie S. Price  
Roberto Quinones  
Stephen Reardon, Esq.  
Kathryn Reid  
Bill Massey, for Courtney Tierney  
Lynne Williams

**Absent**

Kyle Allen, DO  
Juanita Bailey  
Karen Fortier  
Arthur Giesen  
Carter Harrison  
Susan McCammon  
Vernon Wildy

**Guests**

Paige McCleary, DARS/APS Program Consultant

**Staff**

Ali Faruk, Special Assistant to the Commissioner  
Amy Marschean, JD, Senior Policy Analyst  
Cecily Slasor, Administrative Support

**Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Barber called the meeting to order at 10:10 am and asked that members and guests introduce themselves. Ms. Marschean introduced a new DARS staff member, Ali Faruk. He is the Commissioner's Assistant for Policy and Communications.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Farnum asked if members had reviewed the January meeting minutes and if there were any corrections. Mr. Quinones asked that on the page 6 language regarding new board member appointments be changed to "he requested Council and staff work on." With the change, Mr. Farnum moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. New seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted and approved.

## **Best Practices Committee**

### **Action: Adopt Committee Recommendation for Awards**

#### **Richard Lindsay, MD**

Dr. Lindsay, Chair of the Best Practices Committee, thanked Amy Marschean, Tanya Brinkley, Cecily Slasor and Deb Loving for all of their help with the Best Practices Awards process. Dr. Lindsay commented that his outstanding evaluation committee that consisted of Mitchell Davis, David Farnum, Valerie Scott Price, Roberto Quinones, Vernon Wildy, and the Committee's two expert reviewers, Dr. Paula Kupstas, Virginia Center on Aging, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Elizabeth Swider, President, Care is There Geriatric Care Management. The Council received some outstanding applications- 16 in total. The Best Practices Committee recommended the following award winners:

- First Place (\$5000) to the **F.R.E.E. Foundation Equipment Reuse/Recycling and Gifting Program** in Roanoke.

F.R.E.E. helps Virginians achieve independence through mobility when they have no other way to attain their independence. Many adults cannot obtain the equipment they need. F.R.E.E. helps these Virginians in need regain their mobility and with it their independence by giving them needed rehabilitation mobility equipment. The majority of those served by F.R.E.E. are older Virginians.

- Second Place (\$3000) to the **Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVP) of Montgomery and Pulaski Counties and the City of Radford's Supplies for Seniors**

The goal for Supplies For Seniors is to enhance the quality of life by providing basic necessities to homebound seniors during winter months. During the past six years, the RSVPs of Montgomery and Pulaski Counties and the City of Radford have held a "Supplies for Seniors" drive to collect basic household and personal care items for seniors who receive home delivered meals through the New River Valley Agency on Aging and Radford/Fairlawn Daily Bread. Each January, RSVP volunteers sort and bag the donated supplies, then deliver them to an average of 250 homebound seniors residing in the five localities of the New River Valley.

- Third Place (\$2000) to the **Alzheimer's Association Central and Western Virginia (CWVA) Chapter's Arts Fusion**

Arts Fusion offers creative and cultural opportunities for those affected by memory loss in the Alzheimer's Association CWVA Chapter area. Arts Fusion's mission is to employ the arts as a vehicle for promoting creative expression and quality of life experiences for persons with dementia and their caregivers. For those diagnosed with younger onset and early stage dementia, who are living at home with a family caregiver, Arts Fusion offers art museum and gallery visits, nature walks, and opportunities to attend symphony and dramatic arts rehearsals.

The committee chose three honorable mentions but really felt there are four programs that deserved honorable mention as follows:

- **Wills for Seniors** provides seniors with a will, a power of attorney, and an advance medical directive. Four legal teams, consisting of lawyers, law students, and notary publics meet privately with each senior to prepare legal documents. The **Jefferson Area Board for Aging (JABA)** coordinates the event through promotions, completing applications, determining eligibility, scheduling appointments, and guiding participants in preparing an advance questionnaire packet. The packet is reviewed and finalized on the Wills for Senior Day as each senior meets confidentially with their assigned legal team.
- Rural Madison County located in north central Virginia along the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is home to an innovative program to benefit seniors age sixty or older named **The Nest Egg Thrift Store**. A national catalog company warehoused in Madison has generously donated returned items to the Madison Senior Center for repair and sale at the Nest Egg Thrift Store. Through coordination of 28 local volunteers and limited staff of the senior center, this program has provided substantial amounts of money to expand the existing senior center site through construction of a 600 square foot addition. The program is coordinated by **Rappahanock Rapidan Community Services**.
- A collaborative effort formed in 2010, the **Greater Augusta Coalition Against Adult Abuse (GACAAA)** is an all-volunteer organization working to raise awareness of adult abuse in the community and improve reporting procedures and criminal prosecution of adult abuse crimes. GACAAA members include representatives from senior centers, assisted living facilities, healthcare, social service organizations, first responders, law enforcement, local financial institutions, Legal Aid, Commonwealth attorneys, and APS representatives working in Augusta County, Staunton, Waynesboro, and surrounding areas. GACAAA partners with state and local service providers to improve public understanding of adult abuse with the goal of increased reporting, treatment, and prosecution of adult abuse.
- The **Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN)** is a collaboration of organizations and individuals that advocate for and serve older residents of the five Northern Virginia Area Agency on Aging (AAA) catchment areas: Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, including Fairfax City and Falls Church, Loudoun and Prince William, including Manassas and Manassas Park. Representatives of the AAAs, commissions on aging and non-profit organizations (those providing services to older adults) from these areas meet every other month, to exchange information, share knowledge and stay current with the needs of their constituents and the possibilities for legislative solutions. In October, NVAN presents its platform to the Northern Virginia legislative delegation at its annual legislative breakfast, which attracted over 200 attendees in 2013. NVAN's analysis of issues and understanding of the legislative process attracts sponsors from the Northern Virginia delegation for its proposals.

Dr. Lindsay asked for the Council to approve the committee recommendations. Mr. Blancato made a motion to accept the slate of winners along with the fourth honorable mention. Ms. New seconded the motion. The committee recommendations for the 2014 Best Practices Awards were accepted unanimously.

Dr. Lindsay reported that in the future the application may be revised so that applicants specify their diversity reach and the local impact of programs nominated. This clarification will be stressed in the application.

Mr. Farnum reported for new members the award amounts which are \$5,000 for 1<sup>st</sup> place, \$3,000 for second place and \$2,000 for third place. Mrs. Nelum asked what the Honorable Mention programs receive. Ms. Marschean responded that the Honorable Mention programs receive a plaque and are eligible to apply for a future monetary award. Ms. Marschean also reported that council members are welcome to appear at award presentations. Ms. Marschean, Dr. Lindsay and any council members interested will travel to Roanoke, Pulaski and Charlottesville to do the award presentations.

### **Adult Protective Services in Virginia (Presentation)**

#### **Paige McCleary, APS Program Consultant (Handout)**

In Virginia, allegations of elder abuse, neglect and financial exploitation are investigated by Adult Protective Services which operates out of the city and county local Departments of Social Services (DSS). There are 120 local DSS offices in Virginia. While they operate under state regulations regarding elder abuse, staff at the local DSS offices may work on multiple programs, for example, child and adult abuse together. For many local offices, the APS workers have a heavy caseload.

The total number of substantiated reports in SFY 2013 has decreased for the first time in several years. Virginia Beach had the most number of reports of adult abuse at 1088, followed by Fairfax at 980. In order to be a valid complaint, the person must be and identifiable adult, age 18 to 59 with an incapacity or 60+, alleged to be abused, neglected or exploited and under the jurisdiction of the local DSS. Mr. Blancato noted that it would be interested to run the data separately for the two cohorts, 18-59 and 60+. It is estimated that 1 in 24 cases go unreported according to a recent study. There has not been a huge focus on research or funding for elder abuse issues at the state and national level. A concerning loophole in the mandated reporter statute is CNAs can report to the Nursing Director that they saw abuse/neglect or they suspect it. Their obligation as a mandated reporter is fulfilled. Sometimes the Nursing Director can choose to investigate the allegations internally only and therefore not involve APS. Dr. Lindsay asked how APS statewide is doing as far as having enough staff? Ms. McCleary noted that during the last session the chair of House Health, Welfare and Institutions requested that DARS do a study of APS and this will be an opportunity to tell the General Assembly that additional staff are needed statewide to sufficiently address reports and investigations. Dr. Lindsay said he feels strongly that this is an issue the Council should weigh in on, especially in light of the age wave.

