



**JOINT MEETING  
WASHOE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD  
AND  
CITY OF RENO SENIOR CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Draft Minutes**

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**Wednesday – January 4, 2017  
3:00 P.M. - Washoe County Senior Center  
1155 E. 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Reno NV 89512**

1. **Call to Order/Roll Call** – Meeting called to order at 3:05 pm by Dr. Larry Weiss. Because Donna Clontz serves on both boards (as an alternate on the WCSSAB), she chose to represent the City of Reno SCAC during this meeting. City of Reno and County of Washoe met a quorum.

**Present:**           **Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board:** Dr. Larry Weiss, Connie McMullen, Marsy Kupfersmith, Sandra Dexter, Dennis Chin, Wayne Alexander, Garth Elliot  
                          **City of Reno Senior Citizen Advisory Committee:** Donna Clontz, CJ Bawden, Wendy Boszak, Vanessa Dixon, Marsy Kupfersmith, Robert Mulvana, Linda Musselman

**Absent:**           **Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board:** Ken Romeo

**Excused:**       **Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board:** Gary Whitfield, Barbara Korosa  
                          **City of Reno Senior Citizen Advisory Committee:** Stanley Ann Dowdy, Mac Rossi

**Staff Present:** **Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board:** Ken Retterath, Abby Badolato, Sandra Vasquez, Leslie Admirand-Deputy District Attorney  
                          **City of Reno Senior Citizen Advisory Committee:** Andy Bass, Darryl Feemster, Leslie Smith

**Guests:**         Sally Ramm

2. **Public Comment** – Tod Sherman stated he is a caregiver for his wife for the last 3 years; he is unable to collect social security because he is too young and his wife is 100% disabled veteran. He has been battling the problem of getting information when they need it and they have been working on gathering information to make it easier and more cohesive. He stated he is always at the VA and applied for aid and attendance as well as respite care. Dennis Chin stated there is a veteran representative at the Reno center once or twice a month. Diane Buckley stated she belongs to a group of people at the University of Nevada working on elder abuse and she asked the public to take action on social security; republican Sam Johnson's bill stated social security benefits would be preserved for generations to come, but it's not true, the bill would cut social security benefits by 1/3, raise retirement age from 67 to 69 and change the benefit computation formula to change the benefit amount. She asked the public to call

senators and congressional representatives to stop the bill because it will affect current and future social security recipients.

Katie Colling stated she is from Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality and they served over 1200 meals to people. She wanted to talk about affordable housing and how there is not enough affordable housing in the community, it has its own niche market and is only constructed in certain areas, therefore isolating poverty. There are things that can be done to prevent this, such as community land trust, safe grounds so people can sleep outside safely, mandate a percentage of housing and development for affordable housing and work places. Brooke Lymes stated she is different; she lives in a house on wheels that some may call an RV with two service dogs. It is illegal for her to park and sleep on the streets of Sparks and Reno. If the overflow shelter is full, people can stay at the waiting room where they can be warm and dry but they cannot lay down. She stated regulations need to be looked at because homeless people that stay under bridges leave a mess behind and then that has to be cleaned. Instead what could be done is have them stay at the park where there is a garbage can and it's sanitary. Wendy Boszak is president of Women of Washoe and they are part of the Alliance for Retired Americans. They have a petition to present to Congressman Amodei and Senator Heller and they would like the public to look at it and fill it out.

Larry Weiss asked elected officials to introduce themselves.

Donald Abbott stated he is on the Sparks City Council Ward I.

Jeanne Herman stated she is a County Commissioner in District 5.

Garth Elliot stated he is from the General Improvement Development Board of Directors in Sun Valley.

Ken Retterath stated he is the Division Director of Washoe County Social Services and administrator of Senior Services.

Andy Bass stated he is the Director of Parks, Recreation and Community Services with the City of Reno. Leslie Smith is his administrative secretary and Darryl Feemster is the Manager of the Youth and Seniors Division with the City of Reno.

