

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING
Meeting Minutes for Thursday, February 15, 2024
Grasonville Senior Center – Grasonville, MD

ATTENDEES

Members

Martha Anthony
Rebecca Barbee
Toni Breeding
Betty Davis
Janet Melson
Loretta Morris
Janet Salazar
Bonnie Walter

Advisory Members

Commissioner Moran
Annie Sparks
Anne Van Benschoten
Stephen Palmer

Absent Members

Alan Ettman
Kelly Johnson
Rebecca Kennedy
Leslie Ray
Mary Jo Volpicelli

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Bonnie Walter at 10:00 AM.

OLD BUSINESS

- Correction to January's meeting minutes. Janet Salazar wanted to clarify that the QAC Library did not hire a digital navigator, but they are working with one hired by another agency.
- A motion to approve the minutes from the meeting was made by Loretta Morris and seconded by Becky Barbee. The minutes were approved.
- The Financial Report was reviewed and motioned to be approved by Janet Salazar and seconded by Becky Barbee. Approved.
- Bonnie Walter mentioned at the last Site Council meeting at KISC that she had spoken to Connie Dean, Career Technology Liaison for Queen Anne's County Economic & Tourism Development. Connie builds and enhances partnerships between schools and local businesses. She said that she had talked to Ms. Dean about having students come to the Senior Centers to help with instructing members on how to use their smart devices. Ms. Dean said that she would mention it to the different schools.
- Bonnie updated members who couldn't attend the meeting in January about Leslie Ray's new position with the MD Department of Aging. Because of this position Leslie is working on compiling a list of contact information for a possible CoA regional meeting. Leslie was not able to attend February meeting and will hopefully have some details for the next meeting.
- Martha Anthony is working on her informational list of services for veterans. She said once the list is compiled perhaps contact names and phone numbers could be put on a card for people to carry with them.
- Bonnie asked Comm. Moran his viewpoint on doing the Commissioner Tour in September, he said it should be fine. Cathy Willis asked Annie Sparks to mention to the Commissioner if he had any thoughts on what the best time for the tour. Annie also mentioned some other ideas that might be considered such as moving the traditional CoA meeting around to the different Senior Centers to replace the tour. Those meetings could lead up to the Town Hall and be used to promote that. It was decided by the CoA to keep the tour traditional and a date of June 20, 2024 was suggested. Annie will discuss the date with Stacy Voorhees, Senior Center Administrator, and a confirmation

will be emailed to the CoA members if that date is confirmed. We can use a County Ride bus and driver for the tour this year.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Bonnie asked the members for ideas for the CoA table at the Senior Summit. It was also asked if there were any members that would like to volunteer to man the CoA table. Janet Salazar volunteered to schedule the time slots for manning the table.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- **The Active Aging Center is starting their Site Council; they have a meeting date on their February calendar. A regular Site Council meeting will be determined by how many members show up for the meeting.**

SITE COUNCIL REPORTS

- **Grasonville**

Tubs of Fun has been enjoyed by all who are participating. March's Tubs of Fun craft will be a Spring Greeting Card activity. This activity will take place on 3/14/24 at 10:30 AM. Spring College Classes also start in March; advance registration is required. Also in March, Brain Games will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays. Brain Games is a fun brain health group that focuses on gross motor skills, fine motor skills, coordination, balance, memory, attention, visual spatial skills, and executive functions. The group meets every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in March at 9:45 AM. Advance registration is mandatory for this group. This month's movie will be on 3/12/24 at 12:30 PM. There will be a Spring Bingo on 3/22/24 from 9:30–12:00. Hospice Talks, a seminar presented by Rhonda Knotts, is on 3/28/24 at 10:30 AM.

- **Kent Island**

Classes are doing well at Kent Island. The Valentine's Luncheon was well attended. There was a waiting list for the AED class which was only able to take 30 people. Just in time for Easter, the craft for March will be wooden cutouts & beading to make a fun garland. The fee for this project will be \$5 for supplies. March 19th there will be a Special Bingo at 1 PM; plan to come early and enjoy a Special Lunch to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. Lunch starts at 12 PM and the cost will be \$7; the last day to reserve lunch will be on 3/11/24. Easter Brunch and Egg Hunt will be held on Thursday 3/28/24, tickets are \$8 which includes Brunch & Egg Hunt. This event starts at 11 AM.

