



**MINUTES OF THE  
WASHOE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES  
(RETREAT) ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

March 8, 2017

Washoe County Senior Center, 1155 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Reno, Nevada 89512  
Game Room

- 1. Call To Order** - Meeting was called to order at 1:10 p.m. by Chairman Dr. Larry Weiss
- 2. Roll Call** – Dr. Larry Weiss asked for the roll call; Sandra Vasquez took the roll. There was a quorum present.

**WASHOE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT:**

**PRESENT**

Dr. Larry Weiss  
Marsy Kupfersmith  
Barbara Korosa  
Dennis Chin  
Stan Dowdy, Alternate

Donna Clontz, (Alternate  
for Connie McMullen)  
Wayne Alexander  
Garth Elliot  
Gary Whitfield

**ABSENT (EXCUSED\*)**

Ken Romeo  
Connie McMullen  
Sandra Dexter\*

**WASHOE COUNTY STAFF PRESENT**

Sandra Vasquez  
Leslie Admirand (DA)  
Amber Howell

**ADVISOR (ABSENT)**

Victoria Edmondson

**3. \*Public Comment –**

Donna Clontz commented today is International Women’s Day and March is Women’s History Month.

**4. \*Member Announcements –**

Larry announced Holly Buttermann was going to facilitate the meeting, but she had to cancel, therefore he would be the one facilitating the meeting.

**5. Approval of the Agenda for the Advisory Board Meeting on March 8, 2017.**

Motion to approve the Agenda was made by Dennis Chin and seconded by Donna Clontz.  
Motion passed unanimously.

## **6. Discussion and action to define and approve the role of the Advisory Board**

Larry stated the Board should look at the 2014 Bylaws to discuss their role (see attachment). The Board is constituted to advise the Department and the Commission on meeting the current and future needs of seniors, including

- the development of long and short range departmental goals;
- recommending and evaluating programs and policies;
- reviewing the quality of department services;
- providing input to county manager regarding performance of director;
- providing technical assistance, as applicable;
- reviewing and making recommendations regarding the department's proposed budget; and reviewing and providing input to director regarding community trends and needs

Larry stated one of the first things that would need to be changed is the title, 'director' and replace it to 'department' since there is no director and also change Department of Senior Services to Department of Human Services. Barbara asked if Senior Services is a division. Amber Howell stated Senior Services is its own department and when the merge happens it will be one of three divisions under Human Services. There will also still be a director; the Board can still give their recommendations on budgets, policies, and procedures to her as the department director or to the division director which would be Ken Retterath.

Marsy Kupfersmith and Stan Dowdy arrived at 1:19pm.

Gary stated he would like to delegate and make recommendations to the department head and commission. Wayne thinks the Board should report to Ken. Garth would like more communication with the commission. Barbara would like to keep Ken as the contact. Amber stated all division directors know their budget, but she decides what goes in the budget. Marsy understood that they would make recommendations to the commissioners since they are the ones that appointed them. Amber stated the Board is advising the commission. Stan stated she likes the idea of making recommendations to the commissioners, but she hasn't seen them at the Board meetings. Dennis stated in previous years, there was communication to the commission via Grady since he was the spokesman. He believes both Ken and Amber should be mentioned when giving recommendations. Larry stated if it's a practical day to day issue, it could be taken to Ken, if it's something that is about the finances, Amber could be contacted. The commissioners can also be contacted; for instance, they are being contacted because of the ordinance change. Gary asked if they are going to verify what their role is with the commission; Larry stated if they want to change the Bylaws, they would need to be approved. Amber reminded the Board that their role is well defined in code, the Bylaws are the implementations. Donna stated that for her, a citizen board brings in a different perspective; they bring in the non-staff, non-government employee view point into what the government people are doing. She doesn't see the Board being told what to do; instead commissioners want to hear what they want to say and their ideas on things going on. Donna would like to see the Board have space and ideas to give and help do the services better. She also would like the Board to report to all 3

governmental entities. If there was an issue on operational things, they would let Ken know and 'cc' Amber. It would be good to also report to the commissioners and do public comment. For instance, the Board could talk to them about the code changes currently going on. Barbara asked if after everything is changed, would it still be appropriate to call the Board Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board; it was stated they are focusing on seniors. Stan stated she felt like they, as a Board, were being told what to do instead of doing the advising and she didn't feel like they should be told what to do. Dennis stated that for the Board to advise, they would need to know the operations of the senior center. Stan disagreed and stated they also need to look into keeping other seniors active. Dennis also said that senior participation has slowly decreased at the 9<sup>th</sup> street location. Amber stated one of the things that have happened is that other senior centers were opened and therefore that meant seniors were able to go to more centers and not just one.