3. **Member Announcements** – Garth Elliot stated he has spoken multiple times at county commission meetings and he encourages seniors to speak about issues at the county commission meetings.
4. **Approval of Agenda for January 4, 2017 Meeting:** Dennis Chin motioned for the approval of the agenda for January 4, 2017 for WCSSAB and Garth Elliot seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the WCSSAB. Donna Clontz motioned for the approval of the agenda for January 4, 2017 for SCAC and Vanessa Dixon seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the SCAC.
5. **Approval of Minutes from October 5, 2016 Meeting:** Dennis Chin motioned for the approval of the minutes for October 5, 2016 for WCSSAB and Wayne Alexander seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the WCSSAB. Wendy Boszak motioned for the approval of the minutes for October 5, 2016 for SCAC and Donna Clontz seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the SCAC.
6. **Presentation regarding current legislation regarding senior issues at the Nevada Legislature for 2017 and workshop on advocacy at state and local levels** - Donna Clontz commented that Amber Joiner had to be in Las Vegas and would not be attending the meeting. Larry introduced Sally Ramm, Elder Rights Attorney from Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division. Sally stated she would like everyone to put on the hat of a legislative person because the legislature is going to start on February 6<sup>th</sup> and there is going to be only 120 days to become familiar with

over 1000 bill draft requests. They would have to go to a general session of the house or the senate at the call at least once a day, go to committee and caucus meetings; form and reject coalitions and make sure that their own bills are getting their fair shake of the process. They would need to be kind to the constituents regardless of how demanding they are and deal with hundreds of lobbyist in the legislature building. Keeping that in mind, the job as an advocate would be to first try to know the representative of their district, preferably when they are not in session so they can build communication. Campaigning for them and donating to their campaign helps in a way to also get a good reputation with the representative. Not everyone is able to campaign or donate, but if a person is able to, it is a good advocacy tool. During the session, always tell the truth whether it helps the objective or not. Don't spin anything because as an advocate, they will lose credibility. Try to have reasonable answers to objections before going to talk to the legislature. Know the subject better than anyone else and know the opposition and what they are going to say. Sally stated she and Connie met with Randolph Townsend and he once said there are legislators that are only trying to get their name in the paper and legislators that are in Carson City to do the work. Those who are prepared to do the work and attend meetings are the legislators that other legislators trust and respect. Sally stated that advocates need to communicate quickly and effectively, be familiar with the elevator speech, which is a way to condense the issue with a few sentences and be able to tell someone the issue while they are in the elevator. It would have to be concise, clear, and as thorough as it can be in a couple of minutes; the elevator speech needs to be practiced as much as possible. If the representative becomes interested, then they are going to want to know more and they will stop and extend the conversation with them, but the better thing would be to get an appointment with them. If they don't have the time or interest to talk long, the advocate should graciously leave. When graciously leaving, always give them a hard copy of the issue and follow up with an email. In the email thank them for their time, state the position concisely and give them contact information. Also, an advocate needs to be prepared to wait because it's not their schedule to control. They might be able to wait or reschedule an appointment; those two options should be available. If an advocate needs to testify, they have to be completely prepared and well organized. Remember the etiquette and always state the name and who they represent; address the chair of the committee and ask the chair for permission to speak. Do not repeat what has been said before. State that there is agreement or disagreement with the previous statement, and answer all the questions to the best of your ability. If information is not known, never bluff; just let them know the information will be sent later. It is important to be brief and leave out excess personal information. If a bill is being changed, it is important to try and do it before it goes to the bill writers. If the bill has something that the advocate does not feel is adequate, then they would need to speak with the sponsor of the bill and let them know their concerns. Bill revisions should be submitted after the first hearing in the first house. It is dangerous to try and make a change in the bill because then it can be tabled by the legislature. It is the people's right to go into the legislature hearing with a bill in their hand and say "this doesn't make sense." If there is a good argument by the advocate, the chair can say "we'll see you in the woodshed" which is basically an office where two people that don't agree talk out the differences.

