



Clark County Commission on Aging
1300 Franklin Street, 6th Floor
Vancouver, Washington

Retreat Notes

Wednesday, September 16, 2020

3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Chuck Green (Chair), Larry Smith (Vice Chair), Nancy Dong, Amy Gross, Franklin Johnson, Meghan McCarthy, Linda O’Leary, Tanya Stewart, and Pamela Wheeler

Staff: Jacqui Kamp, Jenna Kay

1. Welcome

- The group took turns answering three icebreaker questions:
 - 1) If you could make a documentary about anything, what would it be?
 - 2) Would you rather travel back in time to meet your ancestors or to the future to meet your descendants?
 - 3) What is your top priority to focus on for older adults in COVID-19/post-COVID-19 world and why?
- We have not recorded notes on the first question, but did note responses to the last question: what is your top priority to focus on for older adults in COVID-19/post-COVID-19 world and why?
 - Chuck – isolation/communication with those not tech-savvy and who may be missing personal contact with others.
 - Linda – would like to go out and interview seniors and ask them what is it that you need?
 - Larry – recently spoke with his 101-year-old friend who is hoping his life has been worthy and that he has made his community better.
 - Amy – isolation
 - Franklin – spending time with seniors, the older the better. Giving companionship and listening to stories
 - Pam – engagement and re-engagement, and how might there be cross-generational connections with seniors who may be isolated?
 - Nancy – community and isolation. Knows people who have recently taken their own lives. This is a really serious issue that gets at what is the meaning of life if you can’t connect with other people?
 - Meghan – worried about what happens once we have the immunization and vaccine. How do we get it to the most vulnerable populations?



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- Tanya – meaning and purpose. How to find joy and thrive
- Suggestion: Franklin requested spending 15-20 min at some point in the future to listen to each person, ask questions, and get to know each other better.

2. Where we have been

- Jacqui provided an updated spreadsheet with a list of past commission recommendations to the group. Key points from the following discussion included:
- Chuck – The Aging Readiness Plan (ARP) was published in 2012 and it is almost the 9th year of the plan. When considering the group’s 2021 plan, wants a plan refresh or update to be on the table.
- Pam – could we talk about what other communities have done, adding that information to the ARP?
- Linda – agrees with update to ARP. The Commission has hit almost all the areas in the ARP. Maybe it is also time to think of what’s next? It may not pay to update a document, but may need to ask the Councilors what they wish of this committee?
- Amy – the ARP could never have imagined COVID-19, when it was developed in 2011. We may need to focus on aging in Clark Co. with COVID-19 in the near future.
- Franklin – likes the idea and would propose this will not be the last pandemic. Do we need to incorporate that into our thinking in a modified or new plan?
- Amy – we have been getting ready to do more outreach to the cities. What does each city need, want, or is doing already? Could be good to summarize for them at end of the year.
- Larry – lessons learned. When this virus is over, will we forget about it and go back to things like before? I want us to learn and be better prepared for future.
- Nancy – could incorporate COVID-19 learnings from this year. What systems could help the elder population stay connected, safe and not be isolated?
- Linda – there is some value of looking back. We may have to sift items out that are still relevant, that we want to know more about, etc. In a new plan, could address things like many seniors take a lot of medications; what happens with medication access during an emergency? Also, could address things like some people who say they are an aging in place specialist, but don’t have a formal certification.
- Nancy – noted that there are formal certifications, i.e. Earth Advantage and National Association of Homecare and Hospice (NAHC)
- Amy – the first pandemic in my life was polio. I was in the first kindergarten that was vaccinated. I know people with post-polio syndrome. While I don’t know what post-COVID will look like, we may be able to look back and learn something.

3. 2020 goals and outcomes

2020 Focus update: Jacqui provided an update on planning for end of 2020. Based on the August commission meeting, staff are recommending a topic for each of the end of year meetings where a couple of speakers are invited to answer the following questions: 1) what are you seeing/noticing? 2) what resources are available that the public should know about? 3) what can community members and/or elected officials do to help? Commission members provided feedback on the plan for each month:

- *Food, supplies, medication*
 - Tanya: wants to understand the ecosystem. i.e. does Food Bank also see self as helping with medications? What is working well and where are they getting caught up? Who are we missing from the stakeholder list? Aware that health systems are working on similar issues. Family community resource centers could be a good addition and are well-connected with some local churches.
 - Amy: the Red Cross sets-up relationships with pharmacies and eye glasses in emergencies. Could consider connecting with the Cascade Red Cross.
 - Chuck: Wants to understand the trends and any issues with support infrastructure?
 - Tanya and Franklin: recommended adding a disaster planning topic we have a disaster planning topic. Amy is glad to be a point person on disaster preparedness from her experience with the Red Cross.
- *Housing*
 - Pam: is there a central spokesperson for the assisted living facilities? Jacqui: there was someone who we previously worked with, who coordinated staff from multiple facilities involved in senior recreation.
 - Linda: the Washington State Long-term Care Ombudsman Program may be a good resource. Linda knows the director of the local program.
 - Nancy: due to the high death rate in congregate living facilities, anticipates there will be a trend for elder members to stay closer to home instead of at congregate living facilities.
 - Tanya: aware that Camas is working on a Housing Action Plan. We could bring city staff to share what they are learning.
- *Isolation*
 - Tanya: Health systems or health plans that may be involved. Would we consider looking outside our county, ex. UK has a silver line? How do we learn about best practices happening elsewhere?
 - Meghan: The UK also has a Ministry of Aging. One of their projects involves an app, where if you see a sign of loneliness, you can drop a pin on the app and it alerts social services to come by and do a check. There is evidence that when people start to look for signs of loneliness, they become more observant.
 - Amy: at the last ADRN meeting, there was a presentation on using a TV to create a virtual connection, designed for people without computers. The Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest

Washington (AAADSW) is about to partner with this organization in some way.

