

# **Rhode Island Advisory Commission on Aging**

## **Minutes**

**May 17, 2006**

**Members Present: Ann Gardella, Norm Chapman, Joseph Brown, Kenneth Reynolds, Nancy Pontes, Sister Marietta Walsh, Gloria Williams, Libby Arron, Dr. Bennett Plotikin, Rev. Paul Franklin Bliss, Janice Zeichner and Madeline Ernest**

**Members Excused: Helen Friend, Ester Price and Louise King**

**Members Absent: Joseph Corrente, Maria Matias and Lisa Pontarelli**

**Others in Attendance: Paula Parker (DEA)**

### **I. Call to Order**

**Chairperson Ann Gardella called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.**

### **II. Minutes**

**The minutes of the April 15, 2006 meeting were approved with the correction that Joe Brown was present.**

**III. Chairperson's Report: No report.**

### **IV. Director's Report**

**Paula Parker reported that, now that Medicare Part D is past the May**

**15th deadline, Rhode Island statistics reveal 130,000 of the eligible 172,000 beneficiaries (76%) have filed or have coverage, ranking the state #1 in New England. Newport, which had been ranked last in percentage, ended up #1 in the state. The DEA is still working on RIPAE refilling, with the staff checking on those who have not.**

## **V. Treasurer's Report**

**The current balance in the RIACOA account remains at \$108.45.**

## **VI. Committee Reports**

### **LTCCC**

**Sister Marietta Walsh reported that the last meeting was a little unusual with a focus on Part D and the need to gather information. Senator Elizabeth Roberts spoke on RIPAE. Larry Grimaldi gave an update on problems with the 18 vendors with 44 plans for Part D. Concern was raised about seniors being able to get their prescriptions. The Federal Government had a problem getting information out in a timely manner. Those with creditable coverage had difficulty with their receipts. That problem appears to be resolved, allowing them to pay their deductible at the pharmacy.**

### **NECC**

**Sister Marietta Walsh reported that Paula assisted with the Advisory Commission's letter of concern to the members of the New England Conference, regarding the cancellation of the Conference for lack of registrants. There are those who are making an effort to assure that the Conference that Massachusetts chairs does not become defunct. Sister informed us that only Connecticut and New Hampshire responded with a desire to continue.**

**Norm reported that Christos Perakis, account executive for Apple Computer, has offered to assist with a video conferencing solution. He would work with his contacts throughout New England to find a local business, government office, library, or school that had a video conferencing capability to set up an arranged site for delegate(s) to participate at a prearranged date and time. All the delegate would have to do is be present and involved in the real-time session.**

### **Forum on Aging**

**Joe Brown reported that Dr. Moore of Brown University spoke to members about health issues 20 years from now and who will pay what.**

### **Silver Haired Legislature**

**Libby Aaron reported that the SHL will be having its annual meeting jointly with the Forum on Aging at the West Valley Inn on June 19th. The Financial Committee will be filing an application with the IRS for (3)(c) non-profit status in order to allow donors to claim an Income**

**Tax deduction for any contribution(s) made to the SHL. She reported that Andy Gauthier is doing a “great” job leading the SHL as Speaker.**

**Many members participated in a Mall Membership event to assure that there is a Representative from every District in Rhode Island.**

## **VII. Elderly Problems and the Commission’s Role**

**There was a discussion about the issues that need to be addressed in order to garner community support. All communities are experiencing the same problems that are in need of solutions (e.g., insurance, living at home vs. a nursing home, etc.) Commissioners are concerned that our current agenda may be holding us back from taking action as a Commission.**

**They believe that we need to make some changes in our focus, and that we are responsible to advise and inform both the DEA and the Governor on important issues like home care, which could be the state’s #1 problem. We advise, and the DEA and the Governor take action. There was consensus that, in order to feel like we are advancing, we need to:**

- orient new Commissioners**
- meet in smaller focus groups**
- obtain reliable information on nursing homes and transportation**
  - make a monthly report to the DEA and the Governor**
- invite the Governor to come and address the Commission**

**Norm Chapman reported that 40 residents of Saunderstown met last month to begin a community elderly citizen's community support project that will be all- encompassing (health, transportation, assistance, etc.), allowing seniors to live in their homes as long as possible. It is based on "The Village Concept". He will keep the Commission and the DEA informed as the project moves forward.**

### **VIII. Membership**

**Dr. Constantine will not be continuing as Vice-chairperson, so a replacement is needed. Herb Weiss and Ray Tetreau have declined to continue as Commissioners, and replacements are being sought. The Membership and Nominating Committees will obtain nominees, review their credentials, and submit the names of those chosen to the Governor's Municipal and External Affairs Office for appointment. Libby, Gloria, Joe, Norm, Rev. Bliss, and Paula will serve on the Nominating Committee.**

### **IX. Annual Meeting**

**The Annual Meeting will take place at Atria in Barrington on June 28th. The business meeting will be at 10:30 AM, and an Atria-donated luncheon will be served at noon.**

**It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 AM.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Norm Chapman**