Amber recommended they start looking at the code since the Bylaws are a byproduct of the code. Marsy asked if the name of the Board was changing and they were taking out 'Services' Motion was made to retain the name Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board by Gary Whitfield and seconded by Donna Clontz. Vote: 2 in favor and 5 abstained. Motion was made to change the name to Washoe County Senior Advisory Board by Donna Clontz and seconded by Stan Dowdy. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **7. Review, discussion, and recommendation for approval on ordinance presented to WC Administration and Commissioners or direction to staff**

Amber apologized to the Board because the code was never presented to them and it was something that impacts them as an advisory board. Looking at the code (see attachment) they had first looked into the size of the Board because it seemed that there was struggle in finding seats to fill and one idea was that maybe the board was too large. In section 20, they changed how many and who would be in the Board. On page 9, they looked at how many times the Board should meet and the writing states they shall meet at least four times per year. On section 22, she deleted #2, recommending and evaluating programs and policies because she wasn't sure if doing evaluations was something the Board would be capable of. Item #4 was also deleted, providing input to county manager regarding performance of director because it would be more of an HR function. With Donna's help, they also took out the eligibility of what a senior meant. Donna stated a little history on the filling of seats; every time they tried to fill the seats, there were issues because it wouldn't be in the agenda and the procedures would get in the way. It wasn't that there weren't people applying to be on the Board, they did have plenty of applications.

Larry stated the proposed change now is to have 9 permanent members: 5 to be appointed by commission district and 4 to be appointed at-large from the commission district, plus 2 at-large alternates and 3 ex-officio members. He asked the Board how they felt about it.

Barbara stated that by them changing the members, it would mean some of the members currently present would not be able to be a part of the Board. Donna stated in the current code, it doesn't spell out how many members the Board should have. Barbara stated she does not want to see seniors that are interested in helping seniors not being able to be a part of things.

Garth stated he would like to see two members from every district, he supports staying with the two members from each district. Wayne and Gary also stated they would like to see two members from each district. Donna stated they had talked about how there are 10 members and there should be a voting at-large member, which in the process of getting new members was

dropped off from the Board; if they want it to be at 10 members, then she would like to be the voting at-large member. She also stated that she believes each member from every district should be attending their district senior center and having connection with the seniors attending there. Marsy stated she would like 10 members and an at-large so that there are no issues with voting ties in the future. She also stated that when she came into the Board, it was as an at-large seat and if that was the case, and there is no at-large now, then her votes wouldn't have counted in the past.

Motion was made to have 10 members, 1 at-large, and 2 alternates, and 3 ex-officio by Stan Dowdy and was seconded by Garth Elliot. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion was made to meet at least quarterly per year by Gary Whitfield and seconded by Garth Elliot. Motion passed unanimously.

Donna asked who decides when a meeting should be done and the response was the Chair.

Larry asked for discussion on section 22 in regards to recommending and evaluating programs. Garth stated he agrees with Amber and they should stay away from doing evaluations and would keep the advice given to the director to a minimum. Larry asked if there is something like the housing issue that they are trying to work on and it is not going anywhere, then they can go and talk with people and bring information back, and make recommendations of a program; part of looking at the whole picture is also part of evaluating. Garth stated the evaluation part is a huge commitment and is asking the Board if they would like to have this type of commitment.

