

Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting
March 17, 2011

Board Present: Kathleen Gaylord, Bob Roepke, Luis Ortega, Jamie Warndahl, Jan Olson, Jan Parker, Gayle Degler, Dan Erhart, Autumn Lehrke, Dave Menden, Virginia Lanegran, Jess Luce, Jan McCulloch

Board Absent: Gayle Dorfman, Sally Staggert, Laura Waterman Wittstock

Staff Present: Dawn Simonson, Lisa Sawyer

Guests: Katy Zillmer, Lillie News

The meeting was held at the offices of the MAAA located at 2365 North McKnight Rd., Suite 3, North St. Paul, MN 55109. Chair Kathleen Gaylord called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Following the Chair's welcome, motion by Degler; second by Lanegran to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the February 17, 2011 Board Minutes. Motion carried.

Chair's Report

Kathleen Gaylord commented on the letter she sent to Lieutenant Governor Yvonne Prettner Solon regarding Governor Dayton's interest in developing a service in his office to provide information to seniors. Kathleen's letter provided information about MAAA's service to the community through the Senior LinkAge Line. Chair Gaylord also commented on the release of 2010 Census data.

Executive Director's Report

Dawn Simonson reported on her participation in the Administrative Alignment workgroup convened by the Long-Term Care Imperative. She reported on participation in an input meeting in Anoka County related to senior housing and service development. The meeting was sponsored by Walker Methodist and VOA.

Dawn noted that MAAA had submitted, in partnership with Carver, Ramsey, Hennepin and Dakota Counties, an application for a state-funded ElderCare Development project. Objectives of the project are similar to the program development and coordination expectations of the MN Board on Aging. In the process of developing the application, MAAA met the FTE threshold requiring that the State approve an Affirmative Action Plan. Staff completed the plan and submitted it to the Human Rights Commission. MAAA is finding that more diverse applicants are applying for open positions as a result of using Cyber-recruiter and linking to major, national job websites.

Dawn also noted that MAAA staff members visited a new service provider in Minneapolis that is focusing on adult day services and transportation for African and African American elders. MEISA Care Group has invited the MAAA board to meet at its service site.

Dawn relayed that MAAA is hiring a call center coordinator and that the Pension Rights Project is likely to be renewed for a second year in the three-year grant cycle.

Dawn announced an event on Saturday, March 26 to be held at the Wilder Center by Senator Franken related to retirement planning and income security of older adults and invited board members to attend the April 29 MN Gerontological Society Conference.

Approval of Award for Title III-funded Home Delivered Meal Program Evaluation

Bob Anderson distributed the Request for Proposal and one proposal received to Board members. Bob noted that three potential evaluators contacted MAAA, expressed interest in the project, but stated they were unlikely to apply as they felt that the timeline to complete the work was too short. Bob pointed out that the single proposer, the Improve Group, proposed evaluation outside of the scope of MAAA's RFP and did not adequately address the activities requested. The Improve Group proposed to evaluate service providers no longer funded by MAAA as well as the providers currently being funded by MAAA.

Ortega, Lanegran and Gaylord commented that they were puzzled by the proposer's response and that it was uncommon for proposers to suggest significant, additional scope in response to an RFP. Parker commented that she was not surprised that the Improve Group put forward a plan to evaluate not only the current providers but also former providers as a reaction to media coverage related to MAAA's decision to fund a new home-delivered meals provider for 2011. Erhart suggested that MAAA may want to consider accepting the Improve Group's proposal as it offered greater scope than requested. Gaylord commented that the proposal was non-responsive in that it did not adequately address work elements requested in the RFP. Bob relayed that his recommendation was to reissue the RFP with an extended timeframe for the evaluation project.

There was additional discussion about the number of potential evaluators and the importance of following process in selecting an evaluation contractor. Related to questions from Roepke, Parker and others on timing of the results if the RFP was reissued, Bob replied that to be useful in informing contract renewals for 2012, that the results needed to be in hand in November.

McCulloch asked if MAAA will contact the Improve Group and let them know the reason their proposal was considered unresponsive, and Bob said he would do so immediately following the Board meeting.

