

Wednesday, August 30, 2006
Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging
Board Meeting Notes

In Attendance:

Chairman of the Board, Richard Lovelady
Judge Royce King
Commissioner Glenda Strength
Mrs. Martha Thornburg
Commissioner Daniel Acker
Commissioner Jimmy Roberts
Mrs. Lee Ann Clark
Ms. Gay West
Reverend Glenn Bynum
Mr. Reginald Holloway
Carolyn Fortner, M4A Interim Executive Director
Kelly Flick, M4A Health Promotion and Quality Assurance Coordinator

10:25 a.m. (Agenda Items: A. B. & C.)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Richard Lovelady. He asked board members to read and approve the last set of minutes. Carolyn Fortner reminded the members that the United Way Needs Assessment was included, as well. Commissioner Glenda Strength motioned for approval of minutes, and Commissioner Jimmy Roberts second the motion. The board unanimously approved minutes.

Prayer was provided by Reverend Bynum.

Mr. Lovelady announced two amendments to the September agenda - add to agenda date change for approving contracts from September to October and add appointing a nominating committee for new officers. Officers' terms are bi-annual.

Executive Director's Report presented by Carolyn Fortner, Interim Executive Director

Carolyn Fortner asked the board to take a few minutes to read "Findings on the Status of Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging", which she prepared for the board. Ms. Fortner, then went through the plan, section by section, and highlighted the important information.

- M4A has experienced a tremendous programmatic growth in the past 5 years.
- The internal structure of the agency is at risk because of the lack of drug testing/prescreening of new employees

- Previous Executive Director and Fiscal Officer were overwhelmed because there was too much responsibility put upon them, while they were too busy handling day to day emergencies; “putting out fires”.
- We have strong programs with great staff, but we need develop a risk plan to minimize our potential risk in the future. To accomplish this we will need to keep our programs strong, but put policy and procedures in place to protect the agency, its staff and its board.
- Many negative impressions of M4A are in the community, based upon the nutrition program. M4A’s role is to partner, provide guidance and funding. Ms. Fortner suggested conducting a survey of each county to identify the wants and needs of the counties and cities. It is *estimated* that 40%-50% of the M4A budget is for nutrition but she will confirm (if possible) with ADSS.
- A discussion of the benefits of frozen meals versus homebound meals ensued. While hot meals are less expensive to prepare, they must be delivered by volunteer drivers, which are difficult to locate, plus put the agency at risk because no background screening is conducted. Frozen meals are about \$1.00 more per meal, but are delivered by Valley Food Services, who does conduct background checks on its employees, provides liability insurance, etc. Frozen meals are delivered once per week. Mr. Lovelady suggested working with towns to identify potential drivers. Judge King stated that Blount County pays its drivers, not M4A. Ms. Fortner discussed the Volunteer Protection Act. Reverend Bynum stated that no volunteers would be willing to “jump through the hoops” of background checks. Ms. Fortner stated that the more localized the program, the more control the county/city could have on it. Ms. Thornburg stated that the meals were appalling and that some clients threw-out the food without eating it. Kelly Flick stated that she is working with Nutrition Program Coordinator, Tracie West to develop a survey for the centers to identify the problems with meals. Ms Flick acknowledged that in the centers she visited, she heard numerous complaints, but that no one was willing to put it on paper. By doing an anonymous survey of each center, we would have a firm grip on what the problems were and how many individuals were experiencing them. Once completed, this information can be passed on to ADSS for review and consideration before the next contract is renewed with Valley.

Ms. Fortner stated that the “findings” would be a good plan for the new incoming Executive Director to use. When asked by the board to prioritize the findings, she stated: 1. Fiscal Policy and Procedures 2. Good transition with ED. Both of these need to be transparent to the community. And, 3. Good infrastructure and 4. Improvement with the Nutrition Program. Although she did prioritize these, she stated that they all held exceptional importance in the agency.

