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OTSEGO COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, April 12, 2017 University Center, Room U-107

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Attending Voting Members: M. Sanders, G. Mertz, R. Edel, B. Bowen,
J. Duff, J. Mathis, C. Messina, R. Smith

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Excused Voting Members: J. Camiller

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Non-Voting Member: D. Johnson, Otsego County Board of
Commissioners Liaison

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Attending Staff: D. Wishart, Executive Director
D. Gehman, Director
E. Godek, Research & Volunteer Coordinator
OCCOA Direct Service Work Team

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Guests: Kara LaMarre, Developmental Projects
Coordinator, Area Agency on Aging, Region 9

Call to Order

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- The president, M. Sanders, called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. The OCCOA Direct Service Work Team was welcomed. M. Sanders noted that they are the “heart and soul” of the agency. She thanked them, on behalf of the board, for all that they do. They perform a wonderful service! The board paused for a silent moment of reflection. A quorum was present.

Consent Agenda

- M. Sanders made a request for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

A motion was made by R. Edel and seconded by B. Bowen to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

Open Forum

Nothing was reported.

Executive Board Reports to the Board

President's Report

The president, M. Sanders, briefly presented the following:

- Announcement of Board Re-appointment and Appointment
 - The Otsego County Board of Commissioners recently approved R. Edel's three-year board reappointment.
 - Constance (Connie) Messina was welcomed as the newest board member. She recently moved to the area and has 35-plus years of nursing experience.
 - Rachel Smith is a recent addition to the board. She was recognized.
- Introduction and recognition of OCCOA Direct Service Work Team –
D. Wishart briefly shared the following:
 - She highlighted the four concerns noted in the state report on the direct care workforce that was shared at the February board meeting: 1. There is a shortage in today's workforce, which is expected to worsen; 2. Many of the direct care workers in the field do not receive training; 3. Direct care workers are often under-valued, underpaid, and underappreciated; 4. There is difficulty in retaining direct care workers.
 - The OCCOA will need to continue to plan for the community's growing needs from its direct service workforce. The OCCOA's direct care workforce is well trained and this will continue. Eleven out of the fifteen have earned CNA certifications and two more will soon be taking this training. The agency is ahead of the curve in the community, in terms of wages provided to its direct service workforce. Retention continues to be good.
 - D. Wishart emphasized that the agency needs to continue to do the right thing, stay ahead of the curve, and think about the true value its direct service team gives to the community and families. She acknowledged the importance of their work, not only to clients, but also to family caregivers, to agency staff, and the community.
 - D. Wishart noted that the agency's direct service providers' schedules are fast-paced and that they experience a broad spectrum of situations and clients, all handled with a "heart of caring" and skill. She noted that she could not be prouder of them, or more thankful for each and every one of them and the uniqueness they bring to the agency.
 - K. LaMarre, who has provided training and mentoring to the OCCOA evidence-based disease prevention trainers over the years, noted that the OCCOA direct service team is among the best in the state. She shared an inspirational quote and encouraged each one to remind herself every day that they are exceptional for what they do. On behalf of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Region 9, she presented each service provider with a "relaxation" CD.
 - D. Wishart, assisted by G. Mertz, presented each service provider with a certificate and small gift of appreciation from the agency.

- 1 ○ R. Edel shared a thank you card from a family on behalf of care provided by
2 the agency’s Direct Service Team to a recently deceased family member. The
3 family noted that the care received from the OCCOA service providers over
4 the years was invaluable. Edel observed that the agency frequently receives
5 these kinds of cards and notes.
- 6 ○ Before the OCCOA Direct Service Team departed, D. Wishart invited each
7 of them to have a meaningful and joyful day. Discussion followed.

9 **Vice President’s Report**

10 The vice president, G. Mertz, briefly presented the following:

- 11 • Legal Assistance Program
 - 12 ○ He is still working on revamping the agency’s volunteer Legal Service
13 Program. He was recently able to approach several family law practitioners
14 about volunteering their time and working out the details of the revamped
15 program. These practitioners are members of the local bar association and are
16 the ones who would be able to do the type of work needed by the agency’s
17 clients. He hopes to have the details finalized and a more substantive report
18 by the next board meeting.
 - 19 ○ D. Wishart noted that the agency has an updated draft brochure that will
20 ultimately carry the information that G. Mertz is putting together to identify
21 the resource points. Discussion followed.

23 **Treasurer’s Report**

- 24 • The treasurer, J. Camiller, did not present a report. M. Sanders called for any
25 questions or concerns regarding the financial reports that were included in the
26 board packets. None were raised.

28 **Secretary’s Report**

- 29 • The secretary, R. Edel, shared correspondence earlier in the meeting during the
30 Direct Service Worker recognition.

32 **Aging and Adult Services–Network Reports to 33 the Board**

- 34 • News from AASA (Aging and Adult Services on Aging) – D. Wishart
 - 35 ○ She chairs the AASA Commission for the governor. On April 21, there will
36 be a joint meeting of the State Commission and the State Advisory Council.
37 The State Advisory Council is a group of 40 volunteers giving of their time
38 and talent. Last year, they studied the Direct Care Workforce. This year, they
39 will be studying “Creative Aging,” and will address how art, music, and
40 other means of expression are important to the aging process.
 - 41 ○ The State Commission will soon be working on the State Plan for Services.

