

**MORRIS COUNTY  
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING, DISABILITIES &  
VETERANS  
Morris Township  
virtual  
June 4, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Rebecca Abenante  
Barbara Anderson  
Christina Brino  
Emerson Crooks  
Debra Eckert-Casha  
Kyra Faison-Gardner  
Tom Mazzaccaro  
Fawn Zwickel

**STAFF PRESENT**

Shawonna Bailey  
Kasey Errico  
Christine Hellyer  
Pat Petrillo  
Maria Pilone-Metz  
Maria Rosario  
Jen Van Natta  
Rhea Young

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm by *Tom Mazzaccaro*, the 2021 Chairman of the Council, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The staff introduced themselves, followed by *Christine* introducing the *Council* members.

The April 9, 2021 minutes were accepted and approved with the request to correct the date.

**Motion: L.W./R. A.**

***Tom Mazzaccaro***

Tom welcomed new members *Christina Brino* and *Debra Eckert-Casha*, and they introduced themselves, with their background.

He also reminded members of the link for "This Week in Morris County", is a *Morris County* publication, and encouraged them to sign up for it. The Aging Department staff uses this publication to distribute pertinent information. He also requested the link to be e-mailed again to Council members.

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/a077p7C/signup>

*Tom* also requested the staff to resend the *May 4, 2021 2022-2024 Public Hearing* booklet to *Council* members. It contained the *ACADV mission statement* and an inclusive description of what we do as a *Department* and as an *Advisory Council*. He said we should be very proud of it.

### ***Chairperson's Report-Tom Mazzacarro***

The Division on Aging Disabilities & Community Programming staff will be conducting the 2021 *virtual* monitoring visits. It is mandatory that each *Advisory Council* member participate in at least one *virtual* monitoring visit.

Please sign up for at least one visit.

*Tom* asked *Christine* to explain the monitoring procedure to the members.

*Christine* added that this year the *Monitoring* is being scheduled later than usual, early fall, dates will follow. We meet with our Providers, that we provide funding to, and review their program aspects. This allows us see what's going well and if any adjustments need to be made to any services. The staff also reviews the submissions of their claims.

The monitoring visits are helpful for *Council* members for when you are asked to make recommendations for funding streams.

*Tom* asked if there is a possibility we would be able to these in person?

*Christine* replied no, because this year is a full funding year for *APC* (*Area Plan Contract*) and *GIA* (*Grant-in-Aid*) and my staff's time is limited.

And we learned last year at the virtual monitoring we accomplished more and was very successful.

Maybe next year we can do a mixed method of scheduling

On *May 4, 2021* the *Aging Department* held the annual *Public Hearing for 2022 funding*.

The purpose of the meeting is to let us learn what the population needs and priorities in our services are, and what areas are being served well for the input for our 2022 funding.

And if there are any areas in our continuum that we need growth in because of the pandemic; or are there any gaps in services. Also included was the "Mission Statement".

### ***Staff Reports***

#### ***Director of Aging, Disabilities, and Community Programming***

##### ***Christine Hellyer***

I want to thank *Tom* for joining me at the earlier in *May*, for the *proclamation* plaque honoring *Older American's Month*, that was presented to us.

He also had many nice things to say about the programs and our staff that provide the services.

*Shawna* also headed a *Facebook* campaign honoring our *Providers*, highlighting their agency.

On *April 12, 2021*, from *10am to 1pm*, the *County* and *Aging Department* held drive-thru event at the *Morris County Library*, *COVID-19 Wellness Event*.

The weather was rainy and we only had 65 participants.

It was a with a wellness kit, it was for adults 60 years of age plus adults with disabilities. It also contained informational pamphlets (from *St. Clare's, Morris County Sheriff's Office*) on keeping yourself healthy and vaccination information.

It is for seniors 60 years of age plus adults with disabilities. The weather was rainy and we only had 65 participants.

- Touchless tool kit
- Hand sanitizer
- Reusable mask, and a lanyard
- Hands-free door opener
- Jar opener (from St. Clare's)

Between *Providers, Senior Housing, and Nutrition Department, Home Delivered Meals* we distributed a total of 2500 kits.

This week myself and my staff put together a mini program, "*Social Isolation Program*" internally for 60 + *clients* only, funded by our *Older American's* monies. We allowed our *Providers*, contracted by us, to identify seniors who may benefit from items to combat isolation. We purchased and provided items up to \$40.00 per person such as: CD player, paint by numbers kits, decks of cards, books, novels.

