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OTSEGO COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, April 10, 2019 University Center, Room U-105

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Attending Voting Members: M. Sanders, G. Mertz, R. Edel, B. Bowen,
J. Duff, J. Mathis, C. Messina

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Excused Voting Members: J. Camiller, R. Smith

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Attending Non-Voting Member: D. Johnson, Otsego County Board of
Commissioners Liaison

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Attending Staff: D. Wishart, Executive Director
E. Godek, Research and Volunteer Coordinator
S. Skowronski, LLMSW, Integrative Wellness
Program Coordinator

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Guests: Dana Bensinger – Executive Director, Otsego
Community Foundation
Becky Hawks, Financial Services Assistant,
Region 9 Area Agency on Aging

Call to Order

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- The president, M. Sanders, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and welcomed those in attendance. A quorum was present. The board paused for a silent moment of reflection.

Consent Agenda

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- M. Sanders made a request for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

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A motion was made by R. Edel and seconded by G. Mertz to approve the Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

Open Forum

- 40
- Nothing was reported.

Executive Board Reports to the Board

President's Report

The president, Mary Sanders, briefly presented the following:

- Special Presentation by the Otsego Community Foundation – Executive Director Dana Bensinger briefly reported the following:
 - She works with many nonprofits and the OCCOA Board does a great job.
 - The mission of the foundation is to activate generosity for a strong community.
 - The OCCOA's endowment was established with the foundation in 2009. It is a source of revenue for the agency. The board should review the goals of the fund at least once a year to talk about the best way to use it.
 - People can donate to the OCCOA's fund via checks, or online. The OCCOA can accept more complicated gifts that can be donated either directly to the agency or to the endowment fund. She highlighted that the charitable tax-free IRA rollover is an excellent way for people to donate.
 - The OCCOA's current fund balance is \$56,192.00. The available spendable balance is \$5,613.49, which is determined by an investment committee made up of several financial experts in the community. They also recommend a spending policy for the following year. For the past several years, the investment policy has been 4 ½% of the last 12 rolling quarters of the OCCOA's fund's balance. It was last calculated on September 30, 2018 at \$47,297.00. The agency has never taken out a grant. When this happens, it stays in the spendable balance and accumulates. Discussion followed.
 - There are two grant processes. To receive the money that the OCCOA earned, the agency doesn't need to write a grant, but just notify the foundation and send the meeting minutes that show that the board approved the withdrawal. The board is in charge of the fund. The other way the agency can obtain funds is to apply to the Community Foundation, generally.
 - The OCCOA recently submitted a grant application. It is currently under review and a decision will be made the third week of May.
 - D. Wishart noted that a motion was made at the February 20, 2019 board meeting that was approved to draw down \$3,485.11 from the spendable balance in the agency's account. She and two OCCOA staff submitted a grant for specific program needs and will present to the foundation's grant review team on April 23, 2019. The grants that they presented were for a new focus on education to help support a new department, Integrative Wellness, and program.
 - D. Bensinger will connect D. Wishart with a grant opportunity from a downstate organization who would like to assist Otsego County residents struggling with Alzheimers.
 - D. Bensinger noted that the foundation is working with donors to consider assisting small organizations so they will have what they need in their "toolboxes." She also shared that the foundation can help with promoting endowments managed by the foundation. They can also help with the grant

1 application process to help take the burden off organizations' staffs. Discussion
2 followed.

- 3 ○ M. Sanders thanked D. Bensinger for her presentation and noted that the
4 foundation has blossomed since Bensinger came on board.
- 5 ○ D. Wishart noted that there is state-wide effort to help raise awareness for all
6 community foundations and the percentage of dollars given to older adult aging
7 service programs as the older adult population ages. Three years ago, only three
8 percent went to older adult programs, but this is expected to change as the older
9 adult population grows.

11 **Vice President's Report**

12 The vice president, G. Mertz, did not present a report.

14 **Treasurer's Report**

15 The treasurer, J. Camiller, did not present a report.

- 16 • No questions were posed regarding the financial reports that were included in
17 the board meeting packets. D. Wishart noted that A. Mayer is on vacation this
18 week but has back-up through OCCOA Accounting Assistant Natalie Hunt,
19 should there be any questions.
- 20 • D. Wishart also noted that Becky Hawks, the financial services assistant from
21 the Region 9 Area Agency on Aging (AAA), was present at today's meeting and
22 would be in the office, later, to conduct the programmatic assessment for the In-
23 Home Service Program, as well as the agency's general assessment.

