

Issues/Advocacy Meeting

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday June 16, 2015

SSAC/DSAC Members Present: Mike Volpe, Doris Lamb, Kimberly Kimball, Bill Hall, Sherry Rocha, Margaret Wells, Mark Frederic.

Guests: Rodney Schroeder, Mitzi Naucler and Cathy Savage.

Staff: Lisa Bennett, Ann Johnson, Randi Moore, Mary Kay Fitzmorris and Terri Sharpe.

- 1) Lisa Bennett called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm.
 - Introductions were made including guests.

- 2) Presentation – Legislative and Advocacy Update (Rodney Schroeder; O4AD Chair, NW Seniors and Disability Services Executive Director):
 - State and Federal Updates
 - Federal Level:
 - Older Americans Act Reauthorization:
 - At the Federal level one of the main issues being tracked and advocated for is reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. Authorization for the OAA expired three years ago but fortunately Congress has continued to appropriate dollars toward the Act's programs so they can continue. Programs that fall under the OAA include nutritional programs, family care giver support programs, legal aid support, evidence based programs, support services and some mental health work programs. The Federal dollars and the Federal OAA dollars are part of the nondefense nondiscretionary dollars that were tied up in sequestration at the Federal level. There have been some cuts and changes at the Federal level on funding so funding has not kept pace with cost of living allowances or growth, or any of the baby boomer aging demographics that need those services. Rodney feels reauthorization of the OAA will happen by the end of this calendar year.
 - Mike inquired if there was any particular congressman that was carrying the bill. Rodney said it was Senator Sanders that started it but both our Senators have signed on.
 - Mike asked if any of the cuts and changes that have happen over the last three years will be reinstated. Rodney stated that the appropriations and the reauthorization are separate and due to sequestration the appropriation dollars are less each year.
 - Federal Budget:

- For the first time in many years Congress has passed a budget; however, it is not favorable to the programs that Senior and Disability Services care about. There were distinct cuts with Medicare and some OAA programs.
- They are in the middle of the appropriation process where 12 appropriation bills will go through on Capitol Hill. Labor, Health and Human Services along with Education will start getting talked about this week. The President said if there are drastic cuts or if there is not a restoration to some of the sequestration impact he will veto those bills. There is not enough support in the House or the Senate to override his veto so we may see political turmoil going back forth to the end of the current fiscal year which ends September 30th of this year. With this turmoil there is talk on another government shutdown. If Congress doesn't do something to alleviate the sequestration, sequestration is scheduled to continue. Rodney feels that is probable that we will see a continuing resolution as they gear up for the 2016 elections.
- White House Conference on Aging:
 - Rodney announced the White House Conference on Aging will be culminating in Washington DC on July 13th (the time is still unknown). They will be live streaming the conference and are encouraging local communities to hold viewing events. The State has reserved the Veteran's Auditorium in downtown Salem for this and AARP and NW Senior and Disability Services are both looking into holding an event. The live stream will not be a direct live interaction but rather a live call in where one could provide their input.
 - Lisa asked if anyone was interested in viewing a live stream. Margaret Wells stated she would be. Rodney anticipates the event would be held in the early morning and that's where issues may arise since the east coast is three hours ahead of us.
- Oregon Forum WHCOA
 - Back in May the Governor's Commission on Senior Services orchestrated a White House Conference on Aging in Lebanon. Rodney shared that he felt the forum was very well done and well organized and they did a successful job in getting Oregon's voice heard. He gave kudos to Ann McQueen for her part in organizing and facilitating the Conference.
- State Level
 - Anticipated Budget – Update
 - The Budget is expected to be completed on or around July 11th. The Human Services Budget should be out at any point. This Budget is one that the Co-chairs have worked on and will be released through the Committee. House Bill 5026 is the Budget Bill for this. At this time nothing has been released to the subcommittee but when it has, a group of stake holders will look it over and

- make their suggestions. From there it goes back out to the Committee in the revised format where it will be presented for the final vote.
- 13-15 Investments (15-17 anticipation)
 - All the Investments that we received in 13-15 remain in the Co-chair's framework in theory. What we haven't seen is the actual numbers and the breakout which will happen when the Budget is released. Both Co-chairs have been telling Advocates and the O4AD that the Investments will remain in the framework.
 - In the last biennium we received sequestration general funds to offset the impact of the Federal sequestration and the OAA funding. That restoration of the funds was in the Governor's Recommended Budget that came out in December and so far they have not been removed from the Co-chairs' framework. Rodney feels it's a fifty fifty shot that this could end up in the Budget this go around.
 - Lisa asked what the money would be spent on if it did go through. Rodney stated that it would go back into the OAA Titles in the area where they lost their money, split accordingly among those programs.
 - Mike asked if there was any conversation on the OPI pilot project. Rodney stated that one of the investments in the last biennium was the OPI for younger people with disabilities. It was a \$3 million pilot for one year which ends at the end of this month. In the Co-chairs' framework they are looking at \$6 million to continue the pilot. There is intent for the statewide OPI Program to go to an age neutral program.
 - Lisa inquired if the OPI pilot had a hard time finding people for the pilot and whether we are where we should be in regards to our number of case loads. Rodney said it took some time to get the program up and running, so not all of the funds were used. However, we expect to utilize the full amount awarded in the upcoming biennium.
 - Rodney stated we need to meet the needs of the consumers and as of now NW has reinstated a waiting period for the Senior OPI Program. Lisa reminded everyone that COG also has a waiting list for Senior OPI.
 - Rodney said the Department's position is to recommend \$26.4 million and move OPI to an age neutral program. Rodney made sure the Legislature knew that this would not lessen the wait list numbers. Mike asked if the wait list was shorter than it used to be. Rodney said that NW's was but he had not seen a statewide report but he suspects that it is as well. Randi stated that Lincoln County's wait list for Senior OPI went down but is back up again and there is no wait list for OPI for younger people with disabilities.
 - Rodney summed up that the 15-17 Investments look to be in a favorable position but we'll find out when the Budget comes out any day now.

