

**BARRY COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING  
BOARD MEETING  
Meeting Minutes  
September 19, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 2 p.m. by Chairperson Jennifer DeWitt at the Commission on Aging building at 320 West Woodlawn Avenue, Hastings, Michigan.

- I. Roll Call was taken. The following members were present: Don Bowers, Mike Callton, Betsy Colgan, Terry Dennison, Jennifer DeWitt, Sheryl Lewis Blake, Sager (Junior) Miller, Charlotte Mohler, Sally Shuster Shoff, Douglas Smendik, and Dave Tossava. Absent: Carrie McCormick and Mike Snyder. Also present: Executive Director Courtney Ziny, and Office Manager Susanne Huebner.
- II. Those present stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.
- III. DeWitt noted that the agenda needed to be amended to delete item VI.b. Building Committee Report and instead have item XI. New Senior Center Facility Layout & Cost added. Motion by Callton to approve the agenda as revised. Support by Dennison. All ayes – motion carried.
- IV. Motion by Lewis Blake to approve the Minutes of August 15, 2023 as written. Support by Miller. All ayes - motion carried.
- V. Public Comment:  
  
Stacy Wines, CEO CareWell Southwest, gave a brief follow-up on the previous public hearing held in Delton earlier this year.
- VI. COA Committees

a. Personnel Committee Report: Dave Tossava

The Personnel Committee met, reviewed existing COA personnel policies and made the following recommendations for amendments to align COA and County personnel policies and benefits:

- i. Approval of change to Group Life Insurance benefit

2.04 Group Life Insurance

"All full-time ~~and part-time~~ employees who have completed their trial period will be covered by a group life insurance policy **with accidental death provisions** at the Agency's expense **in the amount of \$25,000 for department heads and \$17,000 for non-represented employees, payable to his or her designated beneficiary.**

If permitted by the insurance carrier, individual employees shall have the option to purchase, at their expense, additional life insurance coverage in amounts and for the cost as allowable by the carrier. The Agency is authorized to deduct from employees' payroll checks the amount of cost of such optional coverage.

~~When an employee retires, and if the employee wishes, the Agency will furnish \$5,000 in life insurance coverage. The Agency will pay \$5.00 per month (\$1.00 per month per \$1,000 of life insurance coverage) and the retiree will pay the difference."~~

ii. Approval of change to Disability Insurance benefit

#### 2.07 Disability Insurance

"The employer shall provide an income protection plan to:

- Full-time employees
- Part-time employees hired prior to September 19, 2023

due to disability, after completion of their trial period, which shall be limited to the following benefits:"

iii. Approval of employee reclassification effective September 25th

Reclassify position of Kitchen Assistant in Hastings to position of Site Coordinator.

iv. Approval of employee step raise effective January 1st, 2024

Motion by Smendik, supported by Shuster Shoff, to approve all of the above recommendations made by the Personnel Committee. Roll call vote taken: 11 ayes - 0 nays - motion carried.

#### VII. Correspondence

Executive Director Ziny noted that she had received a written notice from Direct Care Worker Connie Reinke who will be retiring on November 30, 2023, and a written notice from Eligibility Specialist Judy VanDien who will be leaving the COA at the end of December.

#### VIII. Finance Report

Motion by Colgan, supported by Tossava, to approve the July 2023 QuickBooks Financial Reports as presented. Roll call vote taken: 11 ayes - 0 nays - motion carried.

#### IX. Director's Report: Courtney Ziny, Executive Director

Ziny highlighted some points of her monthly written report.

a. The Commission on Aging received a CareWell Audit Notification and Compliance Letter confirming the agency's compliance.

b. Location of October Board Meeting

The Board's regular October meeting will be held on October 17, 2023 at the Commission on Aging building in Hastings, not at Jack & Judy's Country Kettle in Nashville as noted on the annual meeting notice. The meeting time will remain at noon.

X. Additional Action Items: N/A

XI. New Senior Center Facility Layout & Cost

The conceptual plans of the new Barry County Commission on Aging building were presented to the board. The facility will be 16,500 square feet.

Lewis Blake noted that the new building will change the face of senior center services in Barry County. She noted that there were great discussions and input from staff during the plan development process.

Mohler noted that everybody had input, and that she was very impressed with the thorough, well done process.

Ziny noted that the capital campaign will be around the 2.5 Million dollar mark.

DeWitt noted that the plan includes a ten percent contingency and a three percent escalate contingency.

Ziny noted that the COA will need a communication and fundraising committee.

Motion by Smendik, supported by Callton, to approve the conceptual drawing and to move forward with the marketing and fundraising campaign of 2.5 Million dollars.

#### Discussion

Dennison asked where the Meals on Wheels vehicles would park. Ziny noted there will be a garage on the county property.

Dennison noted that the acoustics in the building will improve, and that seniors will be the beneficiaries of this wonderful project.

Colgan asked about a comparison to the library fund.

Smendik noted that the location is a destination point, and the project makes sense all around.

Miller said he liked the plans.

Tossava noted that the project is well-planned out and every square foot will be utilized.

Mohler noted that no stone had been left unturned.

Bowers suggested to square out the activity room for more room.  
Ziny said that could be an option, and it might be cheaper to do a 'bump out'.

Callton said the plan looks great.

Colgan noted that it was great that staff was involved, and a 'bump out' would be great.

Shuster Shoff noted that the COA might be able to create a more visual distinction with color. Ziny said they could add signage.

Dewitt noted that the drawings look fantastic.

Motion reread. Roll call vote taken: 11 ayes - 0 nays - motion carried.

## XII. Informational Items

### a. Steering Committee Notice

The next steering committee meeting will be held on October 25, 2023 at the COA building.

### b. Upcoming Event Flyers

Trunk or Treat October 31st  
Community Conversations  
Crocheting  
Breakfast to Celebrate Veterans Oct 10 - Nov 14 - Dec 12

### c. Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Callton

Callton noted that the Commissioners had a big meeting that morning, with solar in the Master Plan as a topic of interest. Michael Brown presented the initial budget.

## XIII. Members Time


Dennison noted that he took part in the COA's trip to the Boulder Ridge Animal Park in September. He also said that he is buying a building off of North Broadway to open his own museum.

XIV. Adjournment

Motion by Tossava, supported by Colgan, to adjourn the meeting. All ayes - motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer DeWitt,  
Chairperson