- **Sudlersville**

Sudlersville was closed for interior work from 2/19 – 2/23. New quilting session starts on 3/5/24. The Coffee Club will meet on 3/6/24 at 9:30 AM. The craft for this month will be Mesh Bunny Wreath; \$6 is due at sign-up. On 3/13/24 a free craft of Rope Bunny Magnets will be at 10 AM. A free simple craft Spring Flower Pretzel Bites / Peep Bunny Houses will be on 3/20/24. Easter Brunch & Egg Hunt is on 3/15/24 from 11 AM – 1 PM. The cost of this event will be \$5.

- **Active Aging Center**

There is a lot going on at the Active Aging Center in February. A YMCA Financial Aid Presentation will occur on Friday March 1st at 10 AM. Pool Lap Lanes and Sauna is open for all Senior Center members Monday – Thursday from 9 – 10 AM. The Walking Track is available for members Monday – Thursday from 11 AM – 12 PM. Veteran's Cards & Games happen every Monday from 10 AM – 11 AM. Aqua Yoga is every Monday from 10 AM – 10:45 AM. Aqua Zumba occurs every Wednesday from 10 AM – 11 AM. Birdhouse Craft will be done on 3/28/24 at 10 AM. Lindsay Toulson, Program Specialist, is at the Active Aging Center every Wednesday for appointments.

**ALL CENTERS WILL BE CLOSED FOR THE QAC SENIOR CENTER ANNUAL COOK-OFF
KENT ISLAND SENIOR CENTER WILL HOST THIS EVENT
ON MARCH 8, 2024, 10 AM – 2 PM.
This is a members' only event.**

HOUSING

- **Bonnie said she has stressed to people who have any complaints to keep putting in work orders and to document every time they do. She said she has not told them to call their county commissioners yet. The commissioner said that if anything is going on at Housing Authority it will have a major impact on the Town Hall meeting and the Commissioner's Tour.**

LEGISLATIVE

- **Cathy was not able to attend. Cathy provided two M4A (Maryland Association of Area Agencies on Aging) documents that Annie Sparks briefed the members on.**

AREA AGENCY ON AGING

- **Anne Van Benschoten informed the members about the Senior Summit that will be held on 5/17/24. This year's theme will be the 60's, tie dye and all. The vendors are really excited about this year's theme. The committee is still in the planning stage and working out some of the kinks.**
- **Julia Stokes, the new MAP (Maryland Access Point) Coordinator, will be heading up further plans for his years summit. We are happy to have Julia on board. Anne reported on 2023 Open Enrollment, in 2022 they did 177 Open Enrollments and in 2023 they did 234 Open Enrollments. Loretta Morris said it was more efficient because the I&A staff had sent out pre-registration forms before the appointments. The Program Specialists were able to look over the paperwork before the appointment and just go over what plan suited the clients.**
- **Martha Anthony asked if there was a keynote speaker at the summit, Annie answered that the summit is a more a fun resource day with vendors that cater to the needs of the seniors. The MAP Caregivers Conference which is held in November each year is where they have presentations and guest speakers.**
- **Anne Van Benschoten said there are 2 big new somethings that are being work on for the summit and would like to be a surprise so at this she would not be divulging any info on it.**
- **Martha said where she lives there are 2 issues that are front and present, one is scams and the other is safe being in your home. Anne said at the next Caregivers Conference maybe have someone do a presentation on how to be safe in your home and surroundings.**
- **Stephen Palmer, Transit Administrator, stated with Sudlersville Senior Center being closed the week 2/19 they will have a bus leaving from Sudlersville to go to KISC for bingo. They also have a bus leaving from Terrapin Grove twice a day going to Annapolis.**

