



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

LEGISLATIVE & POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2009

9:30 am

DHS State Lab Conference Room
250 N. 17th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Council Members, Liaisons, and Participants Present

William Engler (Chair), Joyce Finkelstein, George Evanoff, Bernadine Hoffman, Marilyn Johnson, Simone Kelsh, Doyle Meredith, Noreen Nickerson-Cruz, Gregg Kiely, Melanie Starns, John Linda, Don Ritchie, and Christine Bryson-Lazo.

Council Members missing

Lynn Adler, Kati Bates, and Barry Spiker.

Council Staff Present

Cathy De Lisa, Shawn Trobia and Claire Parriott.

Guests Present

Ritch Stevens, Becky Hill, Calise Munoz, and Mary McSorley.

Call to Order, Welcome, Introductions & Approval of Minutes

Committee Chair Bill Engler called the meeting to order 9:30 a.m., and a welcome and introduction period followed. Committee Chair Bill Engler welcomed to the committee two new Council members, Noreen Nickerson-Cruz and Simone Kelsh. Minutes from the January 8, 2009 meeting were reviewed. *Bernadine Hoffman made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Doyle Meredith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.*

Updates

Deputy Director Cathy De Lisa provided a list of the bills being tracked by the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging and updated the committee on their status. Bills highlighted were those seeing action this week including HB 2283, HB 2344, HB 2622, HB 2608, and HB 2616.

A discussion about each of the bills followed. Ritch Stevens, of AARP, informed the committee that HB 2017 was held in committee and indicated AARP's opposition to this bill. A report of the bills being tracked by the Council on Aging was provided to members; a copy is available through the Council office.

Deputy Director Cathy De Lisa updated the committee on the FY 09 budget cuts and effect on the office. The three Council staff will take a combined total of 27 furlough days before June 12, 2009. The furloughs are the Council's share of the \$150 million shortfall DES faces in FY 2009. Deputy Director Cathy De Lisa assured the committee that Council staff is committed to working to keep the office open Monday through Friday, 9 am -5 pm.

State Agency Updates on FY 09 Budget

Department of Economic Security (DES) - Assistant Director of DES/Division on Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) Melanie Starns informed the committee that DES had to take a total of \$150 million in cuts for FY 09. \$100 million were cuts made by the legislature and \$50 million was an internal shortfall. Layoffs, furloughs and program cuts were implemented to make up the shortfall. DAAS took a \$3.5 million cut. This cut resulted in layoffs, furloughs and cuts to programs such as Grandparents Raising Grandkids, Home and Community Based Services, and Lifespan Respite. The statutory language for Lifespan Respite has been preserved in order to qualify for Federal aid.

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) – Due to FY 09 budget cuts, AHCCCS was forced to drop co-payments of Medicare Part D.

Area Agency on Aging (AAA) – Took \$2 million in cuts statewide.

Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) - Gregg Kiely informed the committee that ADOT has not yet had layoffs but has instituted furloughs. Due to the continuing resolution for the federal budget, only 41% of the transportation budget is approved and available. Mr. Kiely told the committee while no federal stimulus dollars are specified for special needs public transportation, improvements to urban transportation will have a positive impact for special needs riders. ADOT has reduced the local match on special needs funding from 20% to 10% and plans to make less expensive vehicles available for special needs transportation.

Senior Action Day 2009 Planning

Deputy Director Cathy De Lisa reminded the committee that based on input from the Area Agencies on Aging and due to the current economic climate and reduced resources, the Council decided that Senior Action Day will be a one-day event in Phoenix. She emphasized the need for input from seniors and community members throughout Arizona. Staff will compile and present information received from the public to legislators at the event. Ms. De Lisa also reminded the committee that seniors and aging advocates are encouraged to set up individual appointments with their legislators at the legislators' offices during the 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. timeframe on April 1st. It was suggested the Council might seek professional input on how best to promote a small yet important event. Committee Chair Bill Engler passed around a volunteer sign-up sheet for Senior Action Day on April 1, 2009 and stated help is needed to prepare for the event and on the day of the event due to reduced staffing. Mr. Engler asked that anyone interested in donating bottled water or prepackaged cookie platters contact Council staff.

Other Updates, New Business, & Announcements

Committee Chair Bill Engler informed the committee that the Council is looking for new members from rural and tribal areas currently not represented. Mr. Engler also encouraged the committee to begin bringing a copy of e-mailed meeting materials to the Council meetings to help cut costs and conserve paper.

Action Items

- Staff will e-mail members the Senior Action Day flyer and contact information for the legislators to the LPCC and Council members.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Committee Chair Bill Engler at 11:17 am.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's Legislative Policy & Coordinating Committee will be April 2, 2009 at a location to be announced. These meetings are open to the public.