



**GOVERNOR’S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING**

**June 9, 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 June 9, 2021 virtually, 1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (12)	Members Absent (1)
Lisa O’Neill, Chair	Shelli Silver
James Fitzpatrick (Proxy for Terri Spitz, Vice Chair)	
Barbara Marshall	
Belinda Akes	
Bert Ijams	
Bonita Imus	
Brenda Holt	
Carol Brown	
Jaime Aguilar	
Nicole Baker (proxy for Arizona Department of Veteran’s Services)	
Steve Wagner	
Virginia Rountree	
<b>Staff and Guests Present (7)</b>	
Kim Brooks	Lauri Atcitty
Vianney Careaga	Mary Weston
Kellie McGhee	Roxanne Thomas
Gina Whittington	

### Call to Order

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, called the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with 12 members and 6 staff and guests present. **Dr. O'Neill** reviewed the procedures of how the remote meeting would be facilitated and welcomed all those present.

### Roll Call

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

### Approval of Minutes

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, requested a review of the **April 14, 2021** meeting minutes. **Steve Wagner** noted a grammatical error in his report, and offered an amendment to his report that the word "car" be changed to "care."
  - o **Jaime Aguilar** moved to accept the **April 14, 2021** minutes with the recommended amendment from **Steve Wagner**.
  - o **Belinda Akes** seconded the motion.
  - o The motion passed with no dissenting votes at 10:03 a.m.

### Law Enforcement Response to Senior Scams

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Det. Kellie McGhee**, Phoenix Police Department, for a presentation on the Law Enforcement Response to Senior Scams. **Det. McGhee** began her presentation by providing background information on how criminal networks target older adults in an effort to acquire these individuals' money. The COVID-19 Pandemic has contributed to people feeling lonely and isolated, which has increased the activity of telemarketing and online scams.. In telemarketing schemes, the scammer usually tries to convince older adults to give the scammer their money by offering them an investment opportunity that will yield them a high rate of return. Scammers also use phone applications to disguise or change their phone numbers. **Det. McGhee** emphasized that the criminal networks behind these schemes do their best to target older adult populations in other states and towns in an effort to make it harder for law enforcement organizations (LEOs) across multiple jurisdictions to track them down. After complaints from victims are filed, investigators are able to begin the process of following the money trail and look for suspicious behavior in the bank account transactions. **Det. McGhee** noted that she has worked on cases in which the bank accounts that the criminals use can be as high as seven to 15 accounts deep. When conducting investigations, there is also an effort to coordinate with local LEOs to build trust with victims by meeting with them in-person since most of their victimization occurs over the phone. This coordination has been especially helpful for LEOs working on cases with victims that do not trust using their phones anymore and that are not from the same state. There are four general types of victims: 1) victims that cooperate and are willing to provide information to assist in prosecutorial efforts, 2) victims that are unwilling to cooperate due in large part to the shame they feel for being taken advantage of, 3) victims that are in a state of memory that inhibits them remembering or recalling the events in question, and 4) victims that have passed away before they could have justice. In addition to telemarketing schemes, there are also click ad schemes over the internet and automated teller machine (ATM) schemes. On the surface, these criminal networks can look as legitimate as a regular business. This can make differentiating legitimate and criminal activity difficult. In Arizona, criminal networks can take the same steps as a legitimate business by submitting an application for a trade name with the Arizona Secretary of State's (ASOS) office and by filing new corporation/LLC paperwork with the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC). **Det. McGhee** emphasized that the point of purchase protocols within the ASOS and ACC could be improved upon to better verify the identities of those filing them and reduce the potential for criminal activity. There are also cases that involve the abuse of notary allowances of credible persons. The credible person is someone whom the older adult would be familiar with, whether that is a family member or a friend, and sometimes that credible person can be the

same person victimizing the older adult. She also referenced the changes that House Bill 2810 would have on the investigative process of these scam cases, namely it would limit the time in which investigators have to identify fraudulent accounts, seize the accounts, and to provide them to the prosecution for restitution. In regards to how families and older adults can avoid victimization, **Det. McGhee** recommended the following: review resources on the [Arizona Attorney General's website](#), setup transaction review on accounts, ask more questions to callers and do research before sending money, step up regulations on cryptocurrency, and continue to educate bank tellers. She concluded with an overview of her department's efforts for Cyber Awareness Week and how scammers seek out victims. The full presentation can be found at <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/gaca/2021/06/09>.

- **Bert Ijams** inquired about the themes that lure older adults into being scammed. **Det. McGhee** responded that, in her own experience, the common theme has revolved around growing their wealth. In retirement, older adults have a finite set of retirement funds and try to find avenues to grow those funds to feel more financially secure. Scammers capitalize on the promise to grow their wealth, but the victims never see this return.
- **Dr. O'Neill, Chair**, emphasized the power of loneliness among older adults and shared an experience of a friend that was a victim of a scam.