Status on Vacant Accounting Position

Ms. Fortner told the board that a full-time bookkeeper, Audrey Chance, was filling in during the absence of the Fiscal Officer. She stated that Ms. Chance was doing a very good job and that her 13 years of past experience was very beneficial to the agency. Ms. Fortner suggested keeping Ms. Chance as the bookkeeper once the Fiscal Officer was hired. Ms. Fortner stated that 30 resumes were received for the Fiscal Officers position, but only 5 candidates met the qualifications put forth by the board. She asked members to review the resume and questions on Karen Hubbard, one of the better choice candidates. Ms. Fortner explained the staff's comments and concerns regarding Ms. Hubbard. Board voiced concerns about Ms. Hubbard's qualifications and staff's concerns that she was overconfident in her abilities, but evasive in answering questions. Ms. Fortner assured the board that Audrey Chance was doing a fine job, complemented by oversight from ADSS accountant, Michael Bridges, and that M4A could continue its search for candidates and the fiscal office would be stable. Discussed Accountant versus Bookkeeper, remembered that ADSS and Auditors recommended an Accountant. Because of pay, it was discussed to hire a part-time accountant to provide oversight. Discussion ensued about who to hire first - Fiscal or ED, which lead to an impromptu meeting regarding the hiring of the ED. Carolyn Fortner and Kelly Flick departed the room, while the discussion took place. Board broke for lunch at approximately 12:25 pm, while executive committee discussed ED, interviewed Ms. Fortner and then offered her the position. Board also agreed to continue searching for an Accountant and to compare the cost of a Part Time Accountant versus a Full Time Accountant. The board wants a degreed accountant.

1:30 pm Meeting resumes on Agenda Item D. Meals Cost (ADSS Memo)

Ms. Fortner asked members to read the memo from ADSS Nutrition Coordinator Sarah Straw about the increase in meal prices and level funding for the nutrition program. Ms. Fortner stated that at the last AAA Director's Meeting, ADSS suggested creating a waiting list for meals.

Notes from ADSS AAA Director's Meeting

The Senior RX program will be changing to Wellness RX in October with the thought being that if they can improve the health of seniors, then less money will need to be spent on medications.

ADSS would like to visit an AAA board meeting in January or February to meet new board members and new legislators from the M4A service area.

Program Data for 3rd quarter

In light of the time, Kelly Flick briefly explained the 3rd quarter numbers and Alabama Cares Survey information. She encouraged members to call her if they had any questions or concerns regarding the information she provided to them, which was in there folder.

Old Business (Agenda item E)

Status of Audit: Audit is completed, copies of audit were provided to each board member. Currently, there is \$1.2 million in M4A bank accounts.

Compensation for Julie Miller's sick leave: Ms. Fortner stated that Julie Miller had accrued 371 hours of sick time while serving as ED for M4A, which equaled \$10,034.21 in compensation. Ms. Thornburg made the motion to not pay it, Judge King seconded the motion, but Chairman Lovelady intervened and pointed out that Ms. Miller had worked for 5 years without a merit raise and the board could compensate her by paying her this lump sum. Reverend Bynum questioned if paying her would set precedence for the future. Carolyn Fortner stated that the board was not legally obligated to pay sick leave. A board vote was conducted: 5 votes (3 in person, 2 by proxy) for Yes and 5 votes (4 in person, 1 by proxy) for No. Reggie Holloway asked if there were funds available to pay this money, yes per Ms. Fortner. Commissioner Strength said the board should pay because of what they've learned from Julie. Board Chair, Mr. Lovelady stated that Julie was underpaid. Reverend Bynum said that "parliamentary wise", if the issued is tied, then it's dead. It was decided to table the decision until the next board meeting. Ms. Fortner said she would check with an Employment Attorney to see if it would be legally sound to pay this or if it would set precedence.

Status on Hiring a Permanent Executive Director (Agenda item E)

The executive committee of the board offered the position to Carolyn Fortner, who accepted the offer.

New Business: Resolutions (Agenda Item E)

There is a need for another board member to have the designation/approval to sign checks as well as two M4A staff members. Ms. Fortner clarified that on each check issued, it must be signed by 1 board member and 1 staff. Further, 2 staff could not sign off on any checks together; there must always be a board members signature.

Individuals recommended for authorized to sign checks:

- #1 Secretary Reverend Bynum
- #2 Carolyn Fortner and Kelly Flick

Motion to approve by Judge King, Second by Mr. Acker and third by Mr. Roberts

Motion to change next meeting from September to October proposed; all members were in favor. Next Meeting: October 25th, last Wednesday of month.

Adjournment (Agenda Item F)

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 PM, with Commissioner Lovelady thanking everyone for attending and serving on the board.

Minutes prepared by: Kelly Flick, 8/31/06

Minutes edited by Carolyn Fortner

Approved: Richard Lovelady, Chairman M4A Board