



Clark County Commission on Aging  
Webex Remote Meeting  
Vancouver, Washington

## MEETING NOTES

Wednesday, March 16, 2022  
4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

**Members Present:** Chuck Green (Chair), Franklin Johnson (Vice Chair), Nancy Dong, Cass Freedland, Amy Gross, Meghan McCarthy, Larry Smith, Tanya Stewart and Pamela Wheeler

**Absent:** None

### 1. Welcome and call to order

Chair Green opened the meeting and completed a roll call of the Commission members.

#### Approval of agenda

Chair Green requested to amend the agenda to add discussion under communications about hybrid meetings.

#### Approval of March 16, 2022 work session and meeting notes

Larry Smith moved to approve the meeting notes. Vice-Chair Johnson seconded the motion. The notes were unanimously approved.

### 2. General Public Comment

There were no public comments.

### 3. Public Health Advisory Council Nomination

- Members discussed nominating someone to represent the Clark County Commission on Aging on the Public Health Advisory Council.
- Dr. Alan Melnick, the Public Health Director, attended the meeting, gave background of the new position on the board, and answered questions. He clarified that the board does not include alternate members.
- The commission voted to recommend Amy Gross for appointment to the Public Health Advisory Council representing the Clark County Commission on Aging or the aging community.

### 4. Program Highlight: Home Share Program

- Mark Maggiora and Tiffany Kostrba, with Faith Partners for Housing gave a presentation on home sharing and creating a home sharing community.
- A copy of the presentation is located under the 4/20/2022 meeting section on [this](#) page of the county website.



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- Following the presentation, Tanya Stewart asked how often they are finding out about housing challenges through the school districts? Tiffany commented that the schools are a good place to connect people to these types of resources and they are exploring distributing surveys to the school districts. Tanya commented that the Camas Family-Community Resource Center is a great place for these types of connections and mentioned that the schools don't only need to be a resource for children. Mark Maggiora commented that they hope that neighborhood associations, school districts and large employers and can also act as resources for their home sharing program.
- Nancy Dong asked if those using the Faith Partners for Housing program was limited in any way. Mark responded that they are leveraging their relationships with the faith community and working with organizations of many different faiths. They do not place any restrictions on anyone involved in or served by their program.
- Megan McCarthy commented on the potential costs of assisted living. She remarked on the great benefits of this type of program and that the current practice of skilled nursing services may not be sustainable. Tiffany commented on the significant cost for assisted living, adult family and group homes and mentioned that with home sharing, skilled nursing services can potentially visit more than one person at a shared home. This model could also apply for recovery options as a potential alternative to an Oxford House.
- Vice-Chair Johnson asked about the rate of placements that do not work and the process when a placement isn't working. Mark commented that a thorough vetting and matching process is key. As an example, Metro Home Share in Portland ran a program for 35 years and made over 5,000 placements during that time. Less than one percent of the matches had issues. Tiffany commented that they will require an application and interview process to assist with the process.
- Tanya Stewart suggested the book, *The Hundred Story Home* as a good resource.
- Public comment on this agenda item:
  - Herman is an executive team member of the Faith Partners for Housing. He is currently home sharing and strongly supports the program. This is a great housing alternative and he is very appreciative that he has the opportunity.

#### **5. Moderated Discussion/ "Fireside Chat": 2022 Innovation Through Connection Kick-off: Survey Results & Service Provider Roundtable**

- Cass Freedland gave a presentation that touched on how the 2022 COA Focus came about and the survey that COA organized regarding the topic. A copy of the presentation is located under the 4/20/2022 meeting section on [this](#) page of the county website.
- Vice Chair Johnson expressed appreciation to the five distinguished guests, which included:
  - Ginger Barnwell, CDM Caregiving
  - Bill Baumann, Community in Motion
  - Kit Kuran, Vancouver Housing Authority
  - Christina Marneris, Area Agency on Aging & Disability of SW Washington
  - Suzanne Washington, Meals on Wheels People
- The main discussion topic was, "How can the Commission on Aging facilitate the development of innovative connection strategies to advance the health and well being of aging adults in Clark County?" To facilitate the discussion, each guest was asked the following questions:
  - Do the COA's survey results represent some of the issues that your organization has faced during the pandemic?

