



### GOVERNOR’S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

February 10, 2021, 10:00 AM

#### Virtual Meeting

1700 West Washington Street, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Human Trafficking Council was convened on February 10, 2021 virtually, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (12)	Members Absent (1)
Lisa O’Neill, Chair	Jaime Aguilar
Barbara Marshall	
Belinda Akes	
Bonita Imus	
Brenda Holt	
Carol Brown	
Nicole Baker (proxy for Arizona Department of Veteran’s Services)	
Shelli Silver	
Steve Wagner	
Virginia Rountree	
Terri Spitz	
Wayne Tormala	
Staff and Guests Present (6)	
Kim Brooks	Meagan Surgenor
Vianney Careaga	Rob Thompson
Bert Ijams	Mary Beals-Luedtka

#### Call to Order

- Lisa O’Neill, Chair, called the Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with 12 members and 6 staff and guests present. Lisa reviewed the procedures of how the remote meeting would be facilitated and welcomed all those present.

#### Roll Call

- Lisa O’Neill, Chair, conducted roll call of the Council and took note of Councilmember proxies.

#### COVID-19 Immunization Update

- Lisa O’Neill, Chair, introduced Meagan Surgenor, Special Programs Manager with the Arizona Department of Health Services, for an update on COVID-19 Immunizations. Meagan provided an overview of the Vaccine and Antiviral Prioritization Advisory Committee (VAPAC). VAPAC is composed of state, local,

and tribal experts that convene to provide recommendations to ensure fair and equitable vaccine allocation across the State of Arizona. Additionally, VAPAC also approves changes to the phased roll-out of vaccination efforts. Due to the limited supply of vaccines, Arizona is using an allocation model for Phase 1 of Vaccine Prioritization. After the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) receives the number of vaccine doses from the federal government, ADHS leadership determines the number of doses to be given to each county. Based on the number of doses allocated, county health departments then decide on the number of doses each provider will be given. The ADHS Immunization Program Office then places the orders into the Arizona immunization registry system, which are sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the vaccine manufacturers for delivery. When Arizona enters Phase 2 of Vaccine Prioritization and when vaccine doses are more available, individual providers will be able to place their own order for vaccines in the immunization registry. While vaccine supplies are limited, a phased vaccination approach is being used to prioritize people by occupation, risk of exposure, and risk of severe outcomes. Most counties have moved from Phase 1A to Priority Phase 1B, with a few in Phase 1B. Priority Phase 1B prioritizes education and healthcare workers, protective services occupations, adults 65 and older (varying by county), and the remaining persons prioritized in Phase 1A. Phase 1B prioritizes essential services/critical industry workers, adults with high-risk conditions in congregate settings, and the remaining persons prioritized in Phase 1A and Priority Phase 1B.

- **Meagan** emphasized that long-term care facilities are a vaccination priority and over 2,100 facilities in Arizona have and are receiving services under the CDC Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care with Walgreen's and CVS. The goal is to cover about 450,000 residents and staff over the next several months. As of this meeting, there have been almost 1,000,000 reported vaccinations administered in Arizona. More than 400 provider sites have received vaccine supplies. These providers include county health departments, hospitals, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), pharmacies, and other key providers. Arizona's 24/7 State Farm Stadium Point of Dispensing (POD) has been recognized as a national best practice. As of last week, more than 100,000 vaccine shots have been administered and more than 200,000 appointments have been booked at the State Farm Stadium POD through February 28, 2021. The 24/7 model has been streamlined to allow 6,000 to 12,000 drive-thru vaccinations per day. For more information about Arizona Vaccine Prioritization, the full presentation can be found here: <https://govff.az.gov/meeting/gaca/2021/02/10>.
- **Virginia Rountree** inquired if **Meagan** could provide more information on the recently announced [partnership with The University of Arizona and the Pima County Health Department](#) to operate a state vaccination site on the university's campus in Tucson. **Meagan** responded that at the time of the meeting she did not have any new information to offer.
- **Mary Beals-Luedtka** raised the concern from the Arizona Area Agencies on Aging of vaccinating homebound seniors and that agencies are working hard to assess plans to get these seniors vaccinated. **Meagan** responded by stating that ADHS is working with Medicare/Medicaid programs to help relieve transportation concerns for those homebound. ADHS also has a phone number available that can be used to access additional information and **Meagan** offered to share that number after the meeting. **Mary** stated that she was encouraged that ADHS is working with AHCCCS to relieve transportation issues, but also emphasized the great need to continue to find other ways to get to these homebound seniors that do not have AHCCCS.