### COVID-19 Update: ITCA-AAA

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Laurai Atcitty**, Region 8 Director of the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona Inc. – Area Agency on Aging (ITCA-AAA), **Mary Weston**, ITCA-AAA Region 8 Program Manager, and **Roxanne Thomas**, ITCA-AAA Region 8 Program Specialist II, for an update on the ITCA-AAA and the COVID-19 Pandemic. They began their presentation by providing an overview on older adult population trends and background on ITCA-AAA Region 8. By 2030, it is projected that one in every five Americans will be 65 years or older. Arizona, as of the 2010 decennial census, has a Native American population of 385,772 and, according to the Arizona Department of Economic Security, 5.4% of Arizonans aged 65 years and older are Native American. In 2020, the University of North Dakota's National Resource Center on Native American Aging conducted its triennial needs assessment. The needs assessment identified that the top common health concerns among Native Americans are diabetes, high blood pressure and arthritis. The ITCA-AAA Region 8 has two Tribal Assisted Living Facilities with a bed space capacity of 28 and four Skilled Living Facilities with a bed space capacity of 239. ITCA-AAA Region 8 supports 21 tribal communities in 13 of the 15 counties in the state and AAA Region 7 supports the Navajo Nation. Some of the programs and services offered by ITCA-AAA Region 8 include: technical assistance and training; coordinating Title III, VI, and VII programs; advocacy; and resource development. The Arizona Indian Council on Aging (AICOA) serves as the advisory board for ITCA-AAA Region 8. AICOA was started in 1976 and serves as a voice advocating the concerns, issues, and needs of elders to live strong, safe, and healthy lives. AICOA also empowers elders to influence tribal and federal leaders to provide the needed services in their communities. Some of the advocacy efforts AICOA engages in, include the following: Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day, AZ4A Older Arizonans Day, Inter Tribal Association of Arizona Congressional Week, Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, AICOA Quarterly Meetings and the AICOA Biennial Conference.
- The challenges faced by the tribal communities because of the the COVID-19 Pandemic were highlighted in eight distinct categories: Resources; Communication; Housing/Weatherization; Transportation; Training, Education, and Outreach; Meal Program; PPEs/Supplies/Vaccine; and Elder Abuse/Fraud, Scams, and Financial Exploitation. It was noted that some tribal communities did an excellent job preparing and executing their emergency plans, while others struggled to obtain the resources they needed. In the northern tribes, there was difficulty in sourcing drinking water and wood to heat their homes. As shortages also affected stores, prices increased on many items that were in high demand. There was a lack of access to the internet and teleconferencing equipment, which made it difficult for people to stay connected with each other. There were also reports of family members experiencing difficulties when trying to access the connectivity equipment in long-term care facilities. Many elders speak only in their native language. This posed another barrier in communication when family members could not visit. As the pandemic continued, it also exacerbated housing issues, especially those relating to access to water and plumbing issues. Social

distancing was difficult as multi-generations of families would live under one roof. In regards to transportation, ITCA-AAA Region 8 found families needed more ways to transport themselves and assist elders. Only six of the tribal communities have a local bus service. Curbside pickup and services were also not available or not accessible in many tribal communities. More family members had to take on additional responsibilities to ensure elders received food and to mitigate the effects of social isolation among elders. ITCA-AAA Region 8 discovered that teleconferencing was successful in working with many of the elders. Training opportunities included caregiver workshops, chronic disease self-management, socialization, recreation, stress reduction, anxiety, benefits and scams. Tribal senior centers excelled in adapting their meal programs to adhere to social distancing protocols. They provided grab-n-go opportunities and made cookie making kits available to elders as an activity they could do in their own homes. The staff in these centers were resilient, when they would get sick, they would spend time home recovering, but they would come back and continue to serve when they fully recovered. As COVID-19 vaccinations have become more available, a large portion of the tribal communities have been vaccinated, but there remains vaccine hesitancy. There is now ample supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) in most of the communities and training is being used on the proper use of cleaning agents. Some communities have developed mobile vaccination units, coordinating with the Indian Health Services to give vaccinations to those that are homebound. ITCA-AAA Region 8 has found that some elders experienced financial abuse and have been victimized by stimulus check scams. ITCA-AAA Region 8 has continued to push out information on this type of exploitation and other financial exploitation scams. The full presentation can be found at <https://goyff.az.gov/meeting/gaca/2021/06/09>.

- **Dr. O'Neill, Chair**, inquired whether ITCA-AAA Region 8 has experienced staffing shortages. **Laurai** responded that she believes they are as short staffed as the other AAAs. However, she did note that applicants do struggle to access the certifications they need that are necessary to fill staff positions.