*We are very proud that we received 32 responses and we fulfilled 29 requests.*

We also had a campaign for "*Public Awareness*" campaign, that was successful. In *May*, we celebrate "*Older Americans Month*". This year's theme is "*Communities of Strength*". We sent seniors/disabled a letter reminding them that we still exist, making connections with one another. It included a prepaid postcard for them to connect with others.

*The 2022 funding applications are now out. There are three applications this year, made available May 28<sup>th</sup>, on two separate websites.*

- *The first is the Grant-in-Aid funding application, is due back by **June 25<sup>th</sup>**, to the Department of Human Services.  
This is a paper application available on Human Services web-site, to be downloaded and typed in.*
- *Area Plan Contract application is due back to the Purchasing Agent by **June 29<sup>th</sup>**. This is an RFP (Request for Proposal), Competitive Contract through our Purchasing Agent, and is only available directly downloaded on **Bid-Net Direct**.  
This is a separate paper with questions answered.*
- *The **Title IIID Evidence-Based Programming** this year is a separate application through our Purchasing Department, also, on **Bid-Net Direct** and is due on June 29<sup>th</sup>.*

We will be holding the *annual 2022 Funding* review and scoring of applications, will be held on *August 10 and 11*. This meeting is when the *Advisory Council* members review and score application requests for funding of programs the *Providers* provide.

We hope to have these in person. I don't have an okay from the *County* as of yet.

Please let *Maria Rosario* know if you can attend.

We will scan the full applications to the *Council* members, for review.

We will also provide **hard copies** upon request.

We will also include **summary sheets** for each application, which is a snapshot of the application: *Provider*, what they provide, and if they provided the services before, and what they will provide with this contract in the coming year.

*Rebecca* added there is a lot to be learned about each *Provider* and what services they provide.

**MAPS Paratransit** is still operating at 75% capacity. We are looking forward to increasing to 100% capacity by late summer, early fall.

**Veteran's Service Office** has recently undergone a re-mapping to make it more social service oriented, and the Commissioners approved two new *Veteran's Service Officers*, one having a clinician background and one is a veteran. We feel they will complement each other and their start dates are *June 21* and *July 19, 2021*. They will be attending the next *Advisory Council* meeting on *September 3, 2021*.

Tom asked if they will receive bios on them?

Christine: yes.

**Nutrition Department** will continue to provide the additional meal weekly to the *Home-Delivered* clients through additional funding our Department received.

The *Congregate* sites still remain closed, we are currently discussing opening options.

I also received information from *Public Media*, that 80% of residents in Morris County 65 and older have been vaccinated, and 70% of adults also.

## **Staff Reports**

### **ADRC-Maria Rosario**

Information & Assistance and Case Management phone calls for *April* and *May 2021* totaled 569 calls. Monthly calls listed below:

- *April: 311*
- *May: 258*

Tom asked *Maria* for clarification on what the ADRC (*Aging, Disability Resource Connection*) does? And are the calls categorized, and what type of calls are received? *Shawwna* replied it is disability and aging. She also explained that the ADRC is the main number at our Department, and it is one stop shop. We receive call from consumers, hospitals, physicians' offices. We provide information and assistance to consumers for themselves and/or loved ones. If the call is more complex, we then provide a Care Management referral, that will be assigned to a screener. The results from that screen will trigger that the client needs case management in certain areas.

The calls are by topic category: care management, Medicaid, transportation, home health services, and then we connect them to services.

And age and disability are identified, is also collected with that phone call.

We don't include that in this report, but we do have that availability.

The report could confuse because sometimes one client could have several topics discussed with one phone call.

Tom feels the topics would be more helpful than just the amount of calls.

Barbara agreed with Tom.

Christine said we will take that into consideration.

Christina asked *Maria* if the calls include disability, veterans and aging calls.

Shawwna replied they are a combination of disability and aging calls. We don't have veteran's report this month.

## **Nutrition -Rhea Young**

The Nutrition Project provided the following number of meals:

### **APRIL:**

Congregate Meals	
Home Delivered Meals	30,967
Weekend Meals	1,568
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,325</b>

### **MAY:**

Congregate Meals	
Home Delivered Meals	29,982
Weekend Meals	2,052
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,034</b>

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

- **4/20/21**- Partnered with non-profit called *POWER* to offer one-time food boxed delivery to our most *vulnerable* seniors, and they are *week-end Home Delivered Meals recipients*.
- **5/10/21**- Distributed *COVID Wellness kits* to all consumers
- **5/24/21**- Distributed *Memorial Day* themed crossword puzzle
- **5/24/21**- Distributed *Reopening Survey* to gauge responses on congregate dining
- **5/24/21**- To Celebrate Older Americans Month, seniors received 1300 greeting cards from a non-profit called "Bring Smiles to Seniors".

