

Minutes

Legislative Advocacy Committee

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

Attendees: Robert Lawrence (Chair), Dolores Raymond (VC), Peggie Beck, Denise Dion, Jack Ewing, Chris Flammang, Charles Kurtz, Barbara Nelson, and Kelly Wessels

Excused: N/A

Guests: John Brenne, Eunice Dutton, John Helm, Kay Kirkbride, Maria Smith, Jacqueline Zimmer

Staff: Marc Overbeck and Becky Murphy

Called Meeting to Order

The December minutes were approved as sent.

The agenda was approved without changes.

Announcements

Kay reported on an e-mail from Rep. Mitch Greenlick. He is sponsoring a constitutional amendment (HOPE) concerning health care being a fundamental right for Oregonians.

Marc reminded members that the Commission is not allowed to take a position on ballot measures or candidates – but there is nothing to preclude GCSS to invite speakers for an informational forum on issues which are of vital interest to seniors. And, members are certainly able to take positions on issues as private citizens.

MOTION: Recommend to invite Rep. Greenlick to speak to GCSS regarding the HOPE initiative. Passed. (Denise Dion/Peggie Beck)

Dolores Raymond reported about the recent Housing Summit. She recommended members to contact their legislators about this issue and with encouragement to them to get involved.

Quarterly Report

Robert thanked Jack Ewing for his efforts in developing the draft Report to the Governor ; Jack also thanked Robert and Marc for their input and editing. Marc

reviewed what the committee had recommended--a quarterly report to the Governor to inform the Governor and his staff what GCSS is working on. Kelly appreciated the reference to RSVP and Senior Companions in the Report. Members were told that Rep. Gilman plans to seek funding for the two programs in the 2007 Legislative Session.

MOTION: Send report to the Governor's Office as is. Passed. (Charles Kurtz/Kelly Wessels)

Marc reported the legislative accomplishments booklet was recently sent to the 90 members of the Legislature, in both hard copy and e-mail formats.

Revisiting Member & Legislator Lists

A list was distributed, members were asked to mark off which legislators they would like to visit.

Discussion on Effective Advocacy

Robert distributed "Effective Advocacy" material to members.

Marc reviewed how a bill becomes a law—the process, legislative systems, finding a willing sponsor who will take action, who can introduce a bill, and contacting legislators.

It is not too early to contact legislators about funding for RSVP and Senior Companions; however, it may be more effective if it is done in cooperation with other groups. As a group, the Commission will need to make decisions on a legislative set of concepts it supports; Robert underscored the need for collaboration and cooperation with other advocates.

Jacqueline Zimmer felt GCSS did very well last session in coordination; she would be happy to look with the Commission to coordinate the work.

Jacqueline presented ideas to assist in the advocacy process: meeting with legislators and advocate groups, connecting with local Senior Advisory Councils (attending, receiving minutes, etc.); and having an open line of communication between groups on three or four top legislative items.

Robert distributed a list of key legislators to members.

Charles mentioned to contact legislators as both constituents and as Commissioners.

Robert proposed that GCSS can possibly obtain legislative ideas at The Future of Long Term Care public forums in May and June.

Jacqueline recommended John attend 04AD meeting in February.

Updates from Interim Committees

Robert reported that the Human Services Coalition of Oregon and the Advocacy Coalition of Seniors and People with Disabilities may combine into one group.

John reported an application has been requested for the Oregon Revenue Coalition in which Charles is liaison.

Emergency Board

Robert distributed Dr. Goldberg's e-mail message which discussed the budget problems (including issues of eligibility and illegal immigrants). Robert feels more attention should be paid to staff reductions (especially in the field) and the caseloads.

Robert recommended a letter be sent. Discussion followed. Jacqueline pointed out that the AAAs need to be factored in with DHS in determining the amounts of cuts that have happened and are predicted. It was suggested that corporations that will gain revenue from an aging population should assist with the solution to the "revenue problem".

ACTION ITEM: A letter to be drafted to Dr. Goldberg and the E-Board and sent electronically for input from the committee members.

Charles reported that advisory groups are happy when commissioners visit, and that he had recently attended a meeting of Elders in Action.

ACTION ITEM: Marc or Jacqueline e-mail chairs of the Senior Advisory Councils.

House Interim TF on Human Services

Barbara Nelson reported attending one meeting of this group, in which the members broke into subcommittees, and there was discussion on illegal immigration and its purported effects on services.

Action Items:	Assigned To:	Due Date:
Invite Rep. Greenlick to speak on HOPE.	Marc	3/06
Send Quarterly Report to the Governor's Office.	Marc	2/06

Schedule meetings with members and legislators.	Marc	3/06
Assist John with presentation to 04AD.	Marc	2/06
Draft letter about E-Board and e-mail to members for input.	Marc	3/06
E-mail chairs of Senior Advisory Councils.	Marc or Jacqueline	3/06