25 **Secretary's Report**

26 The secretary, R. Edel, did not share any correspondence as it was already included in
27 the board packets.

29 **Aging and Adult Services (AASA) – Network 30 Reports to the Board**

- 31 • News from the Aging and Adult Services Agency – AASA – D. Wishart briefly
32 reported the following:
 - 33 ○ Information – Robert Gordon has been named the new director at the
34 Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Staff at the state office
35 are in transition. Senior Deputy Director Richard Kline recently retired, and
36 Scott Wamsley is serving in this vacated position in the interim.
 - 37 ○ The State Commission that D. Wishart chairs is working diligently on four
38 legislative priorities – transportation, the direct care workforce, waiting lists
39 for services across the state, and elder abuse. These legislative priorities will
40 be highlighted on Older Michiganians Day on Wednesday, May 15th.

- 1 ○ Older Michiganians Day is a public policy advocacy day which takes place
2 on the lawn of the state capitol. It is a gathering that allows people to lend
3 their voice to their legislators on their concerns. The Older Michiganians Day
4 Planning Committee, on which D. Wishart serves, will also present a
5 legislative platform to legislators that day. All board members are invited to
6 attend. D. Wishart will send printed information.
- 7 ○ A State Commission meeting is scheduled on Friday, April 19th. Gatekeeper
8 Awards will be presented to DTE and Consumers Energy at this time.
- 9 ● Region 9 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Regional Council – The regional
10 council member, J. Mathis, did not present a report.
- 11 ● Region 9 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Information – B. Hawks briefly
12 reported that the annual Caregiver Conference is planned for April 25, 2019 in
13 Alpena. Reservations should be made through Brooke Mainville, the special
14 projects coordinator with the Region 9 AAA.

16 **OCCOA Executive Director Report**

17 D. Wishart briefly reported the following agency updates:

- 18 ● Ballot language/millage proposal
 - 19 ○ The Otsego County Board of Commissioners recently approved the ballot
20 language for the OCCOA's upcoming millage vote on August 6, 2019. The
21 Otsego County Sportsplex and the Otsego County Bus System will also be on
22 the ballot.
 - 23 ○ D. Wishart will be relying on board assistance, as their busy schedules
24 permit, to encourage people to vote. This could include helping with yard
25 signs, distributing ballot information, and helping people to understand the
26 absentee ballot option and procedure. A lot of key voters will depend on
27 absentee ballots. Board members were reminded that they should not tell
28 people how to vote. The millage represents 68% of the agency's budgeted
29 revenue so good voter turnout will be critical.
 - 30 ○ D. Wishart will be conducting public speaking engagements beginning in
31 June to help educate citizens about the work that the agency does. M.
32 Sanders noted that advertising the last date that absentee ballot votes can be
33 sent out will be important.
 - 34 ○ The agency is at the statutory limit for millage funds and will not be asking
35 for more - just a renewal. It will be critical to look at other grant funding
36 sources to meet the increasing needs of the aging population.
- 37 ● Grants
 - 38 ○ AAA Statement of Grant Award – Federal and state dollars flow through the
39 Region 9 Area Agency on Aging to the OCCOA and support the agency's
40 Older American Act programs, services, and caregiver support. The agency
41 just received its Statement of Grant Awards. For FY 2019/2020, the agency's
42 award is \$265,560.00 It will be dispersed over a long line of funds:
43 congregate and home-delivered meals, in-home services, Caregiver Support,
44 the Otsego Haus Program, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Group, and

1 dementia-specific trainings. This points to the strong value of our accounting
2 team and Cougar Mountain which makes fund management and reporting
3 efficient. D. Wishart will advocate for more federal and state dollars. It is an
4 important part of the agency's revenue. Discussion followed.

