

**SENIOR SERVICES GRANT COMMISSION (SSGC)**  
**McHenry County Administration Building**  
**667 Ware Road, Conference Room B**  
**Woodstock IL 60098**

MINUTES OF FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 2011

Chairman Salgado called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The following Commission Members were present: Chairman Sandy Salgado, Randy Donley; Mary Donner; Virginia Peschke; Anna May Miller; Kathleen Bergan Schmidt; Susan Ritzert; Donna Schaefer; Mary Reid; Norman Joyce; Bruce Treadway; Stephen Polep and Kevin Sarnwick. Donna Kurtz, Don Kopsell, Catherine Nash and Richard Hattan were absent. Also in attendance: John W. Labaj, Deputy County Administrator; Linda McMahon, Administrative Analyst; Lucia Jones, Executive Director, and Kevin Kinsella, Program Specialist from the Northwest Illinois Area Agency on Aging.

Sandra Salgado, Chairman

|                  |                         |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| Bruce Treadway   | Randy Donley            |
| Don Kopsell      | Kathleen Bergan-Schmidt |
| Mary Donner      | Anna May Miller         |
| Catherine Nash   | Stephen Polep           |
| Virginia Peschke | Mary Reid               |
| Susan Ritzert    | Donna M. Kurtz          |
| Donna Schaefer   | Richard Hattan          |
| Kevin Sarnwick   | Norman Joyce            |

MINUTES:

Commission members reviewed the minutes from March 4, 2010. A couple typographical errors were noted. Mr. Polep made a motion, seconded by Kevin Sarnwick to recommend approval of the above commission minutes, as amended. The motion carried with all members present voting aye on a voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Presentations:

*Presentations by the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging and the Human Services Advocates of McHenry County:* Mr. Labaj introduced Lucia Jones, the Executive Director and Kevin Kinsella, Program Specialist from the Northwest Illinois Area Agency on Aging. The Northeastern Illinois Agency on Aging and Human Services Advocates provides services to the eight (8) counties around Cook County. This includes DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will Counties. Ms. Jones thanked the commission for doing a good job on getting the senior services levy passed in order to help fund areas when funding is lacking. Ms. Jones stated that McHenry County is one of the fastest growing counties in the State. There has been a huge migration from the metro areas out. They believe there are at least 55,000 seniors living in the County. 1/5 of the current population is over the age of 60. There will always be a need for long term 24/7 quality care. Ms. Jones asked the commission how many had selected which nursing home they would like to live in? No one expects to have to move into a nursing home. Individuals expect to stay living in their homes. America is a young country, rapidly growing old. In order to remain independent, transportation services become an issue. The number one need for the aging population is the need for door to door transportation services. When seniors start changing their driving patterns it usually signifies they should no longer be driving. They make these changes to accommodate how their health is being affected. Ms. Jones provided commission members with a list of what Agencies and services are funded by the Northeastern Illinois Area Agency on Aging in FY10 and the proposed allocations for FY2011. Many of the programs funded by the agency are also funded by the Senior Services Grant Commission. These programs were not designed to cover 100% of their funding and each agency is required to pay a 15% match of the funds received from the Agency on Aging. This percentage has not changed in over 35 years. Right now for FY2011, all service agencies are working without a final State and Federal budget. Even though the agencies are using the numbers that have been promised, they are not sure they will receive what has been promised. Many of the service providers have had to close their doors because of the lack of these funds. McHenry County has been very fortunate as none of the agencies have closed in the County even though this is happening throughout the State. These are agencies that serve real people with real needs. Right now they are continuing to pay the grantees even

## SENIOR SERVICES GRANT COMMISSION

April 15, 2011

Page 2

though the budget is in crisis. The continuing resolutions have included assurances the agencies will receive the same funding as last year. There are not promises coming forward for FY2012. There are trillions of Federal funds and billions of State funds at stake and the services agencies will suffer because of this. We have no idea of who will be funded. The only known is that the Governor and the Republicans have both produced a draft budget. Everyone should review both of these budgets as each would affect every person in this room. For the proposed Federal Budget the employment program will be cut in half. This is the program that allows older people to enter the workforce. In order to qualify for this employment program the senior must be off work for at least 12 months, they have usually spent all their savings, so they need to work. This program takes persons over the age of 55 and places them in Not for Profit Agencies. These are programs that affect the older persons that want and need to go back to work. This program was cut in half at the Federal Level. The State currently funds a Senior Health Assistance Program where they help the seniors to complete applications for services. This program has been completely eliminated in the Governor's budget. Illinois Care Rx has been eliminated, and the Circuit Breaker will be eliminated after June 30<sup>th</sup>. These are programs that are very difficult for the seniors to navigate. There is also a proposal to cut services 20% across the board. Home delivered meals could be reduced by 3,000 people in the County. The proposed Republican budget has reduced the funding levels to the FY2008 amounts. At least with this proposal there are known funding levels, what's not okay is the uncertainty of what funds the agencies will receive. The senior population is growing which means the number of persons in need of services is growing. The State has worked out a new budgeting system. This is being called the unified budgeting system. The Speaker of the House, President of the Senate meet with an independent budgeting person to come up with the number needed to fund for each committee. Each committee will get a piece of this budget. Historically Human Services gets 20% of the budget. Aging is funded within the Human Services budget. Individuals on the Human Services committee are given a specific pot of money with a profile for each agency, a synopsis of how the program may save money or return money to the State. In the "aging" budget, the community care program (in home services program) that services seniors to help them stay in their homes. Every older person must now qualify for the service. They will be required to file for Medicaid, spend down any savings they may have, in order to qualify for the program. They have to "earn" the right to get an in home worker or services from this program. They will require a "cost share", depending on their income. Many seniors will chose not to spend down their savings, putting many seniors at risk. There has been no funding put into place for FY2012. On the State Website you can go to the Human Services Committee and see where they have been challenged to take their 20% and put it into the appropriate services. The persons on the committee have no idea what some of the Human Services groups do. They will require a learning curve so they can get an idea where funding is needed. They have no idea how these services are delivered. The closest official serving on this committee is from Grundy County. These officials do not know a lot about aging. Aging services are not just for old people. Some of the services are for the care giver support. These are the individuals caring for the older adult. It is much different caring for a child versus an old person. There is no way to get away from the daily requirements. These caregivers feel terribly guilty for wanting time away from their responsibilities. The Agency on Aging tries to provide comfort to some of the caregivers. They also try to provide support for the large influx of disabled adults. This is a big issue. The special needs old folks need a service network to address these needs.