- Human Services Budget
 - Rodney explained that in our area we do not get involved in the service side of Developmental Disability (DD) so he is not as familiar with it but will give a brief overview of what he knows.
 - Three bienniums ago Self Sufficiency began to change the model in the way they were funded. It moved away from the “case work” model and into a “work load” model. Two bienniums ago Aging People with Disabilities (APD) started working with the Department to move our case load model to a work load funding model. In the case load model you were funded by the number of open cases sitting in the branch offices at a specific moment in time. In the work load model credit was given for all the work put into a case regardless of whether it was opened or not. This last biennium we were funded on the work load model and that, along with the 95% equity, is what helped the Transfers with an increase in allocations. The four Transfers include NW Senior and Disability Services, Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, Lane Council of Governments and Multnomah County.
 - APD worked with O4AD to get to where they are now, where DD is just starting to work through to get to the work load model. They are at the table asking for increased funding to help them get there. Unfortunately, at this time asking for any new or additional funding is a hard battle to go through.
- Systems challenges
 - The Federal Department of Labor came out with a ruling about a year ago stating homecare providers are subject to the Wage and Hour Law. This means any provider working over 40 hours a week, this includes live-ins on standby, will get overtime. Provider’s drive time, going from consumer to consumer, will be factored into their numbers of hours worked as well. This ruling was to go into effect January of this year with a 6 month non-enforcement period. There was a Federal court stay stating the Department of Labor overstepped their bounds. The DOL appealed the stay and we now are waiting on the ruling of the appeal, which will be coming out anytime soon. DOL is confident that they will prevail and the states should be working toward implementing these new rules. In Oregon there was an impact both physically and systematically to implement this due to the fact that we have no system in place to track and calculate the number of hours worked or the travel time involved. The State is working on this right now with the anticipation that they may have to implement all or some of the ruling. If the ruling went through without any revisions there would be close to a \$180 million impact.
 - Mike said one of the issues they are looking at is having home care workers working less hours but then more providers would be needed. Rodney agreed stating they are looking at capping the hours of a provider at 50.

- House Bill 3145 private homecare workers register with the Home Care Commission is alive in Ways and Means but nothing is scheduled.
- House Bill 3323 allows large county, Type B area with population of more than 650,000 to investigate suspected abuse and bring civil action against persons who engage in abuse; Rodney refers to it as the Multnomah County Bill.
- Senate Bill 227 authorizes the registry of information related to traumatic brain injuries; this has been signed by the Governor.
- Senate Bill 307 allows individuals in a facility to request activities of daily living be completed by person of preferred sex, there was a hearing on it today and has been referred back to Ways and Means.
- Senate Bill 327 is a minimum wage Bill on the Senate side; it's floating while minimum wage is being discussed.
- Senate Bill 449 creates office for deaf, deaf blind and hard of hearing services in DHS; this Bill is still alive in Ways & Means.
- Senate Bill 454 requiring all employers to implement sick time passed and will be signed by the Governor soon.
- Senate Bill 471 requires court to appoint legal counsel; it is alive in Ways & Means but there isn't a lot of discussion going on.
- Senate Bills 597 and 610 are both minimum wage Bills.
- Senate Bills 622 adds personal support workers and home care workers to list of mandatory reporters of abuse; was signed by the Governor.
- Senate Bill 682 is a minimum wage Bill.
- Senate Bill 774 requires the Home Care Commission to adopt a statewide plan to expand the home care worker workforce; this is still alive in Ways & Means.
- House Bill 5026 is the Budget Bill for the Human Services Budget and should be coming out anytime.

- Thanks were given to Rodney for his time and updates on what's happening in the Legislator.
- Lisa reminded everyone that Nicole Palmateer will be presenting in July and Mike McCormick in August.

3) Adjournment:

- The Issues & Advocacy Meeting was adjourned at 2:25pm.
- The Meeting Minutes were recorded by Terri Sharpe.