Sally provided the handout of the home page of the Nevada Legislature website (see attachment). There are five things to know about the page; first is General Information which has legislative terms and it will help look up terminology used. There is also a map of the legislative building that will help guide those that go to the building (see attachment). Sally also provided a diagram that shows the legislative process of a bill from beginning to end (see attachment). On the website under Session Information, which is the 79<sup>th</sup> session, it shows the index and will give information about bills, meetings, and history of bills. Sally stated there is another site that has the BDR list; it is basically the bill information and opinion site and is very

easy to use. Sally provided the handout Bill Draft Requests by Subject (see attachment) that provides a list of BDRs that advocate on behalf of people who are older and/or vulnerable. If a BDR has turned into a bill, they will add a bill number on it. On the website, there is also a link to Personalized Legislative Tracking and in order to use it, an account has to be set up. The list will give automatic bill tracking up to 10 bills. Sally also provided a map of the legislative building (see attachment), but sometimes the map next to the elevator in the building will help more. The Commission on Aging has developed a handout to educate the legislature on elder issues in Nevada. There are 5 different topics that they are advocating which include Behavioral and Cognitive Care, Healthcare, Medicaid, and Residential and Long Term Care. Sandra Dexter asked how people who don't have access to a computer get information on the legislature and Sally stated the best thing they can do is read the newspaper, watch the news, or be at the legislature. Public member Brooke Lymes suggested the manager of the Reno center provide computers for seniors so they can keep up to date information on the legislature. Donna Clontz stated there are computers at the library and a volunteer could set up a small group session to look at information on the legislature. Gary Golightly stated the library carries newspapers. Jacob Harmon from Alzheimer's Association stated they are very involved with the legislature along with AARP and members of the public who would like more information can contact them and get information.

Donna stated there is a handout of the Northern Nevada Legislature Member list (see attachment) for the public to take. Staff gathered information such as addresses from members of the public that would like to know their elected officials; staff will have contact information for them so that they can advocate to the correct elected officials. Donna also stated there isn't an advisory board for seniors in the City of Sparks and encourages the public to look into a board at Sparks. RTC worked with SCAC to take names of people who would like to ride the bus to Carson City for Senior Day at the Legislature. Senior Day at the Legislature will start at 8:00 am and lunch will be provided. Seniors will be able to meet with elected representatives and learn about issues. Elder Services Guide & Resources brochures (see attachment) are available as a starting point for seniors looking for things such as housing, caregiving, food and nutrition, and healthcare. There are over 152,000 thousand people that are over 50 years old and the population keeps growing.

Donna stated if people are not interested in the legislature, they can use their advocate training at City Council and County Commission meetings that happen 2-3 times a month.

Larry stated there is a Master Plan for senior services in Washoe County and progress has been made on them, but he would like to keep working on it. He listed the 12 goals of the master plan (see attachment). The purpose is to not be 3<sup>rd</sup> in receiving necessary resources; Commissioner Jung mentioned that seniors were 3<sup>rd</sup>; first was children receiving resources, 2<sup>nd</sup> was animals, and 3<sup>rd</sup> was seniors. Larry stated seniors need to be treated better than animals.

## **7. Business:**

- a. Discussion and possible action regarding current legislation and advocacy for senior issues with policymakers including identification of issues and dates for future advocacy training and workshops—Donna stated based on the group, one idea is to set up a weekly meeting at the county senior center. Connie stated she is the owner of Senior Spectrum and as an editor has received very few letters in the 22 years she has been editor. She is also the president of the Washoe County Senior Coalition and advocacy is their thing because they are a 501c4. The Senior Coalition meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of every month at Renown at 8:30 am in the Mac auditorium. They keep up-to-date information on what is going on in legislature. Dennis Chin suggested some of the notices for meetings may be posted at the library.

Member of the public asked if there was going to be talk about federal issues affecting seniors. Donna Clontz stated she believed there should be follow up meetings to talk about more specific issues and either focus on federal, county, or state.

Marsy stated they should reach out to congressmen, such as Katie Pace from Dean Heller's office or Senator Masto because they have local offices in Reno and ask if they could attend some of the monthly meetings.

Mike Thorton, executive director of ACTION (Acting in Community Together Organizing Northern Nevada) stated they have been working on housing and homelessness. They will be having a public convening on January 9<sup>th</sup> at Sparks Christian Fellowship at 6:00 pm. They would like people to attend and let them know about the issues that concern them.

