

Iowa Commission on Aging

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 9:15am

Welcome and Call to Order

Chairman Wulf called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken by Executive Assistant Christel Oberbroeckling.

Members Present

Chairman Joel Wulf, Commissioner Willard Jenkins, Commissioner Suzanne Heckenlaible, Commissioner David Heaton, and Commissioner Steve Van Oort.

Others Present

Director Zach Rhein, Christel Oberbroeckling, Shan Sasser, Alex Bauman, Gloriana Fisher, Dawn Kekstadt, Jayna Grauerholz, Sonya Streit, Angela Van Pelt, Becky Passman, Mike Donohue, Patty Funaro, and Teresa Bomhoff.

Approve Agenda and Minutes

Chairman Wulf asked that the agenda be amended to include an update from the Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Angela Van Pelt. Chairman Wulf called for a motion to amend the Commission on Aging agenda. Commissioner Jenkins motioned to amend the agenda as presented, and Commissioner Heaton seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Wulf called for a motion to approve the amended meeting agenda as presented. Commissioner Jenkins motioned and Commissioner Heaton seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The amended Commission Agenda was approved. Chairman Wulf called for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Van Oort motioned and Commissioner Jenkins seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Aging and Disability Services Staff Introductions by Zach Rhein/Gloriana Fisher

Director Rhein introduced Dawn Kekstadt as the Bureau Director for Community Integration Services. Gloriana Fisher introduced Jayna Grauerholz as the Legal Assistance Developer for Aging and Disability Services.

Legislative Update by Sonya Streit

Sonya Streit gave an overview of bills moving through the legislature that were related to Aging and Disability Services. SF 2081: Medicare Supplement Open Enrollment, SF 2057: Elderly Property Tax Credit, SF 2334: Gift Card Fraud, HF 2317: Nursing Home Room Monitoring, SF 2063: Nursing Home Admin. Training, HF 2585: Nursing Home Citations, HF 2577: End-Of-Life Care, SF 2385: Board Reviews, HF 2574: Repeal of Boards and Commissions, HF 2509/SF 2354: Governor's Behavioral Health Bill. Commissioner Wulf inquired if the language in the bills regarding the Commission on Aging meets the requirements of the Older Americans Act (OAA). Director Rhein explained that the State Unit on Aging (SUA) is now Health and Human Services (HHS). The Commission requests a post legislation wrap up at their next meeting.

Long Term Care Ombudsman Update by Angela Van Pelt

Angela Van Pelt gave an update on facilities and the challenges they face, which gives an opportunity for the aging population to remain at home. She states that facilities haven't recovered since COVID and complaints have risen. Service gaps remain for those who want to return home after residing in a facility. Director Rhein shared that data shows seniors living at home with support is less expensive than living in a facility. Angela discussed creative options in other states which have smaller, community settings. Staff appear happier in these smaller settings, which leads to a higher retention rate. South Dakota has an interesting Regional Designation Model. Commissioner Wulf inquired about staffing at facilities and Angela states they are routinely an administrative issue. When there is turnover in administration, which is often due to third party entities purchasing a facility, the continuity of care and staff morale is negatively affected. Often the corporations find that decreasing staff offers the biggest profit. Commissioner Wulf asked for a checklist to be included on the website if it is not already.

Scam Awareness by Gloriana Fisher

Gloriana Fisher, Bureau Chief of Prevention and Adult Protective Services, gave a presentation regarding scam awareness. There are many investment, Medicare, and consumer scams currently circulating in Iowa. Scammers tend to prey on fear and loneliness. Commissioner Jenkins asked if there could be an easy number to report scams. Gloriana states that information is distributed through the Area Agencies on Aging, Elder Abuse & Prevention, and the Attorney General's Office. The Inspector General's Office is working on publishing information nation-wide. Iowa Fraud Fighters encourages individuals to recognize scams, report fraud, and to protect themselves. Commissioner Wulf inquired about how much was lost every year. Gloriana reported that the loss can be in the millions per the Consumer Protections Agency.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

Chairman Wulf called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jenkins motioned and was seconded by Commissioner Heckenlaible. The Iowa Commission on Aging adjourned at 10:41am.