Motion by Lanegran; second by Ortega to reissue the RFP to require a preliminary report in October and a final report in the 4th quarter. Motion carried.

Final Committee Assignments

Gaylord distributed the committee assignments, stated that chairs from 2010 have been retained and invited Board members to feel free to attend committee meetings to which they are not formally assigned. Committee notices will be sent out in advance. Roepke asked if MAAA should consider developing a long-range or strategic planning committee. Simonson replied that one had not existed in the recent past, and Lanegran and McCulloch reminded the Board that the newly configured Nominating and Governance Committee would take on some of this discussion for full consideration and action by the Board.

Year-end Financial Status - Preliminary Information

Terry Nielsen, Finance Director, reported that the audit process went well and that he expected a clean audit with no findings or questionable costs. The Audit/Finance Committee will hear the initial report from auditor LarsonAllen followed by a report to the Board in April.

Terry informed the Board that tenant PSI has been sold to Barron Services and the lease has been transferred. All payments are up to date.

Terry reminded the Board that MAAA was able to make investments in human resources software systems in 2010 as a result of revenue available that had originally been budgeted for health insurance premiums, and that was not needed as premiums came in significantly below budget. Terry commented on additional investments in 2010 to modernize MAAA's newsletter and to develop a database using Constant Contact. Newsletters are available on the website.

Terry described his concern for the funding outlook on both a federal and state level, but that we do not know anything definitive at this point.

Gaylord inquired about the impact of loss of state funds should that happen in 2011 and 2012. Simonson noted that loss of state funds would impact grocery delivery and Senior LinkAge Line services for which there is high demand.

Board Education to Support MAAA's Strategic Plan & Other Critical Knowledge Areas

Simonson set up a discussion framework for the Board to identify its top priorities for joint board and staff leadership education to align with the newly developed strategic plan. Roepke commented on the importance of leadership development, identification of leadership attributes and methods for holding each other accountable. He noted that leadership development at the board level should be defined and measured and that a focus in this area would inspire and energize the board to achieve MAAA's goals.

Luce described the work he has done offering education sessions, primarily in outstate Minnesota on Communities for a Lifetime. His presentation includes demographics. Members asked Jess if he would consider doing a session for the Board.

Simonson described opportunities for AAAs and the broader Title III Aging Network in the federal health care reform law including further development of evidence-based health promotion and chronic disease management and care transitions from hospital to home. She noted that CMS is expected to release funds for partnerships of Title III funded community based organizations and hospitals to improve care transitions from hospital to home for the purpose of reducing avoidable readmissions within thirty days of discharge. Roepke commented that this could be an effort that fits into larger community goals of striving to become healthy communities and could be done in partnership with other community stakeholders.

Gaylord identified that communication strategy is an important learning area for MAAA and is critical to helping to raise visibility of the agency and its services to the region.

Members commented about demographics and trends related to demography.

McCulloch asked if MAAA would be benchmarking against other entities or if we should consider benchmarking related to innovation and best practices or possibly to internal measures.

Menden asked how MAAA works with counties and discussion followed. Gaylord noted that she and Dawn had discussed future plan to bring information to counties to inform them of our goals and outcomes. Additional Board discussion ensued regarding seeking out a stronger relationship with the Metropolitan Council including role of the Comprehensive Planning process related to aging issues. McCulloch suggested inviting the Met Council to dialogue with us at an MAAA Board meeting.

Simonson will develop an outline of how the identified priorities align with the strategic plan and will work with the Nominating and Governance Committee to bring the plan to the Board. McCulloch and Warndahl volunteered to assist with development of the demographic learning area. Bob Roepke offered to assist with leadership.

State and Federal Funding Proposals & Legislative Initiatives

Simonson noted that there is no update on the federal level related to Title III funding as Congress continues its budget deliberations under a continuing resolution process. She highlighted bills related to seniors moving through the state legislature including the Alzheimer's working group bill, the Vulnerable Adult Coalition bill to strengthen protections for older adults, the voter ID bill and others. Dawn noted that the Governor's budget cuts grants for nutrition services, Senior LinkAge Line and other aging grants by 2%.

Meeting adjourned at 11:36 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Dawn Simonson