- Outreach
 - Currently, Commission on Aging meetings and events are shared via an email distribution list, Facebook, newspapers, press release, and historically are broadcast through CVTV.
 - Nancy: recommends using the NextDoor application to share public announcements. Staff confirmed the county has a NextDoor license and can coordinate with the county neighborhood coordinator.
 - Amy: recommends Map Your Neighborhood program. It's based on getting 6 neighbors together. The program has presentations on how to connect with your neighbors, put something in your window. People are assigned a task during a disaster.
 - Franklin: Vancouver Fire Dept. has an emergency preparedness program. Not sure if it is currently active. The program has a lot of the features of what Amy was describing.
 - Franklin: the local emergency planning committee may have some systems that could be activated.
 - Larry: there is a local emergency preparedness course. When graduate from the program, you are supposed to go back into neighborhood and blueprint your neighborhood.
- 2019 Annual Report presentations
 - The group discussed sending a memo to each of the city councils in lieu of a virtual presentation.
 - Chuck: recommends 1) inviting media to join and watch commission meetings because some of the COVID-19 information may be helpful. 2) Wait until 2021 to re-engage the city councils in-person or virtually.
 - Pam: recommends sending a memo covering here is what we have done and what we'll be focusing on in the near future.
 - Franklin: recommends leaving an opening to have facetime in 2021
 - **ACTION ITEM: staff to put letter together for chair and vice chair review and then send off to city councils**
- 2020 Annual Report and joint meeting with Council
 - The group discussed having a scaled down annual report, based on last 3-months of year
 - Logistically, staff recommend finalizing/reviewing the report in January and holding the joint meeting with Council in February
 - **ACTION ITEM: Staff to move forward with proposal**
- 2020 Healthy communities summit canceled this year.
 - Chuck suggests defer major event discussion to 2021.
 - Nancy: agrees to hold off on events until things blow-over. Give us breathing room. Time for us to plan for next year. Makes sense to wait and see.
 - Last 3 meetings this year will be virtual events unto themselves.
ACTION ITEM: Staff to check with CVTV on video options for 2020.

4. Planning for 2021 and beyond

- The group has two primary questions to answer to prepare for 2021: 1) What will be the focus for 2021? 2) How do we want to structure ourselves for action?
- Chuck: Community engagement: overarching topic
- Chuck: Could focus on engagement with community members, with outreach focused on diverse cultural groups and those with limited income and resources
- Linda: Could frame topic as community engagement and re-engagement; something that gets to the fact that things are different since the COVID-19 outbreak, and we need to approach and think about our approach and mission differently/through our new COVID lens
- Tanya: What does success look like?
- Chuck: requested staff to work with what the group has shared and develop a draft for group review. Will keep as work session agenda topic for next three months as we work out the details. Plan may evolve as hear fall presentations. Goal will be to finalize at January mini-retreat.
- **ACTION ITEM: staff to take above ideas and discussion from earlier in meeting to put together a draft proposal for commission review and consideration. Group will then iterate and refine draft over the course of the next several months.**

5. Leadership roles and liaisons

- The group reviewed current and recent liaison roles that commission members of held
- Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of SW Washington - Aging and Disabilities Resource Network (ADRN)
 - Amy has been attending these meetings. Linda has attended in the past.
 - Meetings are quarterly
 - Amy and Linda both think the presentations are usually interesting.
 - Amy is not interested in continuing as the liaison, but would recommend to other commission members who may be interested
- Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of SW Washington - Advisory Council
 - No current commission members attend these meetings
 - Linda has attended in the past and is on the mailing list and receives the agenda each month.
 - Many of the topics are not relevant to the Commission on Aging's focus areas.
 - Linda recommends having someone continue to receive meeting agendas, and could attend if it's a topic of interest
- Clark County Public Health Advisory Council
 - Amy has a monthly phone call with David Hudson, who works at Clark County Public Health
 - This approach seemed more helpful than attending the monthly advisory council meetings
 - Amy is interested in continuing in her role as liaison to public health

- Human Services Council
 - Chuck connected with Colleen Kuhn, who is the Executive Director of this organization
 - There are currently openings on the Human Services Council board. Linda is currently on their board
 - There are also openings on their Accessible Transportation Coalition (meets quarterly, virtually at this time)
- Mental Health Organization – there was a suggestion to consider developing a relationship with one of the local mental health organizations
- **ACTION ITEMS: staff to share list of organizations for commission member consideration. Commission members who may be interested in serving as a liaison with any of these groups, or has a suggestion for a different group to establish a partnership with, can notify staff before the October commission meeting**

6. Silver Citizen Award

- Linda presented the award subcommittee recommendation to the commission for vote
- The group unanimously supported the subcommittee’s recommendation and selected Evelyn Hallett as the first recipient of the Silver Citizen Award
- Group would like to honor other nominees with honorable mention
- **ACTION ITEM: Staff will notify awardee and nominees and work on details to prepare for the November awards ceremony and provide updates to the group moving forward**

7. Other?

- **ACTION ITEM: Staff will share a link to the COA webpage with commission member bios. If members have any edits, please send those back to staff.**
- **ACTION ITEM: add item to future work session agendas that will help commission members continue to get to know each other better**

8. **Next Meeting:** October 21, 2020 – 3 or 3:30pm-TBD.

9. **Adjournment:** The retreat adjourned at approximately 6:00pm.

The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership in community engagement and advocacy of Clark County's Aging Readiness Plan, especially for those 65 and over who plan to age in place.