## Veterans Compensation and Pension Benefits

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Rob Thompson**, Veterans Benefits Counselor with the Arizona Department of Veteran's Services (ADV S), to present on Veterans Compensation and Pension Benefits. **Rob** began the presentation by emphasizing the importance of educating veterans about their benefits and the access they have to Veteran Benefits Counselors (VBCs). VBC's are accredited by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and advocate for Arizona's service members, veterans, and their families with receiving federal and state veteran benefits. VBCs assist claimants with a variety of services including, but not limited to, educating claimants on eligibility requirements for benefits, processing VA compensation and pension applications, filing for survivor's benefits, and discussing State Veteran Benefits. VBC's are also available for virtual consultations. There are also VA service-connected compensation and non-service-connected

pensions. The service-connected compensation takes the form of a tax-free monthly monetary benefit paid to veterans who are determined by the VA to be disabled by an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during military service. To be eligible for this compensation, discharge must be under conditions other than dishonorable. The VA also pays these benefits in 10% increments. The non-service connected pension takes the form of a tax-free monthly monetary benefit paid to wartime Veterans who meet certain age or disability requirements and have income and net worth within certain limits. The full eligibility requirements can be accessed in the presentation.

- **Rob** also shared the eligibility requirements for VA Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound benefits. He emphasized that claimants cannot receive Aid and Attendance benefits and Housebound benefits at the same time. Both of these benefit types provide monthly payments added to the amount of a month VA pension or VA compensation benefit for qualified Veterans and survivors. **Rob** added his recommendation that if claimants qualify for both of the benefits, to opt for the VA Aid and Attendance benefit over the Housebound benefit. He then commented that veterans that live in assisted living facilities often have access to personnel that can help file claims for their benefits, however, the big difference between them and the VBC's is that ADVS offers the claims assistance for free. ADVS VCB's also have the requisite expertise to file benefit claims correctly. He then shared his contact information and the contact information for VA benefits. The full presentation can be found here: <https://govff.az.gov/meeting/qaca/2021/02/10>.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, requested a review of the **December 10, 2020** meeting minutes.
  - **Carol Brown** moved to accept the **December 10, 2020** minutes.
  - **Barbara Marshall** seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 10:34 a.m.

### Councilmember & Liaison Roundtable

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **herself** for an update from The University of Arizona Center on Aging. **Lisa** informed Councilmembers that Project Echo is still going on and that the University of Arizona Center on Aging is holding monthly lectures. The lectures are with community members and the center brings speakers from around the state to speak on various topics. Councilmembers interested in serving as a speaker should notify **Lisa** at their earliest convenience.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Barbara Marshall** for an update from the Maricopa County Attorney's Office. **Barbara** informed Councilmembers that her office has unfortunately seen an increase and rise in domestic violence cases and fraud cases involving elderly victims. She also noted that the pandemic has increased the isolation of older citizens.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Belinda Akes** for an update from the Pinal/Gila Senior Citizen Council. **Belinda** shared with Councilmembers that she received her first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and was very appreciative for the opportunity. Pinal/Gila Senior Citizen Council has been able to produce and deliver over 700 meals a week for more than 140 clients through the Meals on Wheels program. They have been able to acquire a van to help in the delivery of meals and plan to wrap the van with appropriate branding. **Belinda** thanked Councilmembers and community partners who have helped her Council acquire the necessary funding through grants to operate their programs. She also noted that in her capacity as the president of the Food Bank in Eloy, AZ, they have been able to serve lots of people during the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Bonita Imus** for an update from the Arizona Indian Council on Aging. **Bonita** informed Councilmembers that this is her first meeting and thankful for the opportunity to participate. She is a member of the Hualapai Tribe and comes from a community of under two thousand residents. She serves as a teacher and has been teaching virtually during the COVID-19 Pandemic. **Bonita** has served on the Arizona Indian Council on Aging since 2017.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Brenda Holt** for an update from AARP. **Brenda** informed Councilmembers that AARP is helping sponsor the Annual Family Caregiver Day at the Capitol on March 11, 2021. AARP will also be holding a legislative day at the Capitol this year. AARP has released a COVID-19 dashboard that

will be updated every month moving forward. There has been an uptick in the number of calls received from the Fraud Watch Tip Line, particularly relating to taxes. Callers have reported receiving a 1099G form from unrecognized mailers. These callers are unfortunately victims of a tax fraud scheme. **Brenda** emphasizes the need for victims to report their claims. AARP will be supporting several House and Senate bills in the Arizona Legislature except for S.B. 1377.

