

Governor's Advisory Commission on Aging

Minutes

April 20, 2005

Members Present: Ms. Ann Gardella, Ms. Gloria Williams, Mr. Ken Reynolds, Ms. Louise King, Rev. Paul Bliss, Ms. Nancy Pontes, Ms. Maria Matias, Ms. Madeline Ernest, Mr. Joseph Brown, Sr. Marietta Walsh, Ms. Helen Friend, Ms. Janice Zeichner, Mr. Bennett Plotkin, Ms. Esther Price, and Mr. Norm Chapman

Others in Attendance: Ralph Rodriguez (DEA), Ms. Donna Slemon (DEA) and Ms. Mary King

Absent: Mr. Raymond Tetreault, Ms. Libby Aaron, and Ms. Lisa Pontarelli

Excused: Ms. Corinne Calise Russo, Director DEA, Ms. Paula Parker (DEA), Dr. Herb Constantine, and Mr. Joseph Corrente

I. Minutes

The minutes of the March 16, 2005 were approved.

II. Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Gardella called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. She informed members that Director Russo asked that the next meeting be rescheduled from May 18 to May 25 because she had a scheduling conflict.

III. Director's Report

Elder Rights Initiative

Ralph Rodriguez, DEA Associate Director, reported on the progress of an Elder Rights Initiative that addresses self neglect, guardianship, a 24 hour abuse phone line and the need for an emergency shelter for clients at risk. The initiative will update protective services law to include specific language on self neglect. Ralph Rodriguez stated that the Meals on Wheels guardianship program works well for institution based clients; however, DEA finds guardianship issues for community based clients more complicated. He also reported that DEA is reviewing how neighboring states are handling the coverage needed for a 24/7 abuse phone line and an emergency shelter. Ralph Rodriguez projected a late May date for the completion of the Elder Rights Initiative.

Medicare Part D

Ralph Rodriguez reported that CMS and Social Security will begin an intensive informational campaign in May. The list of companies offering Part D benefits will be announced in late September or October. All companies will charge the same monthly fee for Part D;

however, company pharmaceutical benefits will vary. Seniors should enroll in the company which best suits their pharmaceutical needs. Senior who chose not to enroll in Part D will be penalized 1% per month for every month not enrolled. This penalty will be added to the initial monthly cost resulting in a permanent inflated monthly payment. Ralph Rodriguez reported that it is difficult to determine the cost of Part D to current RIPAE clients.

IV. Treasurer's Report

Esther Price reported DEA will be depositing money in the Commission's checking account.

V. Committee Reports

LTCCC: The April meeting was canceled.

New England Coalition: Sister Marietta Walsh reported that the Coalition will meet April 26 and 27, 2005 in Freeport, Maine. Sister Walsh stated the White House Conference on Aging has an informational website listing states and their issues.

Forum on Aging: The meeting was canceled. Joe Brown reported that the emergency preparedness sessions were extremely informative.

Silver Hair Legislature: Norm Chapman reported that the Silver Hair

Legislature was presented with a check for \$1000. from the Majority Whip. Mr. Chapman updated the members on the nursing home bills and the need to protect elders from fraud.

VI. Old Business

None

VII. New Business

None.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Chairperson Gardella and seconded by Norm Chapman to adjourn the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

The next meeting will be held on May 25, 2005 at 9:30 a.m. in Department of Labor and Training Building 71, second floor conference room 71-2.

Respectfully submitted by:

Donna M. Slemon

Assistant to the Director

Department of Elderly Affairs