Barbara stated if she is evaluating something, then she would like to know what she is evaluating and she's not sure about them doing it. Marsy stated she wouldn't even know what programs she would be evaluating and is not sure it is something that they are supposed to look at. Stan believes the evaluating part would be a very hard thing to do but would like to provide feedback. Dennis stated one of the problems in the past that they had at the Reno center was that veterans were not getting the services they needed at the VA and it was suggested that a VA representative be at the senior center, which is something that is still ongoing. Dennis also mentioned that there are now other problems that are more critical. Donna stated that with all comments and discussions from the Board, it shows how disconnected the Board is to senior services programs because they have not been updated on active programs. There are programs like Adult Day Health, Homemaker program, Nutrition Program, Representative Payee, Human Services, Wellness Program, Facilities Management, and other programs they may not know about but they should know what the programs are and what they do. Donna also agrees that to do an evaluation, they would need to know about what they are evaluating. Some of them might be able to do it, but others may not. What they might be able to do as a Board is go to senior centers and talk to the seniors about the programs and bring back their information and evaluate it, but if there's enough evaluation being done inside, then it should be ok.

Wayne stated he believes they have been doing #7, it sums up what the Board should do, Garth and Stan agree with him. Marsy asked if the Board has a mission statement; Larry stated there is, 'the senior advisory board shall provide assistance and make recommendations to the board of county commissioners, the division director or director of the department of senior services, at minimum' in the following areas that are being discussed. Marsy stated there are too many programs that they would need to know about and it might be overwhelming. Larry stated each member does not need to know the specifics of every program. They would just need to discuss what programs each member has an interest in.

Dennis requested Amber explain the new long and short term goals for senior services.

Stan stated she believed they should do recommendations and provide inputs, but she wouldn't really like to do evaluations. Gary and Garth stated that in regards to evaluations, they wouldn't really be doing the actual evaluations; instead they could read an evaluation and make suggestions based on it.

Donna believed that the role of the board should be broad enough to encompass long and short term objectives. She knows seniors are in the strategic plan, but they haven't been provided feedback to know what that is. One of the things they do know is that there is a serious nutrition issue, but they haven't been told how to help. She believes they should have some say in department goals and doing recommendations. Donna also mentioned they could provide technical assistance as applicable, for example, Stan has a career on Alzheimer's, Barbara worked for the county in senior services, Gary has VA experience, Larry has a PhD in gerontology, Wayne works in providing personal senior services and Dennis has been a senior volunteer for about 15 years. She also mentioned they have given input on the budget in the past and helped advocate for what they need, but they haven't seen the budget in a while. Stan and Larry agree with Donna and Larry stated they don't all need to participate in the same things, until they get to what they want to specialize in.

Dennis stated that in the past, they participated in making recommendations in regards to making the switch from county to private run Senior Law Project and that is when they ran into trouble with open meeting law. There are occasions when they have been able to provide recommendations, but he asked the board if they want to be involved in everything, it's something they should think about.

Motion was made on section 22 to move #7 to be #1 and move all others sequentially and to delete #4 by Dennis Chin and seconded by Stan Dowdy. Motion passed with one abstention by Garth Elliot.

Amber stated that she believes part of the disconnect is on the county side and what they can do is that she can at least come to the meeting quarterly. They should also describe what the programs are, metrics, trends, census, site locations and events so that the board can be well informed what senior services is all about. The board can also ask the department director to do a presentation on senior services programs, trends, and budget; the Board just needs to request the information and extend an invite to request a presentation. Dennis stated that with the merger of Human Services, he had a concern that senior services would be left behind and that a copy of the Master Plan should be given to the legislators. Amber stated the entire department budget is for seniors. Donna asked the Board if the description of the Board in section 22 is ok for them and if the language is good for Amber and the DA. Leslie from DA replied she is ok with it.

Barbara asked about item 31 on the ordinance. Donna stated that there have been occasions when someone has lost privileges at the senior center by being kicked out and they appeal the decision of the director.