The senior population continues to grow and they are very guilty of not saving well enough for their retirement. One day every person in this room will be old. We need to make sure there is a safety net in place to address our future needs. Ms. Jones stated she is so grateful for the Senior Services Grant Commission. This County is very fortunate to have this type of support from the community. Ms. Jones thanked the commission members for their time.

Committee members were reminded that this commission runs off of a Strategic Plan. A survey was completed and one item that they saw was the need for in home services. The other item was transportation. McHenry County has been a leader in the transportation program. One of the first items to get cut during budget cutting sessions is transportation services. This County has realized that no matter how rural or dense, there are people out there that need help. Some of the people receiving services only see people when these services are brought into their home. It was stated that the County needs to highlight the transportation services being provided to these agencies so they can see how much these services are needed.

## SENIOR SERVICE GRANT COMMISSION

April 15, 2011

Page 3

There are a lot of issues out there that need to be reported when seen. These include elder abuse, financial exploitation, telephone fraud and depression. Everyone needs to keep an eye out for these issues. More in home intervention is needed. More than just funding is needed.

Mr. Kevin Kinsella, Program Specialist for the Northwest Illinois Area Agency on Aging, was introduced to the commission members. He is the community partner for McHenry County. It was stated that they work closely on the general programs. Faith in Action has an extensive transportation program. They also work with the VAC on Veteran services. Communication among the groups is mutually beneficial. Under the Governors proposed cuts, the elected officials do not have any idea what and who these cuts affect. Commission members questioned that if one of their senior assistance programs is cut, how do you fight to retain these programs? It was stated that no one will receive the funding they have in the past. They need to fight to keep seniors in their homes and out of institutions. Institutionalizing these seniors will cost more than keeping funding in place to keep them in their homes. Groups will need to collaborate their efforts to continue funding for some of these needed services. Commission Members thanked Mr. Kinsella for his time.

*Discussion on Updating Senior Service Grant Commission Strategic Plan for 2011:* Mr. Labaj presented commission members with an annual report of accomplishments as of February 28, 2011. The completed goals were highlighted. Number three (3) on the long term complex goals, "Establish an Emergency Fund for Seniors" This fund could be used for normal upkeep and maintenance or owner occupied real estate, for out of pocket costs currently being paid by caseworkers, emergency medications etc. While this is not specifically been established, the commission can entertain grant request for a community wide emergency. There has been difficulty in securing an agency willing to fund emergency maintenance program. Commission members stated that they may need to expand this program and request that the Housing Authority apply for this type a grant. They would be a good fit for this program. Goal #4 has been met as McHenry County College has added needed programs for health care coursework.

One of the long term routine goals included additional staff to support the Senior Services Grant program. The General Fund supports part time staff for this program.

For the allocation meeting commission members need to be mindful of the State and Federal cuts being made to the Human Service Agencies.

Commission members were reminded to review the Health Departments "Health Community Survey". This has been posted on the Health Department's website for those interested.

Commission members stated that there was very good information presented today that highlighted the aging population. This information is available on the website. Commission members need to ask the agencies what services they are providing so we know, who is providing what in order to address cuts to these services. The Housing Authority is contemplating an application to assist seniors in home repair projects. It was stated that the grant commission may be able to increase services to the Salvation Army to address these cuts.

Commission members stated that the Circuit Breaker program is very important to many in the community. It was suggested that the Treasurer and Assessor be contacted to find out how many people are signed up for the current Circuit Breaker program.

The County does not have any dental programs for seniors. The only programs available are for kids. In order to get discounted services individuals are referred to Belvidere, Rockford or Elgin. This is an area that services are needed.

Ms. Miller left committee at 11:33a.m.

Sample application forms have been included for review. There were two changes to the forms. The changes include the questions of how much is the funding request and what is the total cost of the program.

SENIOR SERVICES GRANT COMMISSION

April 15, 2011

Page 4

Applicants are also required to include a description so the program can be evaluated and documentation of achievements. The applicants are also required to attend a workshop. One workshop has been scheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00a.m. and July 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:30p.m.

Commission members stated that the CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Commission requires all services to be increased by 50%. This is a huge number.

Commission members were requested to send any questions they may have to Mr. Labaj.

Commission members were informed that the Senior Services Grant Commission members are not required to fill out the blue statement of economic addendum form. An advisory committee this is not required to provide this information as was detailed in the State's Attorney's opinion sent to members.

The next commission meeting will be August 19<sup>th</sup>, the all day grant review session. Commission members requested a copy of the draft minutes prior to the meeting for review.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Noting no further business, Ms. Peschke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Polep, to adjourn the meeting at 11:39a.m. The motion carried with a unanimous voice vote of all members present.

\* \* \* \* \*