Iowa Commission on Aging

**Meeting Minutes**

Monday, June 10, 2024, 10:00 am

# **Welcome and Call to Order**

Chairman Wulf called the meeting to order at 10:02 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, Commissioner Baddeloo, Commissioner Steve Van Oort, and Senator Janice Weiner.

# **Others Present**

Director Zach Rhein, Christel Oberbroeckling, Shan Sasser, Gloriana Fisher, Dawn Kekstadt, Eugenia Kendall, Joe Campos, Cassie Tracy, Sonya Streit, Shelly Sindt, Becky Passman, Kelly Butts, Mike Donohue, Greg Zars, Barb Werning, Lindsey Ingraham, John Hale, Jill Sindt, Jacob Appel, and Dylan Keller.

# **Approve Agenda and Minutes**

Chairman Wulf called for a motion to approve the meeting agenda as presented. Commissioner Jenkins motioned and Commissioner Van Oort seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The Commission Agenda was approved. Chairman Wulf called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2023, meeting. Commissioner Badeloo motioned, and Commissioner Van Oort seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The Commission minutes were approved.

# **Administrative Rules by Joe Campos**

Joe Campos reviewed duplicative administrative rules that were presented in the December 2023 Commission Meeting, and the proposed the following rulemaking actions. Rescind and reserve 17 – Chapter 11, rescind and reserve 17 – Chapter 13, rescind and reserve 17 – Chapter 17, and rescind and reserve 17 – Chapter 18. There have been no public comments regarding the administrative rule change, and a vote is needed to approve the changes. Commissioner Wulf called for a motion to approve the administrative rule change as listed. Commissioner Jenkins motioned and Commissioner Van Oort seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The administrative rule change was approved.

# **Legislative Update by Sonya Streit**

Sonya Streit gave a high-level overview of the legislative session as it pertained to Aging and Disability Services. Over one thousand bills were introduced, and ten percent made it to the Governor’s desk for signature. Within the budget bill, nursing home training was addressed, and nursing home employees must register with the Department of Inspections and Appeals. The bill also transfers nineteen million dollars to Aging and Disability Services, of which fourteen and half million dollars will benefit home and community-based services to help individuals remain in their homes. The Boards and Commissions Bill eliminated or combined over 80 boards and commissions. In further discussion, Commissioner Wulf inquired about older Iowans having a voice. Sonya states their concerns can be addressed through Older Iowans in the Legislature (OIL) and Director Rhein states the duties of the Commission on Aging will be folded into the Health and Human Services Council. Sonya suggested reaching out to legislators to address concerns related to allowances for cares in a facility and the facility workforce. Commissioner Heckenlaible asked where the Commission on Aging was officially eliminated, and Director Rhein explained it was under the Behavioral Health Bill. He thanked them for their service to Iowans and encouraged them to seek further appointments through the Talent Bank if interested. Director Rhein also suggested feedback could be heard at the Director’s Summer Tour, the HHS Council and at the Area Agencies on Aging. Senator Weiner encouraged those present to reach out to their legislators to ensure older Iowans have a voice.

# **Amendment to Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging SFY2022-2025 Area Plan by Eugenia Kendall**

# Eugenia reviewed an amendment to Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging’s (NEI3a) SFY2022-2025 Area Plan. The amendment reflects a reduction in the services of chore services, an emergency response system, and family caregiver emergency response systems. Mike Donahue, Executive Director of NEI3a, reports that a public hearing was held and there were no public comments. Their agency will be focusing on providing core services required by the Older Americans Act. Commissioner Wulf called for a motion to approve the amendment to Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging’s (NEI3a) SFY2022-2025 Area Plan. Commissioner Heckenlaible motioned and Commissioner Van Oort seconded. The motion caried unanimously. The amendment to Northeast Iowa Area Agency on Aging’s (NEI3a) SFY2022-2025 Area Plan was approved.

# **Review of SFY2025 Area Plan on Aging Updates to the SFY2022-2025 Area Plans by Eugenia Kendall**

# Eugenia discussed an overview of the six AAA’s State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 area plan updates.

# Per IAC 17-6.2(2)b.(231), AAAs must submit an annual area plan update to the Iowa HHS - Division of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) for administrative review. Updates must be completed according to the format and due date prescribed by ADS, using the procedures identified in the Area Plan Update Instructions. Some of the executive directors gave a brief recap for their agency. Elderbridge would like to expand the Iowa Return to Community (IRTC) program but there is no additional funding for it. They plan to pursue grants to support the program. NEI3a states there is a demand for IRTC services, and more funding is needed. Their data shows that the IRTC program results in significant cost savings. Milestones reports they are trying to reach more people and their diversity center services have helped in that endeavor. Connections states that all 6 AAAs are part of a vaccine collaborative. They feel that café partners are the wave of the future. They have partnered with HyVee and interest has doubled in the program. Connections is one of ten area agencies in the country to distribute Ring doorbells to some of their aging population.

# **Public Comment**

Chairman Wulf extended a thank you to Aging and Disability Services staff and the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA’s) for their support of the aging population in Iowa.

John Hale, with the Hale Group, thanked Eugenia for her overview of the area plan on aging updates. Mr. Hale inquired about how to find out which programs have waiting lists, how long the wait is, and if legislators are aware of the lists. Eugenia responded that wait lists are part of the review process and the AAA’s work to target and prioritize those most in need. The highest demand tends to be for meals. Kelly Butts, Executive Director of Connections Area Agency on Aging, added that each agency will look different. Connections is beginning to see a younger demographic. When people seek services, they are notified of waitlists and the timeframe. Becky Passman, Executive Director of Milestones Area Agency on Aging, stated that Milestones had to prioritize and start a waitlist for home delivered meals in the spring of last year due to COVID funds being depleted. She emphasized that elder abuse consumers are served immediately. Shelly Sindt, Executive Director of Elderbridge Area Agency on Aging, noted that Elderbridge has a waitlist for congregate meals. Home delivered meals have the greatest need in her agency at this time. Chairman Wulf inquired if Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC’s) would affect the AAA business model. Director Rhein stated this would not affect the AAA business model but is an expansion of services. Shan Sasser, Bureau Chief of Planning & Performance, explained that the waitlist process is a new one. Information is pulled monthly, and her team is working on standardizing the information that each AAA submits.

Mr. Hale asked if all AAAs utilize the IRTC program and if they all need increased funds. He voiced a concern that there are more needs than what can be provided. Director Rhein replied that five out of six AAAs participate in IRTC, and increased funding options are being explored. Shan Sasser directed Mr. Hale to the IRTC sections of the AAA Area Plans. Sonya Streit, with Government Relations, stated that IRTC was filed with the legislature in 2023 and the details could be viewed there.

# **Adjournment**

Chairman Wulf called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Van Oort motioned and was seconded by Commissioner Jenkins. The Iowa Commission on Aging adjourned at 11:15 am.