## **8. Review Master Plan and prioritize issues to be emphasized for the next 3 years**

Larry stated looking at the 2014 Master Plan (see attachment) there are 12 goals for the plan. Amber shared that the nutrition program is very complex. A consultant was brought in for the nutrition program and one of the things that was reported is that they are only serving 11% of the population in need. It is a very complex multi-phase issue that is not solvable by one or two things. The consultant was hired to look at what needs to happen to get them where they need

to be. There is a great kitchen at the Reno center, but it is outdated and it can't keep up with the production increase and even if the kitchen had efficient equipment, there is not enough storage space for the meals. There are two sides to the nutrition program, one is the Home Delivered Meals and the other is the 11 congregate meal sites; which also comes with a case management component. Amber stated she made a presentation to the Capital Improvement Project Committee to make renovations to the kitchen of about \$400,000 and of that amount, \$207,000 were received. There was another presentation in October because a year had gone by and the goal in the budget is to increase meals by 100,000. Another challenge for them is deciding whether to break out sections of the Reno kitchen or ask for a brand new kitchen. At the moment they are pitching for staying in the Reno kitchen because it would be a quick temporary solution. Amber believes the additional funds for the capital improvement project will be approved because they are at capacity. The 100,000 meals would be to eliminate the waitlist and serve what they can that they know about.

Gary stated that if only 11% of the people are being served, then if anyone has checked on the 89% to see how they are being served. Amber stated they have not looked into it, but some things to take into consideration are that some people go to soup kitchens, receive SNAP benefits, and go to food pantries. Donna asked Amber how much it would be to feed all seniors in need, and Amber stated it would be about \$3 million.

Garth asked if the 11% report is by the liberal view or by the conservative view.

Amber stated she will provide the report from the consultant. Larry mentioned that they might already have it because Ken may have given it to them.

Marsy asked if the commissioners know about the severity of the nutrition situation and Amber replied that she has shared the same information to them. There is a budget hearing and the board can be instrumental in providing support to let them know the need in the nutrition program.

Garth stated that commissioners are also concerned about the influx of immigrants coming into Washoe County.

Dennis stated another concern would be the longevity of the vehicles that deliver the food. Amber replied there was approval for two new vehicles that have the adequate storage and cooling components.

Amber stated they are opening another nutrition site at Incline and it will be a huge deal for them because there isn't a senior center in the Incline area and meals are contracted by Sierra Services.

Amber explained what case management is in regards to home delivered meals; what it means is that a driver does not simply drop off the food and leave. It's more of the driver engaging in a little conversation with the client and learning if the client is having difficulties such as not being able to pay for prescriptions. After finding out a need, then an assessment can be made and provide the necessary service.

Dennis stated that in the past, Ginger the librarian wanted to work with Home Delivered Meals and provide a mobile library to homebound people; Amber stated it is a great idea.

Amber stated that looking at the WC Department of Social Services handout (see attachment) it gives visualization to the strategic objectives. Senior services are looking at page 3 so that seniors can age in place. Community Programs can provide aging mastery, in-home respite, and home modifications. In regards to home modifications, the county would be responsible for the

contracts and they could look into using Crossroads clients that have carpentry experience so that they can give back to the program.

There is also Caregiver Support which would provide care consultation, caring for you, caring for me training, Skills2Care, and Home Modifications. Skills2Care would provide an occupational therapist that would go into the home and do an assessment and help the caregiver care for the individual.

Daybreak is at capacity and they can't grow anymore because of the square footage and they are looking into a different location because they would like the census to be at least 50. They can either privatize Daybreak or move the program and staff, but nothing has been decided yet. What they have agreed on is that they can't serve as many people as they need to serve and another thing is that they can move the program to another site and leave the space for kitchen use. Regardless of what happens there wouldn't be layoffs because they would be able to put staff in other areas since there are so many enhancements. Also, part of Daybreak would be to add early memory loss and moderate memory loss and be able to identify their systems and cope with them.

There is also Innovative Initiatives that has the components of Behavioral Programs and Mobile Respite. The behavioral health component is very important, funding was provided from the state mental health block grant and money from the VOCA grant to provide mental health services at various sites.

Amber also stated that the county does not have too much money; they have about \$1 million and millions of dollars in requests. There is some indigent money from adult services that is being suggested be used to fund some of the programs. Also, chair Jung brought out publicly that there is a possibility that the county would look at the GST tax which would bring in about \$16-17 million of which human services would get some of that money.