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

- **Commissioner Moran said that it is the legislative time of year. Community colleges fundings have been cut. The focus has been to get that funding back. The Queen Anne building at Chesapeake College has been slated to be demolished. A new 60 thousand square foot plus building is all for career training. They have 12 different career training classes they want to put in that building. QAC is committed with their funding potion for the building but question if they can get their funding that was cut back to move forward with everything else.**
- **Recreational cannabis was another concern with the state slow in setting rules and regulations, so you had to catch up with zoning. QAC did legislation for medical marijuana which gave it 6 or 7 locations in QAC that a facility could open, but principalities could carry their own. There was only 1 distribution point that the state gave out. Two young ladies in Centreville received that point. They will automatically roll right into being able to sell medical and recreational marijuana.**

The county will be getting one more recreational marijuana location in the county. 1700 people have applied to sell marijuana. They introduced an emergency legislation that copy what their medical marijuana rules and legislation would be for the recreational marijuana. The state is only making it 500ft from schools, institutions, and not making it inclusive from homes. They left churches out and not have added them back in. They anticipate that this could lead towards 17 more locations. The Commissioner is against it first and foremost. They want to model zoning after liquor stores. QAC has more liquor stores per person than anywhere else in the state of Maryland.

- Solar is another issue with Governor Moore pushing the agenda. He is leading the charge for renewable energy, which is not a bad thing, but they are not giving it a lot of thought on the process. Five years ago, when solar was on track to come to QAC, the Commissioner got together with Planning & Zoning to come up with a zone. They zoned a huge swatch of land through the county which follows a 2-mile path on both sides of the transmission lines on 301. At that time, they said that it would take a certain number of acres for the entire state to reach their goal. QAC said that they would do 22 acres of solar. The state has cut the funding for MALPF; last year it was 95 million, this year it's only 30 million in the pot. QAC has their zoning for solar so now the state is looking for 7,000 acres per county on the Eastern Shore. The land on the Western Shore is more expensive but they would have to remove trees and there are buildings they would have to deal with. Here on the Eastern Shore, they wouldn't have a lot to deal with. The Commissioner said that it's alarming and he heard that they won't be using buffers around solar panels. Those who are opposing solar stations are using QAC as a model because QAC has already had zoning in place and the solar stations here are working out fine and there is no need for change. The solar companies are putting pressure on the state to put in more solar stations.
- At the point where Bridges is located the county is renaming it Veterans Point at Wells Cove. A donation of 125, 000 was made by a foundation to put a veteran's memorial there.
- Commissioner Moran received an email saying that the State of MD is removing the parking and commuter bus drop off and pick up under the Narrows Bridge.
- The QAC will having a Town Hall Meeting on 4/11/24 at Bayside Elementary to discuss updates concerning the Bay Bridge traffic and about last year's pilot program that closed some of the exits leading toward the bridge. The Town Hall starts at 6:30 PM.
- Re-decking of the east bound bridge is underway, they have 7 panels already poured. They are closing the east bound lanes down at night. Right now, they are 5 months behind.
- All the departments in the county have sent their budgets in.
- Kent Island Crossing site plan has been approved.
- The new Easton Hospital has been approved, they put 100 million dollars towards the hospital with 10 million a year. UMMS is looking for 50 million from the 5 counties (QAC, Kent, Caroline, Talbot, and Dorchester) and this includes fundraising. The Commissioner said perhaps the counties could pull 15 million for county governments and the other 35 million would come from private donors. The doors to the hospital should be open by FY28.
- Everside Health which is a health care provider that QAC had made available for their county employees and BOE employees. It seems be doing very well; the numbers are a little low. Commissioner Moran said that they would like more people to use it, but otherwise everything seems to be going well there.
- Bonnie said the issue with shutting the ramps down last year was that the state didn't have things in place and started at the wrong end. The Commissioner said that they will start at the bridge and proceed down, one weekend is not going to make a difference, the closures will have to be every weekend so the people who travel to the Eastern Shore every weekend get conditioned to the ramp closures and stay on route 50. The county would like the closures to go all the way back to the narrows.

CONCLUSION

- The meeting adjourned at 11:08 AM.
- Next meeting will be on 3/21/24 at 10:00 AM - Kramer building.

Submitted by Wendy Gilbert, recording secretary.