- **Lisa, Chair**, inquired to whom the victims of the tax fraud should report their claims. **Brenda** responded that victims should report their claim to DES and the AARP Fraud Watch Network. **Virginia Rountree** echoed the importance of reporting to DES as their department has a dedicated team that can help with these kinds of claims. **Barbara Marshall** also noted the importance of reporting these claims with police departments.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Carol Brown** for an update from the Western Arizona Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging. **Carol** informed Councilmembers that her agency was moving forward with a fundraising campaign called "Sharing the Love." This campaign will help raise funds to purchase robotic companion pets for older adults in care homes and in memory care facilities. The robotic companion pets are therapeutic and help reduce anxiety levels.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Nicole Baker** for an update from the Arizona Department of Veterans Services (ADVS). **Nicole** informed Councilmembers that ADVS operates two state veteran homes and that the department is in the process of constructing two more state veteran homes, one in Flagstaff and the other in Yuma. ADVS is also hiring new staff for these homes and the department hopes that the homes become operational in summer 2021. ADVS has been able to vaccinate its staff and residents through the CDC Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care with Walgreen's and CVS. **Nicole** reiterated the importance of connecting veterans with VBC's and noted that ADVS has been seeing 400 new clients every month. ADVS has been innovative in this outreach during the COVID-19 Pandemic and has been able to pivot to virtual platforms. She also reminded Councilmembers that older veterans are three times more at risk of suicide and urged Councilmembers to urge older veterans to connect by calling 1-866-429-8387 or visiting <https://beconnectedaz.org/>.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Shelli Silver** for an update from the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS). **Shelli** informed Councilmembers that AHCCCS has been heavily involved in training targeted at getting older adults to vaccination sites. AHCCCS is working on a pilot program with one of their partners to bring the vaccination in a mobile capacity. AHCCCS is seeking to tie funding with one of its partners to assist seniors in signing-up for a vaccination appointment. Several vaccination sites operate as drive-thru and AHCCCS can provide non-emergency transportation, but that service only operates one way. The department is working to address this by developing policy that would allow for a special rate to be paid for the time older adults are in the car for the drive-thru vaccination events. **Shelli** also announced that AHCCCS's medical visit verification program has gone live with its partners.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Terri Spitz** for an update from the Alzheimer's Association – Desert Southwest. **Terri** informed Councilmembers that in the fall of 2020, they had the Walk to End Alzheimer's. The Phoenix walk was ranked 13th in the nation. She noted that this was a testament to the community members and partners involved. The Association will have its state advocacy day on Tuesday, March 2, 2021. The event will be virtual. The Association will be supporting two bills S.B. 1126 and S.B. 1537. **Terri** noted that the Association is in need of spreading the word on their community education resources and training courses that are hosted every month. The topics include Healthy Living and the Body, and Alzheimer's and Dementia Resources. The Association is also looking for partners to jointly house the education events with.
  - **Lisa** inquired how people register for the education courses. **Terri** responded that people can register on the Association's website and through the link provided on their flyer. She also mentioned that the education courses are free.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Virginia Rountree** for an update from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). **Virginia** informed Councilmembers that DES received funds through the Consolidated Appropriations Act. This includes \$3.8M for home delivery services. **Virginia** projects that DES will receive additional funding for the long-term ombudsman program, adult protective services, and the emergency food

assistance program. DES also appreciates the inclusion of funds for adult protective services and services rates in Governor Ducey's executive budget.

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Wayne Tormala** for an update from the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). **Wayne** informed Councilmembers that the ADHS is thankful for the partnership they have with the Alzheimer's Association – Desert Southwest and its National Office. He has been working on a five-year plan to promote mental health well-being for older adults. The department has also taken an interest in social isolation and social connectedness. **Wayne** also announced his retirement for ADHS this year and that he looks forward to training his successor.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Mary Beals-Luedtka** for an update from the Arizona Area Agencies on Aging (AAA). **Mary** informed Councilmembers that the AAA appreciates the inclusion of service rates funding Governor Ducey's executive budget. They would like to see the funding amount closer to \$5M in the reconciled budget. The AAA is concerned with food insecurity, access to the vaccine, and social isolation during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In regards to food insecurity, some areas have received donations to support the continuation of extra meals being delivered, originally supported by CARES Act funding, but this has not been universal throughout all agencies. In regards to access to the vaccine, there is great concern with getting the vaccine to homebound older adults. **Mary** noted how some of the agencies have been utilizing regional resources to assist in vaccinating and transportation. She noted that not all care facilities in Tucson have been vaccinated. In regards to social isolation, multiple agencies have developed partnerships to help engage more with older adults. These partnerships have led to the development of iPad projects with "circles of friends," robotic pets, and mobile applications. She also noted that the 211 number only operates in Maricopa and for state POD vaccinations.

### Workgroup Update

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, thanked everyone who responded to the request for members for the Aging in Community Workgroup. She is working with GOYFF in identifying potential chairs. More information will be made available soon.

### Upcoming Meeting

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, went over the list of meeting dates for 2021 and reminded Councilmembers to mark their calendars for their next meeting on April 14, 2021. The correct dates for the meetings in 2021 are as follows: June 9, August 11, October 13, and December 15.

### Adjournment

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  - **Carol Brown** moved to adjourn.
  - **Terri Spitz**, seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Dated 10 of February 2021  
Governor's Council Child Safety and Family Empowerment  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Kim Brooks and Vianney M. Careaga  
GOYFF