



Huntingdon-Bedford-Fulton

# AREA AGENCY ON AGING

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July 5, 2023

## MEMO

**TO:** Commissioners of Huntingdon, Bedford & Fulton Counties

**FROM:** Connie Brode, Executive Director 

**RE:** Joint Board meeting

A meeting of the Commissioners of Huntingdon, Bedford and Fulton Counties, serving as the joint board of the Area Agency on Aging, will be held on Monday, July 10, 2023 at 10:00 am. Meeting location is the Holiday Inn Express, Breezewood, PA.

## A G E N D A

Chair – Huntingdon County

1. Approval of minutes from May 1 2023 meeting
2. Financial updates
  - a. May 2023 financial report
  - b. Scheduled audit for FY22-23
  - c. Budget discussions
  - d. 23/24 budget approval
3. In-home Services
  - a. Waiting list
4. Protective services
  - a. Elder justice event in Huntingdon
  - b. Joint event with Link, CIL and AAA in Bedford County
  - c. Joint event with Link, CIL and AAA in Fulton County

5. Senior Centers
  - a. Current statistics
6. Transportation Program
  - a. Fare discussion
  - b. Vehicle status
7. Human Resources
  - a. Personnel report
  - b. New HR Director position request
  - c. Electronic HR management system proposal
8. Executive Session

Attached are the minutes from the May session and other discussion material for the meeting.



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**Meeting of the Commissioners of  
Huntingdon, Bedford and Fulton Counties  
Monday, May 1, 2023**

A meeting of the Commissioners of Huntingdon, Bedford and Fulton Counties, serving as the governing board of the Area Agency on Aging, was held on Monday, May 1, 2023 at the Forbes Road Conference Center, Breezewood, PA. Meeting was opened by Fulton County Commissioner Paula Shives.

**ITEM 1 - Minutes. MOTION: On a Walls/Frederick motion - The minutes of the March 6, 2023 meeting are approved as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

**ITEM 2 - General Pay Increase.** Connie Brode had asked Sherry Kovach to provide data on several percentages for a general pay increase effective July 1 and how it would affect the budget. She said we have to remain competitive with the labor market. Sherry reviewed the proposals and said the 5% requested by Connie would be \$43,000 and is achievable this year. Connie said we now have several care manager vacancies and you have to have staff to provide service. It is hoped that the PA Department of Aging will be able to generate more lottery money to AAAs in the future. Commissioner Frederick asked if 5% would be sufficient and Connie said she feels it will keep people from leaving. Commissioner Shives recognized that you need to look ahead to future funding or the lack thereof and would support 4%. In agreeing with her, Commissioner Thomas is still concerned about having enough staff to provide service.

The assessment program which is fee generated has helped the Agency's surplus as will the health insurance savings. In response to a Commissioner Walls question, Sherry said ARPA money received after May 11 can be used only for direct services. Discussion was held on current wages and various stipend/retention plans that the counties have done. Commissioner Ulsh saying he would be in favor of giving a flat dollar amount across the board rather than a percentage, with Commissioner Thomas saying that is what Huntingdon County provides. Connie reminded the Board that in the past year we did provide a special increase to lower level positions.

***MOTION: On a Walls/Baughman motion - The Joint Board approves a 5% general pay increase for all Agency employees effective July 1, 2023. Motion carried 4-2.***

**ITEM 3 a) March financial report.** The financial report was emailed to Commissioners earlier. Sherry said AAAs finally received the block grant amendment funding and the Agency got \$196,000 of the \$267,000 requested. She said block grant money is coming in better and the



line of credit was not needed in March. The Agency has a large Caregiver Support Program and we will be asking for additional money in the next request. No reserves have been used yet this fiscal year and will be carried over, along with unused ARPA funds and program income.

In-home services are still under budget due to provider staff shortages. Lori Heaton said the Agency picked up 2 new providers and the "waiting, no provider" list is now very small. Connie reported that the \$460,000 owed the Agency from PennDOT for last fiscal year has been approved and this will cover the previously discussed deficit for transportation. As noted, assessment is going well and, with the new contract, more work will be coming to AAAs.

3b) Budget discussion. Several items were already reviewed and Sherry said on the service side levels are fairly consistent to prior years. Congregate meals continues to be watched due to increased costs. Connie said we are allowing senior centers to do more fundraising events, either meals or trips. She said a new food service provider visited the office and said they are looking to move into the eastern area.