5 ○ Michigan Health Endowment Fund

- 6 ■ The CommunO₂ platform is coming along nicely. Board members have a
7 report in their grant packets that shows the agency's budget with and
8 without the Health Fund grant that supports it.
- 9 ■ CommunO₂ is on the move in Otsego County, Flint and Traverse City.
10 Todd Balkema Elder Law Center is the first professional service joining
11 the platform. They will be joining in both Otsego County and Traverse
12 City.
- 13 ■ In Flint, there is an access center that works with people with hearing loss.
14 They are looking forward to bringing split screen sign language
15 opportunities to the platform.
- 16 ■ 211 Otsego County will be the first 211 center with video calling
17 opportunities thanks to the Health Fund.

18 ○ Otsego Community Foundation - D. Wishart thanked S. Skowronski for her
19 assistance with the foundation grant application.

20 ○ KMG Service Coordinator – The agency has a grant to fund the KMG
21 service coordinator position. These dollars help expand the agency's staff,
22 strengthen its advocacy work, and help care for a vulnerable older adult
23 population at one of the county's senior housing locations. The grant is in
24 place for this year and submitted for next year. The agency has just hired a
25 new service coordinator/counselor and she is in training and orientation.

26 ○ Federal/State Grants – There are a lot of advocacy efforts underway for the
27 re-authorization of the Older American Act Program. D. Wishart asked board
28 members to voice their support to federal leaders. The vote for this program
29 will come up during the late summer or early fall.

30 ○ Other – D. Wishart requested that board members let her know of any other
31 grant funding opportunities that they are aware of.

32 ● Staff

33 ○ Integrative Wellness Department

- 34 ■ This new department is currently being developed and will be led by
35 Sarah Skowronski, who recently completed her Master of Social Work
36 degree. She will be working with clients who have the most difficult
37 situations; integrating services between Advocacy, Otsego Haus, and In-
38 Home Services; and working in the community to help bridge services
39 between the OCCOA and different organizations.
- 40 ■ S. Skowronski briefly presented a report on the following:
 - 41 ● The services that will be provided by the new department will be those
42 for which the Advocacy Department has found the greatest need. With
43 the aging population growing, the department has been working with
44 more caregivers who are completely overburdened and often in
45 “crisis” mode. Not only are many taking care of their children, but also

1 their parents. The systems and supports that are in place are limited
2 and often difficult to work with.

- 3 • The goal of the Integrative Wellness Department is to not only work
4 with the client, the agency's staff and supports, but also beyond.
5 Recently, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) set
6 up the Universal Caseload system. Unfortunately, this has made it
7 more difficult for clients to access benefits and services and the
8 OCCOA staff have been finding themselves advocating on a regular
9 basis for those in need. Skowronski's goal is to connect people to the
10 benefits and services that they need without duplicating services within
11 the community. There are a lot of great agencies providing a lot of
12 great care. She will be working with them to find creative solutions to
13 provide people with as much care as possible with a limited amount of
14 resources. Discussion followed.
- 15 • Caregiver Shortage - Agencies in our community need more
16 caregivers. They have difficulty in staffing programs that need to
17 provide near 24-hour care in the home. The OCCOA is excited to
18 expand supports and services and welcomes board feedback and
19 personal situational information to help keep people from falling
20 through the cracks so that they may receive needed services. Her
21 department will address clients' emotional, economic, social, and
22 physical wellness and will partner even more with the hospital, the
23 VA, the waiver team, and other places to make this possible. She will
24 also be letting these places know what kinds of assistance the OCCOA
25 can provide.
- 26 • Transitional Care Partnership
 - 27 ○ This partnership has been established with the hospital, as many
28 releases from the ER have put clients in very difficult situations and
29 led to increased chronic hospital recidivism rates. The partnership
30 also includes Community Mental Health, NEMCSA, the VA,
31 DHHS, and others.
 - 32 ○ Each month, the partnership will tackle a different topic and will try
33 to bring new partners to the table who have some ideas about how
34 to help.
 - 35 ○ The partnership's April 23rd meeting will focus on medical
36 transportation. The Bus System helps many clients. Still, many
37 people are having access-to-care issues because of limited
38 transportation in this area or because of limited finances to pay for
39 cab service. For example, transportation to dialysis is a huge
40 challenge for many people. They often must go five days a week
41 for treatments. This can present difficulties for the Bus System to
42 get them there and bring them home. When people miss their
43 dialysis treatments they often end up at the hospital. DaVita
44 Dialysis will be attending the meeting to lend any ideas that they
45 might have.

