

SENIOR SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 2, 2016

Present: Suzette Boydston, Chair; Catherine Skiens, Vice Chair; Bill Hall, Commissioner; Anne Brett, Mark McNabb, Chris Barnes, Doris Lamb, Dewey Konopa, Janet Shinner, Curtis Miller, Bob Daley and Suzanne Lazaro.

Guests: Mike Volpe, Cathy Savage, Dani Marlow, Lee Lazaro, Tanya Thompson, Janet Judd, Victoria Short, Tim McQueary, Jasper Smith and Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald.

Members Absent: Bill Turner, Lee Strandberg, Kimberly Kimball, Margaret Wells and Fawn Metcalf.

Staff: Dave Toler, Ann Johnson, Sue Smith and Terri Sharpe.

- 1) Welcome, Introductions, Additions to the Agenda (Suzette Boydston, Chair):
 - Suzette Boydston called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. Introductions were made including guests.
- 2) Approval of Minutes:
 - **ACTION: Catherine Skiens moved to approve the SSAC January 5, 2016 minutes. Dewey Konopa seconded. Motion carried.**
- 3) *Talking About Dying* Community Forums (Bob Daley, Transitions and Caregiver Support Coordinator):
 - Bob Daley gave an update on the *Talking about Dying* Program sponsored by Oregon Humanities in Portland. Their goal was to bring Oregonians together to talk about issues and differences regarding death and dying. There were 42 90 minute discussions that reflected on people's stories and experiences, which ran from September of 2015 to January 2016. Bob was a facilitator for seven of the discussions here in the Willamette Valley and Newport. Attendees consisted of caregivers, someone with a personal illness, people in grief and others that work in the content area. Feedback from the participants consisted of feelings of connection to the group and to their community as well as relief in being able to talk about death and dying. There was a normalization of the dying process and the emotions associated with the dying process along with a release of grief for those that experienced a recent loss. People reported increased motivation in planning for their own end of life and hoped that there would be further opportunities for more discussions in this content area.

- There were eight facilitators that were hired as independent contractors through Oregon Humanities and funded by Oregon Humanities and Cambia Health Foundation. The response from the program was so great that on March 11th the facilitators will get together and discuss if there is anything that Oregon Humanities can do to provide another similar opportunity as they move forward.
- *Talking about Dying* is part of Oregon Humanities Conversation Project. There is a website and a magazine for anyone that is interested in their work.
- Mike Volpe stated that this topic would be of interest to DSAC as well. Suzette stated that any updates and continued conversation on the subject will be presented at the Joint meetings so as to include both Councils.
- Anne Brett inquired about the demographics of age and gender of those that attended the discussions. Bob stated that there were more seniors than younger people and the younger people consisted mostly of students that were taking a gerontology class. There were more women than men but not by a large ratio.
- Dave Toler inquired as to whether the support will be ongoing and what are the goals and outcomes they are looking for. Bob said that Oregon Humanities goals were to get the conversation going on a statewide level. The ongoing support will be discussed at the March 11th meeting. They did refer people to their local support groups and to “death cafes” where people can get together and talk about death and dying.
- Dave informed the Councils on the COHO (Choosing Options, Honoring Options) program. This program is primarily focused on emotionally and pragmatically preparing for death. This would involve family members planning and talking about issues regarding a dying family member as well as the person that is dying. Dave would like to see a similar program started in the three county area.
- Suzette would like Advance Directives as a topic for the Joint meeting along with having the Advance Directive forms on hand.

4) Information Sharing:

- Chris Barnes shared her excitement when Samaritan backed down from removing seniors out of Wiley Creek and hopes that they will follow through in getting the memory care portion of the facility put in. Chris also shared that she heard about a grant where they are sending Albany paramedics out into the community to follow up on non-emergency medical calls. She would like more information on this. Catherine Skiens stated that it was a pilot project but does not know if it has been approved yet by Samaritan.
- Rusty shared that he would like to see a representative from the fire department come speak to the Councils on emergency response for the home.
- Suzette shared that she would like the Councils to get out to the senior meal sites and to consider hosting a meeting at a site.
- Lee L shared that the Legislative Round Table was successful.

- Rusty would like to advocate to our congressman to eliminate the death tax. Suzette stated that there needs to be a conversation on death and dying and the cost of death and the cost of taxes for the family members on a list of upcoming agenda topics. As a whole the Councils need to agree what to advocate.

5) Adjourn for Lunch/Joint Meeting

- With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.
- The Meeting Minutes were recorded by Terri Sharpe.
- The next meeting is scheduled for March 1, 2016.