Also, each year we are involved in the "*Seniors' Farmer's Market Voucher Program*", where the client receives a voucher for \$30, to be used at approved farmers market. This service historically provides 1200 vouchers.

This year we will be piloting a new program, offering produce pre-filled bags partnering with "*Ort Farms*". They will also receive \$30 voucher for their purchase, as of today, we have confirmed 139 bags in July and 138 bags in August to be delivered for residents of six senior housing buildings. We feel this is an effective way to bring the farm to those not able to get out.

*Debra* asked "are the housing units you selected are they throughout the County or is it in one locale"?

*Rhea* replied that the senior buildings chosen were several of the largest senior housing facilities in *Morris County: Pleasant View in Randolph, Butler Senior Housing, Morris Mews, Mount Olive Manor and Jefferson and India Brook*.

*Barbara* asked how recipients chosen?

*Rhea* : Eligibility: 60 years of age; with an income of \$1,968 gross monthly income for single and \$2,658 gross monthly income for a couple.

*Emerson* asked how do they know about this program?

*Christine* replied we have 2 programs this year. The voucher program, that we have had for years, *provides vouchers \$20-\$30 to 1200 senior clients*. In previous years we realized vouchers weren't being redeemed, due to the inability of seniors are unable to physically visit the farms. We teamed with the fifteen senior housing units to assist in getting the word out and distributing them.

*The pilot program provides 140 pre-filled bags, so the homebound can redeem their vouchers.*

*Christine: asked if the pre-filled bag vouchers are still available?*

*Christine: No, that is now closed. If this proves to be successful, there are ways to grow these events.*

*Rebecca asked if they are also eligible for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits?*

*Christine: Yes*

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The *Committee Reports* include topics discussed for each Committee at the *Coordinators* meeting. The staff then prepares a report to be read at the *Advisory Council* meeting by individuals that are assigned to each *Committee*.

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS-Fawn Zwickel**

It appears more people are being vaccinated, but some are still reluctant to remove masks. Paranoia and fear are still residual in the Community.

I think it's best to spread the word vaccinations are a good thing.

The *Committee* met on *May 6, 2021* and discussed the following:

### **COVID-19 pandemic updates from Gov. Phil Murphy April 28, 2021**

As of *Wednesday* morning, 6,834,212 total doses have been administered statewide and 2,915,754 New Jersey residents were fully vaccinated – 62% to the state's goal of 4.7 million fully vaccinated individuals by June 30.

Vaccine update in nursing homes

CVS and *Walgreens* recently completed their last rounds of vaccination clinics in 1,193 long-term care facilities:

145,775 doses administered to residents

127,643 doses administered to staff

The Governor set *May 10* as the date when the [capacity for outdoor gatherings](#) climbs to 500.

The governor also increased capacity limits for large outdoor sports and entertainment venues to 50% and altered the definition of "large" from 2,500 fixed seats to 1,000 starting *May 10*.

The [maximum capacity at catered indoor events](#) such as proms and weddings will increase to 50% with as many as 250 people allowed.

## **American Sign Language Interpreters available at COVID 19 Vaccine Mega-sites**

- (TRENTON) – The Murphy Administration today announced that deaf and hard of hearing individuals are able to ask for an American Sign Language interpreter when receiving a COVID-19 vaccine at the state's six vaccine mega-sites to assist with communication access during the vaccination process.

### **Alert: Postcard Disguised as Official OCR Communication**

- OCR has been made aware of postcards being sent to health care organizations informing the recipients that they are required to participate in a "Required Security Risk Assessment" and they are directed to send their risk assessment to

[www.hsaudit.org](http://www.hsaudit.org). The link directs individuals to a non-governmental website marketing consulting service.

**Christine explained to the new members that the Committee reports are generated from the Sub-Coordinator's meeting.**

Kyra added she didn't realize at the last *Advisory Council* meeting that she was going to be asked to read a Committee report, and she panicked. She advised Fawn that in the packet sent to the members there are attachments with reports assigned to *Council* members, that they are requested to read at this meeting.

Fawn said she received that.

Tom asked if Fawn would be appropriate to speak to a staff member prior to the meeting to see what's going on and what is relevant to the meeting?

Christine: That is what the sub-committee meeting is for, to bring the sub-committee highlights to the whole Council at this meeting.

Tom how are the disabled population receiving their vaccine?

Christine there are several groups are working on that.

They have not posted demographics for disabled recipients.

We feel homebound is homebound, 18 or older, disabled or not we will provide the service.

We have vaccinated 130 clients with our *Homebound vaccination* program.