Mr. Blancato talked about his work at the national level with the Elder Justice Coalition

and that he recently testified before Congress on March 25, 2014 on the need for funding for elder justice issues. He commends APS staff but also conceded that APS staff do not advocate well enough for their network. Council members and others need to bring the issue to the attention of every one of Virginia's members of Congress.

### **Budget and Legislative Update (Handout) (Working Lunch)**

#### **Amy Marschean**

There is \$99,000 annually in Governor McDonnell's proposed budget and approximately \$316,000 annually in the House version of the budget for public guardianship. This funding would help shore up current programs and provide some new slots in programs. The state budget remains up in the air. VERC, NVAN, the Council, Alzheimer's Commission, and others provided great support for additional guardianship funding. The 15 public guardian programs in Virginia have not seen an increase in funding since 2007.

Ms. Marschean also reported on legislation that passed in the 2014 General Assembly session including:

- HB 413: Guardianship bill required reports to be filed under seal
- HB 240/SB572: Long-Term Care Ombudsman access to records (Commission bills)
- HB 312: Civil remedy for financial exploitation
- HB 450: Background checks must be received prior to health care providers providing direct care
- Two commission sunsets were removed and the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission was extended to 2017 and the Joint Commission on Health Care was extended to 2018.
- SB 575: Advance Health Care Directive Registry submission by legal representative or designee
- HJ 190: Request the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to examine the use of supported decision-making for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

### **Washington D.C. Update (Handout)**

#### **Robert Blancato**

Mr. Blancato reported there is an amendment to change the Older Americans Act formula for funding allocations to states. Senator Warner is promoting a new option for the Affordable Care Act that is an even less expensive plan to incentivize more people to enroll. Mrs. Nelum also mentioned the death of actor Mickey Rooney and Mr. Blancato commented the Elder Justice Coalition sent out a press release. Mr. Rooney testified before Congress about a family member who financially exploited him and became the face of adult exploitation.

Finally, Mr. Blancato stated the Elder Justice Coalition created a petition on [Whitehouse.gov](http://Whitehouse.gov) to encourage the Obama Administration to make the President's FY 2015 budget request of \$25 million Elder Justice Initiative a priority when speaking to

Congress. This funding for an APS National Data System and research for evidence-based practices will be a huge step for Elder Justice, but the public is needed to voice their support for the Initiative. The petition need 100,000 signatures by May 7, 2014 in order to receive a response from the President.

### **V4A Update**

#### **Bill Massey**

Mr. Massey is providing the V4A update on behalf of Courtney Tierney. Most of the items discussed at the February meeting are still in play. With regard to the APS presentation earlier, he noted all AAA workers are mandated reporters. He noted the ongoing Care Transitions programs currently through a AAA in eastern VA and one in SW VA. The program helps seniors to avoid hospital readmissions by providing a Care Transitions Coach who helps with medical appointments, medications, etc. The V4A spring meeting is being held in Williamsburg this week. The V4A and VACIL will be having a joint session tomorrow to share ideas and network with the hope of better coordinating at the local level.

### **Public Guardian & Conservator Advisory Board**

#### **Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders Commission Update**

##### **Amy Marschean**

The Public Guardian and Conservator Advisory Board met on March 20. Dana Traynham of the disAbility Law Center provided a presentation on Supported Decision-Making. The Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission also heard Ms. McCleary's presentation on Adult Protective Services on March 25. The Commissions GTE grant funded webinars on on AlzPossible.com on the types of dementia have been successful. All of the webinars are archived on the site.

### **Legislative Committee (Handouts)**

#### **Brenda Nelum**

The Legislative Committee met this morning before the full council meeting. David DeBiasi from AARP met with the group and provided information on a legislative initiative being sponsored by AARP called the CARE Act. The committee plans to invite him back to a future meeting and will bring his information to the full Council. The Legislative Committee also will be researching the elder-safe emergency departments. Ms. New reported that VCU hospital is building an elder-friendly ER. She may be able to obtain a video tour or something for the group to see.

### **Planning & Development Committee**

#### **Robert Blancato**

When scheduling a community conversation, the committee has discussed tying it to something. Next year, DARs will be working on its Four-Year State Plan on Aging and the Council's listening sessions could be tied to the plan. This committee also works on

the funding for the Best Practices Awards and will continue to work on securing future funding for the awards.

**Future Meeting Dates**

July 9, 2014

September 24, 2014

**New Business**

None

**Public Comment Period**

None

**Meeting Adjournment**

Chair Barber adjourned the meeting at 1:40 p.m.