1 ○ Hiring/Orientation

- 2 ▪ Advocacy Counselor – The agency has hired another advocacy counselor
3 in addition to the service coordinator/advocacy counselor. The Advocacy
4 Department is the agency’s fastest-growing department under the
5 leadership of John Panci and Sarah Skowronski.

6 ● Volunteer Appreciation

7 ○ OCCOA Volunteer Coordinator E. Godek briefly shared the following:

- 8 ▪ April is traditionally National Volunteer Month. National Volunteer Week
9 is April 7 – 13, 2019 this year. This is a time when many non-profit
10 organizations honor their volunteers.
- 11 ▪ This year, the agency kicked off the week with an early morning
12 broadcast at the Eagle 101.5 FM, which included a big shout out of
13 “thanks” to all the volunteers who support the OCCOA.
- 14 ▪ A mailing also went out on April 6th that included an appreciation card
15 and a coupon for a free ice cream cone.
- 16 ▪ This past fiscal year, 192 individuals and 17 groups collectively
17 volunteered 9,500 hours of their time for 36 of the agency’s programs,
18 activities, and services. This amounts to assistance from up to 525
19 individuals. The value of these hours was just under \$119,000.
- 20 ▪ E. Godek noted her pride in the agency’s volunteers and her amazement at
21 all the work behind the hours. Volunteers truly are invaluable to the
22 agency and thanks to their sharing their time and talent, the OCCOA can
23 provide so many more programs, services, and activities than what would,
24 otherwise, be possible.
- 25 ▪ She shared that the agency will feature its volunteers in a full-page ad that
26 will appear in the Gaylord Herald Times’ “Home-Town Heroes” insert
27 this month. The ad will include all agency volunteer names and some
28 photos.
- 29 ▪ D. Wishart thanked E. Godek for her leadership to the Volunteer
30 Department and noted that the department can track volunteer
31 contributions through some very valuable volunteer software, Volgistics.
32 E. Godek also noted her appreciation for her support staff, M. Borowiak,
33 and the agency’s support for the Volunteer Department.

34 ● Programs

- 35 ○ Gray Matters – The agency is exploring brain health through this program.
- 36 ○ Functional Fitness – The OCCOA is also exploring a new partnership
37 program for physical/functional health that would enable people to do some
38 weightlifting and exercises that would, in turn, help them improve their
39 functional abilities that are required for activities of daily living.
- 40 ○ Spring Fling Luncheon – this is scheduled for Tuesday, April 16, 2019.
- 41 ○ Chair Yoga – The agency is continuing its partnership with Yoga-45 to bring
42 Chair Yoga to the community.
- 43 ○ Exploring the World of Technology – This is a monthly program that is
44 allowing older adults to learn about many different aspects of technology and
45 to help them feel less isolated.

- 1 • Clients – The agency continues to address client needs. The focus is on the state-
2 wide legislative priorities: transportation, elder abuse, direct care workforce
3 issues, and waiting lists.
- 4 • Other – M. Sanders made a request for a motion to approve the meeting minutes
5 for December 12, 2018. They were not approved at the February board meeting
6 due to a lack of quorum.

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8 ***A motion was made by C. Messina and seconded by R. Edel to approve the December***
9 ***12, 2018 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.***

- 10
11 • Announcements and Q & A
 - 12 ○ Clarification was requested on what board members can say in encouraging
13 people to vote for the agency’s upcoming millage in August. Discussion
14 followed.
 - 15 ○ R. Edel shared that on May 11, 2019 at 9 p.m., the Pigeon River Discovery
16 Center will present an Evening Under the Stars.

17 18 **Adjournment**

19 The April 10, 2019 Otsego County Commission on Aging Board of Directors meeting
20 was adjourned at 10:02 a.m. by M. Sanders. The next meeting is scheduled at the
21 University Center on Wednesday, June 12, 2019, at 9 a.m.

22
23 *Eileen K. Godek*

24
25 Eileen K. Godek
26 Recorder