

Minutes

General Issues Committee Governor's Commission on Senior Services January 26, 2006 Department of Human Services

Attendees: Eunice Dutton (Chair), Remona Simpson (Vice-Chair), Jack Ewing, John Helm, Kay Kirkbride, Dolores Raymond, Jack Roberts, Kathleen Schonau

Excused/Absent: Elaine Barrett

Guests: Peggie Beck, John Brenne, Bob Repine, Kelly Wessels,

Staff: Robert Gordon, Marc Overbeck, Wendy Russell

Called Meeting to Order

Review of Agenda – No changes

Approval of December minutes- (Jack Roberts/Remona). *Passed.*

Announcements

John spoke about GCSS assisting in the long-range planning forums that will be held throughout the state. The Committee agreed that questions from the “Seven Questions” on Long-Term Care fit into the issues they are concerned with.

Housing- Bob Repine

Bob addressed the committee on a host of issues related to housing:

Field Structure and Programs - There are 6 regional field offices as part of the Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS). Bob would like to have people from Housing be at the long-range planning community forums.

There is a program that OHCS has with some community partners in which there is a voucher offering agreement with private landlords to pay first and last months' rent for either a 6-month or 1-year lease if families complete a “ready to rent” training. The training is 2-3 weeks in length, and the voucher guarantees that if the tenants default, the landlord will not lose the money.

A new program is being piloted by both OHCS, which has successfully placed 200 homeless individuals averaging 9 years of homelessness each in homes, using the same voucher system mentioned above for chronic homeless people. Of those 200, only 1 or 2 people have defaulted. The results are very hopeful. These voucher programs need community partners to help expand.

Manufactured Home Parks- Numerous parks have closed. Land developers have been buying

them up to build higher-priced units, such as townhouses or condominiums. Bob acknowledged that park owners are not required to disclose any information on the terms of sales. OHCS is trying to find other models from other states and how those states acquire parks before they are bought by developers. On the federal level, HUD has a park acquisition program and has partnered with the Ford Foundation. Under this program, parks can be purchased by the owners or another organization that will maintain the park, but often when the park is being sold at above appraised value the home owners cannot afford the price.

Funding set asides- OHCS has been using special allocations for special needs, seniors and chronic homelessness. This money is all for multi-family developments but are set aside for housing for those specific groups.

Homeless Agenda- Legislation in the 2005 Session would have expanded the Interagency Coordinating Council on Hunger to include Homelessness. The legislation died but the Governor will sign an Executive Order in February that parallels the proposal.

Assisted Living Facilities- There have been no new facilities in Oregon because of the moratorium; OHCS is not inclined to put money up for Assisted Living Facilities due to the fact that Medicaid money is not a guaranteed amount over time, and thus there is no secured long-term funding for any units developed by the State Housing Fund.

Housing Centers- These centers were developed to help keep people living in their own homes. Funds are used to address the issue of when situations where there is a question about assisting an owner to repair the home versus forcing them to sell the home and use more government services. Currently there are 10 housing resource centers throughout the state. The improvements are paid for by Community Development Block Grants dollars and are awarded by community-based partners who already have other complimentary programs which help homeowners. The applicants have to be income eligible and there is a full assessment of the house prior to approval. Some of the uses for the grants are to pay for ramps, improve heating systems and update electrical services and replace/repair roofs. There is almost \$4 million available yearly. These are funds that are agreed to be repaid by the owner when the property is sold, refinanced or there is a title change due to death. This program has been up running for 4 years there is the hope that there will be two more centers added in the state.

Apartment Conversions- Bob noted the issue of apartment complexes where the owners change to condominiums and then sell the units. This issue is not as drastic as what is happening with manufactured home parks, but it is still an issue and many renters get displaced as a result.

Disaster Preparedness

Eunice said she hopes to get someone from the American Red Cross to come visit the Commission and discuss disaster preparedness.

Eunice reminded people of the Oregon Gerontological Association March 10 conference on

disaster preparedness.

Members of the Committee explored questions that they wanted Ken Murphy to answer at the full Commission meeting:

1. Is there an evacuation plan for nursing homes and assisted living beyond getting them out of the building?
2. Is anyone trying to train people to be adaptable to circumstances and events?
3. Who in Oregon has turned in their plans?
4. Who is required to have a plan?
5. What counties have exercised their plans?
6. Is there an interagency system of local government communication?
7. What federal and state resources are available to help with the costs?
8. How do you distinguish what a local entity is promising to do for older adults as a population?
9. What are local entities doing with Homeland Security money?

Other Issues

There was discussion around the “Seven Questions” related to Long-Term Care. The Group agreed that on the March agenda the committee would look at these questions as a way to begin to get ready for the Community Forums.

Member Input

None.

Public Comment

None.

Action Item:	Assigned To:	Due Date:
Work with OCHS to obtain more information on the housing issues address by Bob Repine	Staff	3/06
Compile the proposed questions for Ken Murphy and get to Ken prior to the Friday meeting of the Commission	Marc	1/27/06