Kasey added *Atlantic Health* has a three-part series to address the process of understanding what we all have been through during the pandemic.

After the meeting it was forwarded to the *Council Members*. It will also be attached to the minutes.

## **LEGISLATIVE REVIEW-Rebecca Abenante**

The following bills were discussed at the *Coordinator's* meeting May 6, 2021, and the *Advisory Council* is asked to endorse.

### **Legislative Review**

- **Senate Bill No. 1049.** Establishes standard medical expense deduction under SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) for certain senior citizens.
- **Senate Bill No. 2232.** Establishes "Senior Citizen Home Repair and Modification Program"; appropriates \$10 million.

**Motion: NOT SUPPORTED BY COMMITTEE as is; but if changes are made we will revisit. It also has only one sponsor.**

Emerson commented that seniors want to stay in their homes, but cannot afford the minor repairs to keep it habitable; but this Bill needs more explanations.

Tom added that we previously supported a bill similar to this, assistance with ramps, safety rails in bathrooms, etc.

Rebecca added there are many administrative challenges.

Barbara also agreed.

Rebecca asked if we can request modifications or changes?

Shawna replied that our *Department* only sends letters out if the *Council* endorses/supports the Bills presented to them. But if the members of the *Council* would like to draft a letter to the Sponsor of the Bill, with your recommendations; we could circulate it among the ACADV members and then have it sent out to the legislators from the ACADV Council directly.

*Emerson* also said that he met with *Senator Rice* about S-2232 he sponsored. His response to my concern the 4-family housing being an investment. I told him I felt that shouldn't fit *with this bill, and taxpayers should not have to support this bill*. His response was his constituency that have single units to 4- family housing units not collecting rents due to *COVID 19*. I pointed out that is not a permanent condition. And based on that left I said if he doesn't amend it, I will not support that bill.

*Tom* did we support that?

*Tom* he is not willing to amend it?

*Emerson* no.

**Senate Bill No. 3296.** Establishing veterans' affordable housing preference; authorizing bonus fair share credit for veterans' affordable housing.

### ***Planning Program Review- Kyra Faison-Gardner***

The subcommittee met on *May 6, 2021* and discussed briefly the *2021* needs assessments survey, hard copies and online.

Also, a *Modification Request* from *DAWN Center for Independent Living* was presented, and approved by the committee.

### ***Announcements***

*Fawn* added she recently met with *Senator Bucco*, to bring bill **S-2821** to the Committee, requires Adjutant General of DMV (Division of Military and Veterans Affairs) create a program for veterans to receive evaluation and treatment for PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), total brain injury, or traumatic brain injury.

*Emerson* added the *VA Hospital* has fully opened. *Lyons* and *Morris County* medical clinics have appointments available.

*Emerson* also said that he met with *Senator Rice* about S-2232 he sponsored. His response to my concern the 4-family housing being an investment. I told him I felt that shouldn't fit *with this bill, and taxpayers should not have to support this bill*. His response was his constituency that have single units to 4- family housing units not collecting rents due to *COVID 19*. I pointed out that is not a permanent condition. And based on that left I said if he doesn't amend it, I will not support that bill.

*Tom* did we support that?

*Rebecca* no we wanted more information. We also felt there were

*Tom* he is not willing to amend it?

*Emerson* no.

*Rebecca* advised members caregiver training is still available on the web, Atlantic Health System, "Gerry's Apartment".

*Christine* added having reserved the large conference room here in our building, and is trying to get the *County's* permission to hold the future *Advisory Council* meetings.

*Emerson* said for future *Advisory Council* meetings, hybrid would be a good choice.

*Christine* added that is her plan.



*Rebecca* added that *Karl Klingener* has been incredibly helpful to one our patients when he was making appointments for in- home visit vaccinations.

*Christina* asked about joining sub-committees.

*Christine: Maria* will reach out to you and *Debra* for a virtual orientation next week.

*(It was held on June, 10, 2021.)*

*Christine* also next week sometime you will receive an e-mail in regards to a *Provider* modification. We didn't have time to prepare

*Christina* added she previously lived in *Passaic County* and the services were horrible, and she is very happy to be in *Morris County*.

*Debra* thanked everyone, saying she has learned so much today from the meeting today.

She also suggested that *County College* has a television program and maybe a program can be dedicated to the "*Aged and Disabled*". Seniors watch a lot of television.

*Barbara* agreed that is a good idea.

*Shawwna* added the State level has a "Caregiver Task Force" survey. If you want more information *Pat* or *Maria* will forward it upon request.

***Meeting adjournment 2:48pm***

***Motion: E.C./B.A.***

***Next meeting September 3,2021***