- Has your organization focused on other barriers to effective communication with aging adults in Clark County?
  - What successful connection strategies has your organization implemented and is there anything you would do differently?
- Christina Marneris commented that it really resonates that older adults prefer to engage in person or primarily via phone. At the time of the rollout of vaccines, the process was very complicated. Their office helped connect almost 400 older adults to vaccines by connecting via phone and helping schedule appointments. Organizations should keep this in mind as they plan and continue to evolve their emergency planning practices. While this is a very technology driven community and society, not everyone has access to technology or access to the knowledge of how to use the technology.
- Suzanne Washington commented that when the pandemic hit, they couldn't be at everyone's door delivering meals every day. In the Friendly Chat program, their customers preferred communication over the phone. They could opt-in to a program to get a phone call once a week. Over 65% wanted the call, whether it was from the same person or not. It has made a huge difference. They looked at other technology, but phone was preferred.
- Bill Baumann commented that Community in Motion learned that when older adults were sheltering in place during the pandemic, they were not interacting with their normal groups, whether it was friends, family, faith or other groups. Sheltering in place prevented normal socializing and made it difficult for older adults to get goods and services. Community in Motion transitioned their employment to work program into the essential delivery program to serve customers at home. People struggled with not being able to socialize in-person during COVID.
- Ginger Barnwell commented that in-person care was favored by the majority of CDM in-home care clients. This included errands and other in-home care. A small number asked only for call check-ins and medication reminders via the phone.
- Bill Baumann added that they found that the main source of socialization for many older adults was during transportation or at medical appointments during COVID.
- Ginger Barnwell also found that technology was a hinderance during virtual medical appointments.
- Kit Kuran commented that for older adults at VHA properties, they experienced many of the same issues as described by the other guests. There has been a barrier to engagement through technology. They are now back to serving their residents in-person. They are also having technology classes at their properties. They are partnering with Villages of Clark County and members can take advantage of their classes. They have a property for young adults that have experienced houselessness and that have transitioned out of the foster care system. Volunteers at that property are providing assistance and classes for older adults in the community.
- Christina commented that unpaid family caregivers also experienced isolation and a reduction in socialization. AAADSW launched a digital support group for caregivers and started a newsletter with games and inspirational messages. They tried to offer things that could reach any audience in a way that they liked to communicate. They transitioned their fitness classes to a digital format. They worked with the Accountable Community of Health (SWACH) to develop a technology mindset video series that is available to everyone in the community. The videos are a great resource for introducing how to access technology to older adults. They also did newsletters for other groups they work with and engaged with their clients over the phone in place of some home visits.

- Suzanne commented that there is a huge barrier to internet connection, access and affordability. They had a grant and provided a device and six months of internet service to some older adults but after the six month period was over, many people could not afford to continue the service.
- With peer-to-peer connections, Meals on Wheels People organized telephone book clubs to encourage the formation of friendships which had differing degrees of success. Telephone bingo was very successful. They also tried it virtually, which was not very successful. Their Safe Homes for Seniors program, coordinated through AAADSW, has been successful bringing volunteers to people's homes for routine maintenance and socialization. Library share helps deliver books to older adults and provide some socialization. Her organization is also looking into the services provided through home share programs as a way to assist older adults.
- Bill Baumann said Community in Motion shared information with their contracted transportation vendors so they could pass the information on to older adults they served. An example was having vendors share information about their essential delivery program when they were delivering food or driving customers to appointments or other destinations. Word of mouth was also successful. Once older adults found out about the programs offered, they shared with others that were in need.
- Questions from Commission Members
  - Larry Smith asked if Neighborhood and Homeowners Associations were successful in disseminating information. Several of the guests found those organizations very helpful in getting the word out through Nextdoor or their newsletters.
  - Chair Green asked about the community rooms in the VHA facilities. Kit Kuran reported that the community rooms reopened for use in March 2022.
  - Cass Freedland asked if any of the guests had heard of any really interesting things at other organizations or in other communities that they would like to see replicated in Clark County. Christina mentioned a volunteer companion program that they are exploring and a simplified internet access technology over the television called Kradle. Suzanne said the television access was something they were also reviewing.
- Public Comment:
  - A member of the public, Andy Tawker, had a question for some of the guests. He was wondering if any of the agencies had a 211-type portal that is dedicated to senior citizens in our community? If not, are there any plans for creating that type of system? He also asked about the affordable internet access program offered by the federal government and if there is any effort to help people make these or other programs available to seniors in Clark County?
  - Mark Maggiora commented that the Middle Class Alliance organization had a primary goal of internet access for all. That group has dissolved but some members are working with the state on trying to offer services to communities in need.
  - Bill Bauman mentioned [tripresourcescenter.org](http://tripresourcescenter.org) helps provide information about the transportation resources available in each SW Washington County. Also AAADSW has [helpingelders.org](http://helpingelders.org) which has many varied resources for older adults and people with disabilities.
  - Kit Kuran also referenced that they offer resource guides at each of their properties.

- Franklin expressed appreciation attendance by all of the guests and the interesting ideas they offered.

#### **6. Hybrid Meetings**

Chair Green announced that the County Council started hybrid meetings. He asked commission members about their feelings on hybrid meetings. Members generally supported starting hybrid meetings to give options to commission and community members for attendance and to meet some members who have never attended an in-person meeting. Larry Smith referenced that other jurisdictions are having successful hybrid meetings. Chair Green suggested having the May meeting as a hybrid meeting and suggested the Chair and Vice Chair would coordinate with staff on the details.

#### **7. Public health update**

Amy Gross gave an update of the COVID-19 talking points from public health.

#### **8. Announcements**

- There were no announcements.

#### **9. Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 6:17 p.m.

***The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership and creates community engagement in addressing the needs and opportunities of aging.***