



**Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton**  
**AREA AGENCY**  
**ON AGING**

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**Citizens Advisory Council Meeting**  
**Friday, January 28, 2022**

The Citizens Advisory Council of the Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton Area Agency on Aging met on Friday, January 28, 2022 at the Hopewell Senior Center. Meeting was opened by President Prudence Harclerode leading the group in the pledge to the flag and prayer.

***MOTION: On a Burr/Gates motion - The minutes of the November 19, 2021 Advisory Council meeting are approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.***

**ITEM 1 - Open discussion on impact of Covid-19 pandemic on mental health.** Connie Brode said the pandemic and closing of the centers for part of 2020 was difficult on older person's mental health since socialization for the senior citizens is so important. This has caused some significant emotional issues with all age groups and can result in physical issues. It was noted that, particularly for older persons, there are few facilities set up for geriatric mental health care. The key to good mental health is to stay active with friends, family & community activities, including attending senior centers. The group agreed with Mrs. Lohr that you can always call people and check on them as well.

Mrs. Burr felt that the mixed messages coming out almost daily about Covid has caused people to fear. It was pointed out that everyone has a different comfort level and we should be respectful of each other's position. Connie said the way services are provided has changed with the pandemic, with lack of personal care aides, tele-medicine, etc. Mrs. Gates suggested that the centers set up days where people can come in and have a tele-health appointment with their doctor. In regard to getting people back to the centers, Mrs. Mellott said their county/center is looking at getting a filter system that purifies the air, with Commissioner Shives saying Fulton County is installing one to try before purchasing for all their buildings.

**ITEM 2. Audit update.** Connie said the Agency's fiscal year audit was delayed due to a variety of circumstances. It is now completed and received by the Agency this week. There are no compliance issues in the audit and it will be shared with the Joint Board at their next meeting.

**ITEM 3 - Agency satisfaction surveys.** Connie said 2 of our volunteers, Mrs. Imgrund and Mrs. Harclerode, worked hard on getting the annual surveys out to consumers and entering the results in the computer and she thanked them for their work. Twenty percent of consumers are mailed surveys, in addition to having it on the Agency's website. There were 114 responses from Cart passengers with the majority pleased with the service, the clean vehicles, courteous



drivers and timeliness. In-home services had 54 responses with the majority of consumers satisfied with service, even with the shortages in aides this past year. The respondents also stated that the care managers are knowledgeable and pleasant. Overall the congregate meal surveys were positive and it was noted that 70% of meals continue to be grab & go, rather than dining in. The overall return rate of surveys was about 33%. The Agency's quality assurance worker also does regular phone calls and other surveys throughout the year.

ITEM 4 - Senior Centers - a) Attendance and programming. Attendance continues to be below average, with about 10-20 dining in. However, the state is planning to end the grab & go meals June 30 and it is hoped that all these participants will once again begin attending the centers. Bobbi said there were 3,800 congregate meals served at the centers last month. It was announced that senior center trips have started up again and, when the Health & Wellness programs begin, there will be Healthy Steps and Bingocize among other activities.

b) Senior Center grants. Bobbi said the next round of senior center grants are out and the state has set the funding levels again this year. Full-time centers will receive approximately \$4,752 and satellites \$1,000. The Agency will again schedule a meeting with center operators and senior group presidents to review procedures and regulations. Mrs. Mellott said under the current grant some items are still on back order due to the pandemic.

ITEM 5 In-home services. Lori said the Department of Aging will be conducting regulatory monitorings of the Caregiver Support Program. Staff is currently being trained on the new Protective Service regulations and changes are being implemented. As mentioned, contracted in-home service providers continue to be short staffed and not able to fill all the service requests. The Department has allowed in-person visits again, particularly for protective service cases. A lot of assessment work is still done on the phone with short visits following. In-person visits are not done at nursing facilities if they are not allowing visits, with the exception of protective service.

ITEM 6 - a) Vehicle acquisition. Connie said the Agency finally received 8 new vehicles ordered last year. Tony said all road testing has been done and they are being put into service in the 3 counties. The vehicles are 4-wheel drive, have automatic inside sanitizing systems, cameras and storage for wheelchairs.

b) Grants. Two transportation grants are in award status, including about \$1.5 million for another round of new vehicles. The Agency had asked about mini-vans to use for destinations that are hard to get to with the bigger vehicles. At first, PennDOT was not going to allow them, but has since approved the Agency to purchase some mini-vans.

ITEM 7 - Advisory Council membership. Reappointments are coming up for members and Connie thanked the group for their service over the past 2 years. She will be submitting names to the Commissioners for approval and there are a few vacancies to fill.

ITEM 8 - Enrollment. Mrs. Gordon, who represents the PA Council on Aging for our area, said the Council continues discussion on enrollment and the issues with Maximus. They fully support AAAs across the state doing enrollment and assessment. Connie said discussion also continues on the local and state levels and she thanked PCoA and the Advisory Council for their input and support. At the request of the Commissioners, Connie recently sent a letter to the PA Association of AAAs (P4A) in support of continuing the negotiating process.

Having no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:25 am.