Amber suggested in the future for the board to take a tour of the TADS building; some board members replied stating they have taken a tour. Also, the budget is senior weighted, there aren't a lot of requests in the budget for child and adult services. How the budget works in the county is that money can be moved around and therefore once the budget is over, the board can advise her if they believe there is a program that needs more attention. In the last budget cycle, they acquired a Quality Improvement (QI) unit so the board can assign her (Amber) to assign staff to do research on something they would like. Also, even though the code for the merger hasn't been finalized, adult and senior services are working together and sharing resources. The QI team consists of a case compliance reviewer, social services policy specialist, a legislative person, management analyst, data team that generates data reports, and an ombudsman.

Donna expressed her thanks to Amber for giving them so much information.

Amber stated that she will commit to attending the advisory meeting quarterly and giving report updates so that the board is more up to date. Also, the board is privy to data information to be able to learn things such as how many people are receiving rep payee, home delivered meals, and how many seniors attend all the congregate sites.

Donna asked if the data is up on the website, Amber replied that it is not because there are rules as to getting permission to have command of their own website. What she can do is send it to Larry and he can send it to the Board. There is a plethora of data, they just need to centralize it and give it to the Board when the Board requests it. Larry stated to Amber that if she needs help, to let them know because they would really like to help and volunteer.

Looking at the Master Plan:

Goal 1: Increase participation of seniors in volunteerism; Todd had conveyed to the Board at a previous meeting that they were focusing on home delivered meals which come with some case management. Larry asked if any of the items in the action plan ring a bell. Donna stated that when the Master Plan was created, it was by a paid staff person and two Vista volunteers whom ran focus groups and got a research organization to do a survey that provided a lot of data. When this plan was created, there wasn't a volunteer program yet, but now they are up and running and people can volunteer for many different things. Donna stated she and Larry have been working on senior health advocates and potentially providing volunteering services like what AARP does in the senior center. There is also a volunteer manager for the county and it is a paid position; it would seem volunteerism is centralized and should be able to get to the community of seniors. Donna also stated that Catholic Charities has a person that is looking into doing events such as bean bag baseball at the different meal sites.

Donald Abbot's interest in the Master Plan is recreation and socializing. He is interested in doing outreach to young people; when he was in high school, he had to do his volunteers hours at a church or somewhere else, he was never told about volunteering in a senior center.

Gary stated that the reason he is in the board meetings is also that he meets with the VA people once a month and passes on information he has learned and they pass on the information to other groups. What he wants to do is make sure veterans have resources readily available. In addition, if he meets a veteran that has had a bad experience with the VA, they he can refer them to other resources he has learned about through the board meetings. Gary stated that for him Goal 1 and 2 are what interest him more.

Wayne stated Goal 7, affordable and accessible housing, is what interests him because housing is not getting cheaper.

Garth stated volunteerism is important to him because it would help holster many other things. When people help and get involved, then it helps improve situations. Recruiting and maintaining volunteers is what is crucial, specifically retaining volunteers; therefore it would be a good idea to create an effective recruitment process.

Wayne asked if they could have the county volunteer manager come and talk to them; Larry replied yes.

Barbara stated every goal in the Master Plan is very important to her. Since she retired from the Washoe County Senior Center, she was able to see things that were going on with seniors. While she was at the information counter, it was mostly the children of seniors going into the center to get information on how to help their parents age in place. Dennis stated that is the reason why the chapter opened an information desk and AARP services were provided. Barbara also stated that recreation activities for her are something really important.

Donna asked Sandra what it's like at central reception and Sandra stated people are provided with basic information when it is inquired and many questions will be referred to Aging and Disability Resource Center, which is located at the Reno center. Barbara stated that she believes it's important to have a centralized one stop for necessary information and that way seniors are serviced better.

Marsy stated goal 10 is important for her because it is important to get the word out to seniors to let them know there are resources available. There are seniors that don't have access to a computer and also may not have transportation to go to the library and have access to a computer. She would like to do something like a mass mailing and the list might be obtained through the voter's registrar office.

Stan stated goal 7 is important for her and not just low income housing, but also housing for middle fixed income seniors. For the middle fixed income seniors, they make too much to qualify for low income, but as things go up, their income doesn't go up and sooner or later they find themselves homeless. Donald stated that Sparks had two complex built for seniors and that there is another project in the works for low income housing. Stan stated she is more interested in the fixed income seniors and their housing because no one is doing anything for them.