3c) Health insurance proposal. Connie had sent information to the Commissioners earlier, noting that Highmark's initial increase was 17% and, after our broker did some negotiating, the final figure came down to 3.54% with a \$15,000 credit on the first month's premium. This is very good news. The in-house employee health & wellness benefit will continue as well.

***MOTION: On a Baughman/Thomas motion - The Joint Board approves renewing the Agency's health insurance coverage with Highmark at a 3.54% rate increase effective July 1, 2023. Motion carried unanimously.***

ITEM 4 - Administration - a) Transportation fare increase. The Commissioners were emailed the 4 proposals for a fare increase for the Cart program effective July 1. The last fare increase was 2018 and we were due for another one when Covid hit. The transportation advisory subcommittee met several times to review the proposals and recommended #4 as most appropriate. The full fare for a one-way trip in Zone 1 will go from \$20 to \$35 and in Zone 2 from \$30 to \$65. The Agency can use a maximum of \$350,000 from the Aging Block Grant to help subsidize Cart. Proposal #4 would generate \$2,344,446. Connie said the \$1 fare to go to a senior center is being eliminated. Special senior center trips will go from \$1 to \$2 per stop.

PennDOT pays 85% of the trip for anyone over the age of 65, with the Agency supplementing that cost and covering those 60-64, less the passenger fare. Special funding sources including MATP and PWD help cover costs for qualified individuals. Connie said we are providing a lot of MATP and 65 & over trips, but PWD trips continue to be low. Commissioner Baughman asked about medical trips and Connie said a lot of them go to specialists in Altoona, which is Zone 2.



A special Advisory Council meeting was held this past Friday to present the proposals and recommendation of the subcommittee to members. Following discussion, the Advisory Council accepted the subcommittee's recommendation of proposal #4 as the best choice for a fare increase. In response to a question from Commissioner Shives, Connie said the Agency takes some people to work now and she would like to be able to expand this, possibly with the employer's support.

***MOTION: The Joint Board of Commissioners approves the recommendation from the Advisory Council and the transportation advisory subcommittee of proposal #4 for a fare increase for the Cart system effective July 1, 2023. Motion carried 5-1.***

4b) Contract renewals. Connie said the 5-year contract cycle will continue for most of the contracts listed and there was no need to go out for bid on any of the agreements.

***MOTION: On a Walls/Baughman motion - The Joint Board approves the list of contracts as presented by the Agency. Motion carried unanimously.***

4c) Resolutions. Connie said the resolutions allowing her to sign various documents to continue Agency business need renewed for Fiscal Year 23-24. These will be emailed to each county to be placed on letterhead and approved at their regular weekly meeting. The one for PennDOT which requires all 9 signatures on one resolution will also need renewed and can be signed today.

***MOTION: On a Thomas/Walls motion - The Joint Board approves both referenced resolutions for Fiscal Year 2023-24. Motion carried unanimously.***

ITEM 5) Waiting list. The waiting list for in-home services includes 60 for Huntingdon County, 11 for Bedford County and 4 for Fulton County. Lori said the new provider mainly picked up cases in Bedford County. Hopefully, we can find more providers for Huntingdon.

ITEM 6) Protective service. Connie said since the last meeting the Agency went through a protective service monitoring by the Department of Aging. The results were excellent with a 95% compliance rate. She said there were many complimentary remarks about our work.

ITEM 7) Senior centers. Connie remains concerned about attendance at the senior centers. The Agency had requested special money for some training modules, but it was not approved by the state. There was discussion about transportation to senior centers and using volunteer drivers. The Agency is requiring volunteer drivers to have a physical, like our paid drivers, before being approved to operate an Agency vehicle for center trips and there was a question on the cost of physicals. Connie said this will be reviewed. She said they will also be trained on the proper way to strap in passengers and they must do the pre-trip inspection being taking the vehicle. We also require a PA driver's license to operate an Agency vehicle. In

response to another question, in order to bring persons into the center they have to go through the reservation process with Central Dispatch.

ITEM 8 Transportation. Connie provided statistics on ridership, saying that trips are coming up with 6,000 being provided in April. Two more vans were delivered and we are still waiting for 3, along with the 11 buses. The hold up is with the camera equipment.

ITEM 9 Human resources. The personnel report since the last meeting was provided, noting 6 vacancies. Interviews have been ongoing with good prospects for some of the positions.

***MOTION: On a Walls/Frederick motion - The Joint Board meeting enters Executive Session.***

Coming out of executive session and no action to be taken:

***MOTION: On a Thomas/Walls motion - The May 1, 2023 meeting of the Joint Board of Commissioners is adjourned.***