

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
HUMAN SERVICES TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 9, 2011

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale, Chair
*Kyle Bogdon, DES/ACYF
*Krista Cornish, Town of Buckeye
+Naomi Farrell, City of Tempe
Laura Guild, Arizona Department of
Economic Security
Jeffery Jamison, City of Phoenix
Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging
Margarita Leyvas, Maricopa County
*Joyce Lopez-Powell, Valley of the Sun
United Way
Steven MacFarlane, City of Phoenix
*Jayson Matthews, Tempe Community
Council

+Joy McClain, City of Tolleson
+Leah Powell, City of Chandler
Cindy Saverino, Arizona Department of
Economic Security
+ Carol Sherer, Arizona Department of
Economic Security/DDD

OTHERS PRESENT

Rachel Brito, MAG
Amy St. Peter, MAG

+Those members present by
audio/videoconferencing.
*Those members neither present nor
represented by proxy.

1. Call to Order

Chair Sylvia Sheffield, City of Avondale, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. She expressed gratitude to the City of Phoenix for allowing use of their meeting space while the MAG offices are under construction.

2. Call to the Audience

An opportunity was provided for members of the public to address the Committee. No public comments were made.

3. Approval of May 5, 2011 HSTC Meeting Minutes

Chair Sheffield called for a motion to approve the May 5, 2011, meeting minutes. Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging, motioned to approve the minutes. Marge Leyvas, Maricopa County Human Services Department, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Sun City Transportation Coordination Model

Chair Sheffield invited Michelle Dionisio, Benevilla, to report on how this nonprofit agency is addressing emerging transportation needs in the Northwest valley. Ms. Dionisio discussed efforts to address the community's needs after Sun City Area Transportation (SCAT) Dial-A-Ride closed for business at the end of December 2010. Ms. Dionisio said social workers received many calls from concerned citizens. Benevilla invited community groups and citizens to a meeting to discuss the issue. The meeting was held on December 17, 2010, with approximately 20 attendees

representing the Sun City Tax Payers group, nonprofits, government entities, the senior center, Total Transit, and others. Ms. Dionisio noted Total Transit received the contract from Valley Metro to provide cab service after SCAT closed. The group wanted to research both short and long-term solutions. A second meeting was scheduled and the press were invited to attend. Benevilla worked to inform citizens of available resources and how to become Americans with Disabilities Act certified. Locations were set up for individuals to obtain and complete the required documentation for ADA certification. Benevilla also assisted homebound individuals by sending volunteers to their homes to help complete the required forms. The process has since changed with the opening of the Valley Metro Mobility Center. Now the agency is focused on helping raise awareness about the new in-person eligibility determination and the transportation needed to get to the DEC.

Area Agency on Aging was able to secure a bus for the senior center while the process of researching short and long-term solutions continued. Benevilla contacted the County Supervisor's Office to ensure representation and also presented at the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce. The goals were to raise awareness about the needs of the community and encourage greater involvement. Meetings have been held monthly since December and there are more than 25 groups represented that are working together to address the issues. The City of Peoria and the City of Surprise, recently participate in meetings as Benevilla works to coordinate a regional effort.

Benevilla has an established volunteer force that provides transportation services on a limited basis. However, with gas prices increasing and concerns about insurance, some volunteers are uncertain how long they will be able to continue. Opportunities to offer a stipend are being researched. Ms. Dionisio said a long-range needs study is being considered. Additionally, Dave Cyra, United We Ride Ambassador, attended a meeting and offered technical assistance, information on best practices, and a wealth of information on practical and realistic options.

Ms. St. Peter noted a need to consider service delivery in different ways. She acknowledged efforts in Sun City for providing a great model on how to do things in the future. Ms. Leyvas asked for a brief overview of Benevilla. Ms. Dionisio advised Benevilla is a human services organization formed in the Northwest Valley more than 30 years ago. It is an interfaith community care organization serving elders, people with disabilities, and children. The agency operates a family resource center through First Things First. Additional information is available at www.benevilla.org. Ms. Leyvas requested a presentation to the Human Services Commission at a future meeting. Jim Knaut, Area Agency on Aging, acknowledged Ms. Dionisio for her leadership and accomplishments in coordinating efforts to meet the needs of seniors when SCAT closed for business.

5. MAG Municipal Aging Services Project Inventory and Key Informant Interviews

Chair Sheffield advised there has been significant activity on the MAG Municipal Aging Services project. She invited Amy St. Peter, MAG, to offer an update. Ms. St. Peter referred to the revised inventory available in the meeting materials

acknowledging Rachel Brito and Jim Knaut for their work on the inventory. A brief overview of the cities, towns, and services included in the inventory was provided. Ms. St. Peter advised the inventory is specific to services provided or funded by local government. As such, many services are not included in the inventory. Nonprofit agencies that contract with local government are included. The inventory and key informant interviews complete the first stage of the project.

Ms. St. Peter thanked everyone who participated in distributing and/or completing an interview. One-hundred thirty three interviews were received. An overview of the Draft Key Informant Interview Results highlighting a sampling of participating agencies was provided. Services identified as being the most needed were transportation and socialization; both are interconnected. Other important services included health, housing, and technology specific to cell phones and emergency preparedness. Ms. St. Peter advised input was received from the stakeholder group meeting and changes have been made to the draft results.

Ms. Leyvas asked for clarification of a lock box noted under “additional needs.” Chair Sheffield advised a lock box contains a key to a person’s home and, in some cases, a tag that references a list of current prescriptions that is kept in the refrigerator for emergency personnel to access. She noted all public buildings also contain lock boxes. Lock boxes are secure and very similar to those used by realtors. There is an initial cost for installation. Ms. Sheffield noted a different program that offers pet care by volunteers for seniors needing assistance. Both are good examples of programs that work well but that people may not be aware of. Committee members discussed the sub-categories included within services needed most and recommended adding home repair and affordable housing to the footnotes.

Ms. St. Peter provided an overview of how the needs of older adults have changed. She noted a shift in paradigm to aging in place. This now requires a shift in how service is delivered. The recession has greatly impacted agencies, individuals, and the community. Older adults, through interviews, noted their need to continue working yet finding transportation to employment difficult. The needs best met by local government were identified as transportation and socialization. Ms. St. Peter clarified “meals” includes both home and congregate meals; and information and referral is combined with case management. She noted some people may not see these service needs as having a role for local government. Laura Guild, DES, inquired whether responses were general or specific to a particular service. Ms. St. Peter advised comments were general and either from nonprofits or older individuals. She noted seniors often turn to their place of worship rather than to local government in time of need.

The stakeholder group cited additional needs such as lock boxes, sensitivity training, and wellness checks. These recommendations have been added to the draft results. Staff will research different models for ideas such as Adopt-a-Parent/Grandparent and for raising public awareness about available programs. Ms. Leyvas noted the importance of identifying the target audience and focusing on how best to reach them.

She referenced the Arizona Community Action Association's campaign *The Changing Face of Poverty*, provided options for people to donate via the internet as well as through an ad in the Arizona Republic. Ms. Leyvas noted more donations were received through the newspaper ad as it reached a greater target audience of older adult who may not trust the internet.

Ms. Guild asked for additional information regarding workplace flexibility for caregivers and the need for public education about this issue. Ms. St. Peter commented employers need to be aware of and allow older adults who work but may need to take some time to schedule an appointment. She said people may want or need to continue working, but only want to work part-time. Employers need to be more willing to break one position into two or possibly three part-time positions to accommodate these types of needs.

Chair Sheffield recommended researching co-housing for people who want to age in place, but remain in their own homes with some support. She noted 24-hour care is very expensive; co-housing may be an option to consider. Ms. Leyvas discussed Exito, Inc., a supportive housing project in the West valley that pairs up elderly people to live together. She noted the program is not a group home as individuals pay their own rent in the two to three bedroom homes.

Ms. St. Peter clarified the draft results do not in any way suggest taking funding away from those services identified as least needed. It does stress the importance of collaborating to meet a greater need with the programs available. Many examples were shared on how the community can support local government. Recommendations generally fell into one of the following categories: volunteer, vote, and voice. Ms. St. Peter asked for additional input from the Committee. Having none, Chair Sheffield asked for a motion. Steve MacFarlane, City of Phoenix, motioned to approve the inventory and key informant interview results for the MAG Municipal Aging Services Project. Ms. Leyvas seconded the motion. The motion passed.

6. Phase Two of the MAG Municipal Aging Services Project

Chair Sheffield thanked everyone who assisted with the completion of the first phase. She invited Ms. St. Peter to discuss phase two of the Project. Ms. St. Peter advised the second phase is Community Engagement. Staff will conduct focus groups from June to September, in the East Valley, West Valley, and Central. Additional focus groups and broader areas may be added. Staff is seeking volunteers to offer locations for focus groups. Focus groups should last no longer than two hours and include 10 to 15 participants. Larger groups can also be accommodated. Focus groups should include older adults and people who serve older adults and may be offered in Spanish as well. The purpose will be to have more detailed discussion about transportation, socialization, expectations of local government, what works well, and how to approach challenges/obstacles differently. Ms. St. Peter advised ETC Institute has been contracted to conduct a scientific survey and the third phase of the project will

consist of a Regional Community Forum. Committee members were given an opportunity to provide input and/or ask questions.

Recommendations were offered to conduct focus groups at Banner Olive Branch Senior Center, Benevilla, Phoenix Indian Center and Chicanos por la Causa, as well as other nonprofits. Ms. St. Peter encouraged Committee members to forward recommendations for other locations and groups. Ms. Leyvas offered to distribute information to the County's sub-contracting agencies. Ms. St. Peter asked for input for the survey design to be shared with ETC Institute. The Committee preferred an opportunity to review a draft survey and provide feedback. Ms. Leyvas made a motion to recommend approval of the focus group and survey design for Phase Two of the MAG Municipal Aging Services Project. Ms. Guild seconded the motion. The motion was passed. Mr. MacFarlane will review the draft questions for the focus groups discussion.

7. Committee Officer Appointments

Chair Sheffield said she has enjoyed serving as Chair of the Human Services Technical Committee for the past two years. She thanked the Committee and staff for their service and for making her term as Chair an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Chair Sheffield reported that letters of interest have been received for the Chair and Vice Chair positions. The MAG Executive Committee meeting agenda for June 13, 2011, includes potential action on the officer appointments. Pending action from the Executive Committee, Chair Sheffield said this would be her last meeting as Chair of the Human Services Technical Committee.

8. Request for Future Agenda Items

Committee members were given an opportunity to suggest topics or issues of interest they would like to have considered for discussion at a future meeting. Recommendations include ongoing discussion of the Municipal Aging Services project and a future presentation from Exito, Inc. regarding supportive housing opportunities in the West Valley. The Committee discussed taking a summer break in July. Staff will confer with the new Chair and Vice Chair.

9. Comments from the Committee

Committee members were given the opportunity to share comments or information related to community events. Ms. Leyvas discussed a community needs and client survey that will soon be administered by A New Leaf, MesaCAN and Maricopa County Human Services. The two-page survey will be taken near the end of July or August over a one-week period of time. The Arizona Community Action Association will conduct a more comprehensive survey in FY 12 with the help of interns. The survey aligns with the six national Community Action Program goals. Ms. Jonovich advised the City of Phoenix will conduct a survey in September just with senior centers. Chair Sheffield discussed a project the City of Avondale is hoping to launch in August. The project will utilize a self-sufficiency matrix to measure the impact of poverty on people who receive assistance through community action programs.

10. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m. The next HSTC meeting is scheduled for July 14, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. at the City of Phoenix, 19th floor, large conference room.