Dennis stated he believes the Reno area lacks a public relation person for senior services, but he believes the county is taking care of it. He would like to see recreation and music programs and he has noticed the library has music programs, but they haven't done one at senior services. In the past there was a person that would rent some movies and they would watch it.

Marsy stated that in the June meeting, Jeff Scott (new library director) will be talking about what they are doing with seniors in computer classes.

Donna stated what she would like to work on is affordable housing because it is reaching crisis mode. Social workers are having a hard time talking finding housing for people in the Lemmon Valley flood and even Amber is getting the bureaucratic push back when trying to get people in homes. Donna also stated that there should be incentives and builders to get them interested in building for the need. Gary suggested something be attached to building permits such as 'you can get this permit if (blank)'. Marsy stated she was talking to a builder and she asked him what do they need to do for builders to do something for the needy, and he replied that before they can even do anything, they pay about \$40,000 in permits and fines and if they can get those waived, then maybe they can talk. Barbara stated there are federal incentives and the developers that want to do housing for low income have a hard time because it its incredibly complicated to do all the paperwork.

Larry stated he is interested in volunteerism as a goal. Social and citizen engagement and volunteerism would be the goals for year one. They would need to identify and understand the volunteer process and invite the new ombudsman; find out how to be able to retain and engage volunteers for senior services to be able to increase volunteer involvement. Stan suggested they talk to youth advisors from the high schools and involve youth volunteers for seniors; Donald stated English teachers would be the ones to contact because they are the ones that suggest to students what they should do for community service hours. Marsy stated ROTC is also good because someone there wanted to do computer classes for seniors. Donna suggested they talk to the Catholic Charities event coordinator and others to learn about the programs that are in place for recreation activities at the centers.

Affordable housing is also a goal the board would like to focus on. Donna stated the list to apply at Reno Housing Authority is open. Marsy stated that during Older American Month, Amy Jones (executive director of Reno Housing Authority) will be at the North Valley Library. An objective would be to hold a housing information meeting for both low income and fixed income seniors. For the low income information, it would be to explore the waitlist. Stan and Marsy would identify the mid-level numbers for fixed income; Larry stated those number may be retrieved from looking at economic figures. Donna stated at the City of Reno meetings, housing is an ongoing subject. Stan and Marsy stated that meetings are usually for low income people, what they would need to do to get attention for the mid-level income people is to start doing public comment during meetings at Reno, Sparks, County, Legislature and bring the issue to attention. Stan suggested there be four meetings to have seniors attend so they can learn what is going on. It was suggested to also bring in the media and get media coverage.

Donna stated that they will receive 50,000 resource guides created by the VISTA grant and they were printed for free. They would need to distribute information packs that would include Golden Pages, Washoe County Resource Guide, and Elder Resource Brochure, the brochures are on the website. The information packs could be distributed to all sites and people on home delivered meals.

Senior Health Advocate program is recruiting volunteers to be able to sit down with seniors and senior caregivers and give them face to face information and counseling; they have 13 and would like to have 20 volunteers.

Dennis Chin leaves meeting at 4:48pm.

Donna stated there should also be media exposure of senior resources and they should also do distributions to retirement homes and create public service announcements.

Donna stated Nancy Leuenhagen with Washoe County is happy to help the Board with getting information out with things such as press release and using social media.

#### **9. Discussion and approval to identify collaborators from community organizations to help fulfill Master Plan objectives**

Larry stated they can talk about collaborators as they work on the items they will have to finalize in their next meeting. Donna stated she would like feedback about various ideas they have shared with the public safety arena; she would like to propose for the next meeting the idea of a senior safety round table. They would invite public safety people from Sparks PD, Sparks Fire, Reno PD, Reno Fire, Washoe Sherriff, Washoe Fire, REMSA, Renown, St. Mary's; the topic would be what is going on with the senior population that relates to their health and safety to learn how to make senior lives healthier and safer. Donna handed out a brochure (see attachment) from Douglas County and their version of the public safety arena.

#### **10. Identification and acceptance of each Board member's area of interest**

Larry asked the board members to think about their area of interest.

#### **11. \*Public Comment**

Marsy stated the retreat meeting went really well.

#### **12. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Gary Whitfield and seconded by Stan Dowdy. Vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm.