



**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING**

**April 14, 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 April 14, 2021 virtually, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

<b>Members Present (11) Members Absent (2)</b>	
<b>Lisa O'Neill, Chair</b>	<b>Absent: Bonita Imus</b>
<b>Terri Spitz, Vice Chair</b>	<b>Absent: Shelli Silver</b>
<b>Barbara Marshall</b>	
<b>Belinda Akes</b>	
<b>Bert Ijams</b>	
<b>Brenda Holt</b>	
<b>Carol Brown</b>	
<b>Jaime Aguilar</b>	
<b>Nicole Baker (proxy for Arizona Department of Veteran's Services)</b>	
<b>Steve Wagner</b>	
<b>Virginia Rountree</b>	
<b>Staff and Guests Present (4)</b>	
<b>Kim Brooks</b>	<b>Cindy Saverino</b>
<b>Vianney Careaga</b>	<b>Mary Beals-Luedtka</b>

## Call to Order

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, called the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with 11 members and 4 staff and guests present. **Lisa O'Neill** reviewed the procedures of how the remote meeting would be facilitated and welcomed all those present. **Lisa O'Neill** introduced **Terri Spitz** as the new Chair of the Council and introduced **Bert Ijams**, Executive Director of Prescott Meals on Wheels, as the newest member of the Council.

## Roll Call

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

## Approval of Minutes

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, requested a review of the **February 10, 2021** meeting minutes. o  
    **Belinda Akes** moved to accept the **February 10, 2021** minutes.  
    o **Barbara Marshall** seconded the motion.

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- o The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 10:04 a.m.

## Arizona State Plan on Aging

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Cindy Saverino**, Program Administrator with the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES), for a presentation on the [Arizona State Plan on Aging](#). **Cindy Saverino** began her presentation by providing background on the services the Aging and Disability Services Administration works with the Area Agencies on Aging to provide to older adults, individuals with disabilities, and caregivers. These services range from in-home, family caregiver, promotion/disease prevention, state long term-care ombudsman, and legal services. These services are also some of the focus areas of the State Plan on Aging. The State Plan on Aging is developed by the Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) and covers four federal fiscal years, beginning on October 1<sup>st</sup> and ending on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The plan guides the state on service delivery. The state plan is made up of five goals, which are identical to the ones established for the Arizona Aging 2020 Plan that was implemented in 2004.
- The first goal was to streamline access for all eligible adult Arizonans to the integrated array of quality care available by all state aging services and promote resources for individuals that are physically and sensory challenged. Some of the accomplishments highlighted are as follows: maintained a statewide toll-free Caregiver Resource Line that offers a Single Entry Point/No Wrong Door (SEP/NWD) access for caregivers across the lifespan; promoted Medicare benefits information and awareness to tribal communities; and reduced the Home and Community-Based Waitlist by 23%.
- The second goal was to increase awareness and understanding of aging issues and help prepare Arizona for an aging population. Some of the accomplishments highlighted are as follows: worked towards creating a dementia-capable system that includes SEP/NWD access for people with the disease and their caregivers; increased awareness and public understanding of relevant legal issues through outreach; and created a Non-Medical Home and Community-Based Services (NMHCBS) Waitlist policy.
- The third goal was to increase the ability of adult Arizonans to maintain their individual well-being and safety, in order to remain active, healthy and living in their communities. Some of the accomplishments highlighted are as follows: focused on caregivers by implementing CarePRO assessment pre-test and post-test; and worked with Area Agencies on Aging to provide evidence-based health promotion/disease prevention classes. **Cindy Saverino** noted that regional ombudsman staff and volunteers were unable to fully interact with long-term care residents during the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, robots and other technology were employed to communicate with residents more effectively while face to face interactions were not available. The robots had tablets that would display the faces of the ombudsman staff and volunteers when they met with the residents.
- The fourth goal was to strengthen Arizona's economy by fostering an integrated and well-trained informal, paraprofessional and professional workforce. Some of the accomplishments highlighted regarding the fourth goal are as follows: utilization of the Arizona Respite locator to recruit and educate potential workers; and the

long-term care ombudsman continued to work on revising state policy to mirror federal regulation. • The fifth goal was to enhance the state's capacity to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure to deliver services in a culturally appropriate, timely and cost-effective manner. Some of the accomplishments highlighted are as follows: reviewed the use of technology innovations for the use of monitoring or service delivery; and improved communication and technical assistance with other tribal entities including the Health Services Administrator of the Navajo Division of Health/Division of Aging and Long-Term Care Support. • The last State Plan on Aging was combined with the Arizona Aging 2020 Plan, which was created under the administration of Governor Janet Napolitano, to avoid duplicative efforts. The agencies that contributed to the Arizona Aging 2020 Plan will be asked to participate and provide their input on the next State Plan on Aging. The next state plan will cover the federal fiscal years of 2022 to 2026. The full presentation can be found at

<https://govff.az.gov/meeting/gaca/2021/04/14>.

- **Bert Ijams** inquired about the role the Council would play in the next state plan and about the data being collected from the previous four years that will inform the next state plan. **Cindy Saverino** responded by stating that the Council's role in the state plan is to approve the plan and oversee its implementation. Updates on the State Plan on Aging are given regularly at Council meetings to keep Councilmembers abreast of developments. In regards to the data collection, a work plan is available on the DES website that outlines the goals, objectives, and the key measures of success.
- **Brenda Holt** inquired about the use of robots, like those used by regional ombudsman during the pandemic, in the future for long-term care facilities. **Cindy Saverino** stated that innovations like those of robots could play a bigger role in the future to not only connect with the regional ombudsman but to also allow residents to connect with their families. She also thanked **Mary Beals-Luedtka** and her team for helping get the robots. **Mary Beals-Luedtka** stated the robots have not only been successful in Arizona, but also in Pennsylvania from which the idea came from. As robots become operational, meet-and-greet events are set up with long-term care facility staff and residents so that they can get used to the robots and know how they engage with them.
- In regards to earlier statements made about the role of the Council in the State Plan on Aging, **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, clarified that the Council will also have the opportunity to review the plan, ask questions, and provide their feedback before approving of the plan.

### Councilmember & Liaison Roundtable

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **herself** for an update from The University of Arizona Center on Aging. **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, informed Councilmembers that one of the biggest projects the Center of Aging has been working on was to help nursing homes across the state with any COVID-19 related issues, particularly in the areas of: reducing the spread of the virus, best practice safety measures, support staff retention, and allowing family members back to visit.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Barbara Marshall** for an update from the Maricopa County Attorney's Office. **Barbara Marshall** informed Councilmembers that there is no report of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office but she did provide anecdotal information on accessing services available to older adults. In her experience, she found it difficult to acquire the cost/dollar amount for a service without disclosing personal information. She offered up the suggestion that a master list of services and the cost associated with it would be very helpful. **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, stated that this would be an area the Council would greatly benefit from learning more on and to receive more clarity on the issues. **Mary Beals-Luedtka** stated that the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), as the licensing governing agency for the state in this area, would be a good place to reach out to for more clarity. Additionally, a regional ombudsman can help consumers navigate service options.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Belinda Akes** for an update from the Pinal/Gila Senior Citizen Council. **Belinda Akes** informed council members that on May 21 the Pinal/Gila Senior Citizen Council will be hosting a grand opening for their new kitchen for the Southern Arizona Meals on Wheels program. Over the Easter holiday, the Santa Cruz Valley Food Bank provided 75 Easter baskets for families in need. • **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Bert Ijams** for an update from the Prescott Meals on Wheels. **Bert Ijams** introduced herself to the Council and welcomed the opportunity to serve on the Council. **Bert Ijams** serves as the Executive Director of Prescott Meals on Wheels. One of her passions is serving homebound adults. She has recently employed creativity and arts as an intervention for social isolation among this adult population. Yavapai County has one of

the highest rates of senior citizen suicide in the State of Arizona. She is eager to serve as a conduit from the community she serves and engages with to better inform the work of the Council and the State Plan on Aging. **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, recommended that if she has the time to engage to serve on the Aging in Community Workgroup.

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, noted that **Bonita Imus** was not present and no update was received from the Arizona Indian Council on Aging.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Brenda Holt** for an update from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) – Arizona. **Brenda Holt** informed Councilmembers that AARP recently held its first virtual Legislative Day at the Capitol with over 50 attendees. AARP partnered with Costco and the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) to provide some COVID-19 relief. They coordinated the drop-off of 62 cases of Gatorade to the State Farm POD for the workers and volunteers. AARP intends to coordinate this drop-off again in the month of June. AARP also donated flip-flops, AARP umbrellas, journals, and blankets to a homeless shelter in need.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Carol Brown** for an update from the Western Arizona Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging. **Carol Brown** informed Councilmembers that the Western Arizona Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging is beginning to return to in-office operations. They are almost done with a recent project of delivering care bags to low-income senior apartment complexes in Mohave, La Paz, and Yuma counties.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Jaime Aguilar** for an update from the Southeastern Arizona Governments Area Agency on Aging. **Jaime Aguilar** informed Councilmembers that they will be putting on a Scam Jam to inform older adults of the different types of scams that are being targeted at them. A local prosecutor will also be on hand to provide information from a legal perspective. The event is not only designed to provide information, but to also gather information from those in attendance on things they have seen.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Nicole Baker** for an update from the Arizona Department of Veterans Services (ADVS). **Nicole Baker** informed Councilmembers that ADVS is in the middle of a transportation study. The study is meant to identify transportation-related barriers veterans encounter in accessing services. After the study is complete, ADVS intends to explore ways to break down those barriers. She also mentioned that Governor Ducey recently signed into law S.B. 1443, which expands the Arizona Military Family Relief Fund which will provide financial assistance to veterans. ADVS noticed a gap among older veterans being able to meet the criteria to access the program. The new law will help address this gap by expanding the criteria. On April 30, ADVS will be working with AARP to do a telephone town hall. This will connect ADVS with more veterans they wouldn't have otherwise been able to connect with because of AARP's broad reach. ADVS has also received \$1M from the American Rescue Plan and CARES Act to support the existing veterans' state homes. Construction is also underway for the two new veterans' state homes in Flagstaff and Yuma.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, noted that **Shelli Silver** was not present and no update was received from the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS).
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Steve Wagner** for an update from The RightCare Foundation. **Steve Wagner** informed Councilmembers that one of the bills pending in the legislature, S.B. 1373, is awaiting a hearing and floor vote in the Arizona House of the Representatives. The bill would help address gaps in emergency care outcomes involving the need of immediate resuscitation to preserve brain function. The bill also addresses the issues of falling injuries and the care rendered to them to prevent further harm and injury.
  - **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Virginia Rountree** for an update from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). **Virginia Rountree** informed Councilmembers that DES was recently awarded \$1M from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Administration of Community Living (ACL) to help expand vaccine access for older adults. Governor Ducey recently signed into law S.B. 1466, which extends the [Family Caregiver Grant Program](#) through 2024. The program is designed to reimburse caregivers for durable medical equipment or other items designed to assist up to \$1,000. There has not been a lot of utilization of that program, and would encourage Councilmembers to spread the word on the program.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Terri Spitz** for an update from the Alzheimer's Association – Desert Southwest. **Terri Spitz** informed Councilmembers that the Alzheimer's Association recently published its annual facts and figures report. Some of the key figures highlighted were: Arizona is the fastest growing state with people living with Alzheimer's; Arizona has the highest average number of hours per week per caregiver

in the country; and Arizona has had the highest increase in dementia deaths during the COVID-19 pandemic than anywhere else in the country. On March 2, the Alzheimer's Association held its Alzheimer's State Day with 50 advocates participating throughout the day. Community education continues to be a large part of the work the Alzheimer's Association takes on. The Alzheimer's Association recently partnered with the Mexican Consulates in Arizona to broadcast their virtual education on Facebook Live. The Walks to End Alzheimer's have also been put on the calendar for later this year.

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Mary Beals-Luedtka** for an update from the Arizona Area Agencies on Aging (AZ4A). **Mary Beals-Luedtka** informed Councilmembers of the legislative asks from the AZ4A. The bills for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) in both the House and Senate have done well. Now it will come down to budget negotiations between the legislature and the Governor. The Senate has already put \$1M in the budget for HCBS and the House has put \$1.5M. AZ4A's ask is \$2.5M. The Area Agencies on Aging are also working to obtain additional funding for the Long-Term care Ombudsman program. Sen. Wendy Rogers introduced a bill with \$1M allocated towards that program. It passed out of the Senate and will also be part of budget negotiations. This additional funding will allow Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to hire 13 full time Ombudsman positions statewide. In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the priorities of the AZ4A have been focused on food insecurities, access to the vaccine, and social isolation. **Mary Beals-Luedtka** then highlighted the work of the AAA regions in these priority areas. Region III has contracted with two community based organizations to do phone calling, setting up appointments for vaccination, providing follow up and reminders, and arranging transportation to and from the vaccinations sites. They are also doing a special contract with 3 transportation providers to provide the rides needed. Region IV is currently assisting clients with vaccine scheduling and transportation in Mohave County. Plans for Yuma County will begin next week to offer the same services. AZ4A is assessing the need in the community to possibly assist the general 60+ population with this service. In Region VI, their vaccine ACP project has provided COVID vaccination sites throughout their region with advance directives and the AAA brochure with contact information for further help and resources. This information was given out while people were waiting after they had received their vaccination. In Region VIII, Tribal Communities have tailored the vaccination program to meet the community's needs and continue to support vaccine accessibility through community events, IHS/638 (clinic) appointments, drive up blitzes, and vaccination visits to homebound older adults. Region I has implemented a new grocery shopping program to help older adults who cannot shop online or go to the store to access food. Shopping assistants will shop twice a month at Fry's grocery stores, using agency credit cards. Shoppers call clients to obtain their grocery list, shop for them, and return the items to the client. Clients are expected to pay for their own groceries. The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust has provided funding to help develop the project. In Region III, most senior centers are still doing Grab-and-Go. Two Centers have opened fully and two more will open back up this summer. AZ4A has provided the centers with Opening up Guidelines based on CDC recommendations. Shopping continues for a limited number of clients each month. Food Security remains a high priority for Region IV. Carryover funding has been applied to budgets for Home delivered meals and congregate care (Grab-and-Go Meals). Extra meals have been re-initiated and there are no current waitlists. In Region VIII, their Nutrition Analyst/Program Coordinator conducted a Cooks Training that provided information on: food safety and sanitation, kidney disease and diabetes- diet/nutrition, and menu planning. Region III is continuing virtual classes and training. Their Health & Wellness Program is doing a virtual Health & Wellness event on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Region IV continues to offer online support for Caregivers. A Companion Pet program officially launched providing robotic pets to clients living with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's/Dementia. This program assists with social isolation, caregiver stress, and companionship/comfort. Region VI's Hello Neighbor Program delivered and distributed AAA bags filled with informational literature and "swag" to promote community education and provide information on the Senior Community residents at Casa del Sol.

### Workgroup Update

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced and announced **Carol Brown** and **Brenda Holt** as the new Chairs of the Aging in Community Workgroup. **Carol Brown** stated that she and **Brenda Holt** are excited for the upcoming year. She notified Councilmembers that their first Workgroup Meeting will be on May 4<sup>th</sup> and urged any Councilmembers interested in serving on the Workgroup to let **Kim Brooks** know as soon as possible.

## Future Meeting Topics

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, requested topics for future meetings from the Councilmembers. Councilmembers suggested the following topics and presenters: Arizona Attorney General's Office to discuss scams, Alzheimer's State Plan, State Falls Prevention Plan, Foundation of Senior Living, suicide among older adults, and Arizona Caregiver Coalition. All further recommendations should be sent to **Kim Brooks**.

## Upcoming Meeting

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- **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 June 9, 2021.

**Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, made a point of order to introduce **Vianney Careaga**, Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family, as he will assist **Kim Brooks** in providing support to this Council.

## 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.
  - **Brenda Holt**, seconded the motion.
  - The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 11:34 a.m.

Dated 14 of April 2021  
Governor's Advisory Council on Aging  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Vianney M. Careaga  
GOYFF