George McNally stated that in the 2 years he has been in Senior Law Project as a lawyer, he is concerned about the increase of seniors facing unlawful evictions. His concern is also that he represents seniors at court hearings and landlords are getting advice from judges. George stated the services are free and to let people know if they need legal help they can go to Senior Law Project. Donna stated she spoke with a sheriff and he said he is talking with judges and they are thinking they should create special courts that involve evictions and that way be able to try and prevent any unlawful evictions for seniors and adults.

Wendy Boszak stated many groups are forming coalitions and she believes it would be a good idea to connect with coalitions that are already formed instead of creating new ones.

8. Discussion and possible action regarding joint projects such as Senior Day at the Legislature, Older Americans Month, Stuff-A-Bus for Seniors, co-sponsorship of seminars on affordable housing and financial security, transportation and other topics – Donna stated every year the month of May is Older Americans Month and she would like two meetings to plan events; the theme is "Aging Out Loud." From the county: Marsy, Wayne, and Larry would like to volunteer and work on OAM. From the city: CJ, Wendy, Vanessa, Linda and Donna would like to volunteer as well. Donna also welcomed participation and attendance from members of the public. Donna stated Stuff-A-Bus happens twice a year, during winter time and OAM in May. The items collected in barrels located throughout the community are put into an RTC bus and then taken to the Reno center for seniors in need. She would like a sub-committee that would meet a couple of times; Larry, Marsy, and Stan volunteered to work on Stuff-A-Bus. Donna Clontz motioned for creating a sub-committee for Older Americans Month for SCAC and Marsy Kupfersmith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the SCAC. Marsy Kupfersmith motioned for creating a sub-committee for Older Americans Month for WCSSAB and Wayne Alexander seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the WCSSAB. Donna Clontz motioned for creating a sub-committee for Stuff-A-Bus for SCAC and Marsy Kupfersmith seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the SCAC. Larry Weiss motioned for creating a sub-committee for Older Americans Month for WCSSAB and Garth Elliot seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the WCSSAB. Larry stated co-sponsorship of seminars on affordable housing and financial security, and transportation is postponed for a future agenda item; Donna replied the items are covered in seminars during OAM.
9. **Washoe County Staff Report** – Ken Retterath reported they recently hired a Human Services Program Supervisor and her function will be to coordinate and grow the nutrition program.
10. **City of Reno Staff Report** – Darryl Feemster reported the registration for Reno-Tahoe Senior Winter Games has started and registration will be closing January 23<sup>rd</sup>. The first meeting for volunteers will be January 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am at the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center.

- 11. Agenda items for the next Joint Board meeting** – Donna suggested transportation issues be an item for the next joint meeting. Wendy Boszak suggested an update on the legislature be provided. Garth Elliot suggested recreational activities for seniors. Larry stated next joint meeting would be the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of April.
- 12. Public Comment** – Brooke Lymes suggested instead of watching the news to go out and stand in line at St. Vincent's and talk to people and get their life story and that way they can be better advocates. She would also like for people to consider the difference between law and regulation. She also expressed her thanks to the Board for all they do. Janice Flanagan suggested that for recreation activities to take into consideration people with disabilities and make trails more accessible to wheelchairs. Ivan Espinoza, Director of Aging and Disability Resource Center stated they have a specialist that will help people find resources or make referrals to other agencies. They have an office at the Reno center on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 8-5 pm. Diane Buckley stated she attended the Sparks Senior Center and no one knew what was going on and didn't know about the meeting. Agustin Cortes stated he advocates for elders and a serious concern of his is the hit and runs. There was a veteran who was run over and there was only a misdemeanor that was given to the driver. There was also a senior driver that ran over someone. Tod Sherman stated they have to work with officials and make Nevada great.
- 13. Adjournment-** Larry Weiss motioned for Adjournment for the WCSSAB and Garth Elliot seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the WCSSAB. Marsy motioned for Adjournment for the SCAC and Donna Clontz seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously for the SCAC. The meeting was adjourned at 4:59 pm.