- 1 • Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Information – K. LaMarre
 - 2 ○ D. Wishart announced that K. LaMarre is retiring May 5, 2017. She
 - 3 complimented her for her work and support to the agency over the years,
 - 4 noting that she will be dearly missed. D. Wishart presented her with a gift on
 - 5 behalf of the agency.
 - 6 ○ K. LaMarre shared that her replacement will be Liz Kowalski, effective April
 - 7 17, 2017. K. LaMarre noted that she has enjoyed working with the OCCOA
 - 8 and is willing to volunteer for the agency.
 - 9 ○ Additional staff will be hired to handle NAPIS data entry.
 - 10 ○ M. Sanders noted that K. LaMarre’s assistance has been appreciated and that
 - 11 she will be missed.
- 12 • Region 9 Area Agency on Aging Regional Council – Jim Mathis
 - 13 ○ No report was presented.
- 14 • Other – Older Michiganians Day
 - 15 ○ D. Wishart noted that Older Michiganians Day is scheduled for May 17,
 - 16 2017 and will take place on the lawn of the state capitol. All are invited and
 - 17 encouraged to attend. It is a good opportunity to meet with state
 - 18 representatives regarding aging issues. A printed platform of issues will be
 - 19 soon be available to aid board members in addressing the issues that are
 - 20 important, both personally and professionally, to them.
 - 21 ○ J. Mathis shared his positive experience in attending an Older Michiganians
 - 22 Day.
 - 23

24 Management Team

25 The management team, D. Wishart and D. Gehman, briefly reported the following:

- 26 • Agency Updates
 - 27 ○ Budget – The agency continues to do well with cost savings that are expected
 - 28 to have about a \$90,000 impact on the deficit budget. The staff continues to
 - 29 work very hard to contain and cut costs.
 - 30 ○ Staff
 - 31 ■ Shannon Gapinski, a direct service worker, will be transferring to a new
 - 32 position in Customer Service in the office. She has been training in the
 - 33 office on a limited basis for almost a year and will start her new position
 - 34 on April 17, 2017.
 - 35 ■ The agency will be interviewing candidates for the Healthy Aging
 - 36 Activities Coordinator position during the last two weeks of April.
 - 37 ■ The agency will be advertising for two positions next month: an office
 - 38 manager for the Advocacy Department and another direct service
 - 39 provider.
 - 40 ○ Programs
 - 41 ■ The Meal Program continues to encompass Congregate Meals, Home
 - 42 Delivered Meals, Commodity Foods (through a collaboration the AAA
 - 43 Region 9 and the agency), and Senior Project FRESH.

- 1 ○ Senior Project FRESH is collaboration between the agency and the local
2 farmers, the farmers market and components of the City of Gaylord. The
3 agency has ordered 280 coupon booklets. This year's kickoff meetings will
4 take place in late May and early June.
- 5 ○ Otsego Haus Program – There has been a slight uptick in clients but they still
6 need more. Referrals are appreciated.
- 7 ○ Volunteer Program – It continues to do well. The staff is in the midst of
8 providing tax assistance. Just a few more clinics remain. They are a lot of
9 work but much appreciated by clients. Key volunteers are preparing federal
10 and state returns, as well as the Michigan tax credits, as needed.
- 11 ○ Accounting Department
 - 12 ▪ An assessment for the agency's waiver clients was recently completed and
13 follow-up will be provided soon.
 - 14 ▪ Today, the AAA Region 9 will be conducting a general and In-Home
15 Service assessment.
 - 16 ▪ Later in the year, the agency will undergo its annual programmatic and
17 fiscal assessment.
- 18 ○ Advocacy Department – The agency is working on strengthening this
19 department. It has three counselors: John Panci, Sarah Skowronski, and
20 Danielle Kleinhuizen. Both S. Skowronski and D. Kleinhuizen are working
21 on higher education in social work and the agency is supporting their efforts.
22 S. Skowronski is currently interning with the Department of Health and
23 Human Services and is seeking an internship for her next semester. She is
24 doing amazing work. D. Wishart noted that she couldn't say enough about
25 these three counselors and all that they are accomplishing.
- 26 ○ D. Kleinhuizen is also the service coordinator for the Alten Zimmer. This is a
27 new responsibility for her that has transitioned to her from S. Skowronski.
- 28 ● Other
 - 29 ○ Phil Alexander, in collaboration with the Historical Society, the University
30 Center, the Otsego County Library, OCCOA, and others, is putting together a
31 new program that will be a look at Otsego County history. It will include
32 such things as walking tours and site visits. It will be an interactive program
33 where participation will be included.
 - 34 ○ D. Wishart solicited any questions or concerns that board members might
35 have.
 - 36 ▪ R. Edel voiced his concerns regarding the proposed budget from the
37 federal executive branch and its possible impact on the agency if cuts are
38 passed.
 - 39 ▪ D. Wishart noted the need for aging services is expected to continue to
40 increase and that there are many younger older adults living with chronic
41 conditions who will also be in need of additional services. Advocates are
42 lending their voices about any cuts that affect aging services. She will
43 send board members some advocacy alerts with some talking points and
44 contact information.

- 1 ▪ D. Gehman noted that there is a proposal to cut the Community
- 2 Development Block Grants. He does not expect these cuts to affect the
- 3 agency very much. However, the agency can't afford to lose these funds,
- 4 given that its Home-Delivered Meal Program delivery costs increased this
- 5 year.
- 6 ▪ He noted that RSVP is also at risk of having its federal funding cut. The
- 7 OCCOA is a currently the largest funder of the RSVP program.
- 8 ▪ D. Wishart thanked the board for their time and the expertise they bring.
- 9 ▪ M. Sanders complimented D. Wishart for the recognition provided to the
- 10 Direct Service workers.
- 11

12 **Adjournment**

13 The April 12, 2017 Otsego County Commission on Aging Board of Directors meeting
14 was adjourned at 9:48 a.m. by M. Sanders. The next meeting is scheduled at the
15 University Center on Wednesday, June 14, 2017, at 9:00 a.m.

16
17 *Eileen K. Godek*

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19 Eileen K. Godek
20 Recorder