### Councilmember & Liaison Roundtable

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **herself** for an update from The University of Arizona Center on Aging. **Dr. O'Neill, Chair** informed Councilmembers that the Center has been busy developing a new certificate and master degree program focused on aging.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Barbara Marshall** for an update from the Maricopa County Attorney's Office. **Barbara** informed Councilmembers that she does not have much to report on besides reiterating that her office has seen an uptick in fraudulent activity targeting the elderly and in domestic violence involving the elderly.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Belinda Akes** for an update from the Pinal-Gila Council for Senior Citizen Council. **Belinda** informed Councilmembers that the Southern Meals on Wheels had its dedication ceremony for its new kitchen. The kitchen was dedicated to Jim Norris, who has been involved with Pinal-Gila Council for Senior Citizen Council since 1974, dedicating 47 years to the organization. The Santa Cruz Valley Food Bank recently acquired a new walk-in freezer, courtesy of the City of Eloy's COVID-19 Relief funds. She also asked Councilmembers to keep the residents and first responders from Pinal and Gila in their thoughts and prayers as they fight the wildfires impacting their communities.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Bert Ijams** for an update from the Prescott Meals on Wheels. **Bert** informed Councilmembers that on June 14, the Prescott Meals on Wheels Center will open to in-person operations for the first time in 15 months. This was a herculean task to get volunteers and clients feeling comfortable coming back. The biggest concern they have received is whether to wear masks or not wear masks. The Center intends to educate the staff, volunteers and community members that receive services from Meals on Wheels on this matter, using the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. She also noted that a small portion of the people they serve that are homebound are refusing to go back to daily meal deliveries as opposed to weekly deliveries due to their concern of exposure to COVID-19..
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Bonita Imus** for an update from the Arizona Indian Council on Aging. **Bonita** informed Councilmembers that the Hualapai Tribe has opened up its senior center. She also noted that there is confusion among the members of the tribal community on the COVID-19 Pandemic protocols moving forward.

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Brenda Holt** for an update from the Arizona State Office of American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). **Brenda** informed Councilmembers that the state office is looking to expand their broadband services and provide access to high-speed internet to the rural areas and underserved communities in Arizona. The state office is also opposed to the flat tax proposal in the legislature. The state office believes that the tax proposal is regressive and would not benefit low income earners in the state. Revenue sharing structures in urban and rural municipalities will face challenges when it comes to funding services, such as police, fire, and emergency medical services.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Carol Brown** for an update from the Western Arizona Council of Governments (WACOG) Area Agency on Aging. **Carol** informed Councilmembers that June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. WACOG is encouraging participation in the Arizona Department of Economic Security's (DES) Elder Abuse Awareness Day Conference. They are also partnering with the Arizona Attorney General's Office to host a life care-planning presentation. WACOG has also partnered with its coalitions and community partners to provide resources in English and Spanish about elder abuse and prevention.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Jaime Aguilar** for an update from the Southeastern Arizona Area Agency on Aging. **Jaime** informed Councilmembers that about three weeks ago local law enforcement held a modified version of a Scam Jam. According to Jaime, the Federal Bureau of Investigation states that the biggest scams that have been targeted toward seniors have been about selling the COVID-19 vaccine to them.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Nicole Baker** for an update from the Arizona Department of Veterans Services (ADVS). **Nicole** informed Councilmembers that the ADVS concluded its veteran transportation study with over 2,000 respondents statewide. Their next step is to have focus groups around the state to identify possible solutions to the issues raised in the study. The state veteran homes have resumed visitations and are working to ensure all parties involved are comfortable with the visitation protocol. The two new state veteran homes are still on track for Flagstaff and Yuma. Last month, ADVS provided U.S. Senator Mark Kelly with a tour of the Flagstaff site. Over Memorial Day weekend, the department held a virtual ceremony and had help from families to place flags at each grave site at their cemeteries. They also had a burial for a veteran who was killed in action during the Pearl Harbor Attack and whose remains had been recently identified. The department helped bring the family together for the burial.
- **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**, noted **Steve Wagner** had to step away from the meeting.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Virginia Rountree** for an update from the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES). **Virginia** was appreciative of Carol's mention of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on June 15 and of DES's Conference. She further informed Councilmembers that funding from the American Rescue Plan includes an additional \$224,279 for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. The funds will be distributed to the AAA's per the state funding formula for utilization and will be spread over three years to align with the allowable spending timeline. The State Health Insurance Program/Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (SHIP/MIPPA) and Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) programs partnered with ON Advertising for marketing and outreach efforts. The SMP efforts highlighted scams and frauds relating to COVID-19 vaccines for seniors and others on Medicare. The SHIP/MIPPA marketing contained a general message of awareness of the SHIP/MIPPA services. This served as an unbiased resource to provide information and optimize access to care. Both campaigns operated statewide, lasting four (SHIP/MIPPA) to six weeks (SMP), and utilized radio stations in rural communities, weekly print advertisements in more than 40 regional newspapers, and five electronic billboards located within the Phoenix-metropolitan area. DES has also partnered with ON Advertising on the marketing campaign for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. This campaign will promote the program and educate people on what the ombudsman does in advocating for long-term care residents. The campaign should be rolling out in late June. There will be Facebook advertisements and a video will be created to detail what the program does and how to access the service. The video will be placed on the DES homepage. The Adult Protective Services (APS) reports are up 15% through May over the same period last year. This is attributable to the impact of the COVID-19

Pandemic, and continued awareness and outreach. With the signing of House Bill 2535, the list of mandated reporters is expanded to include health professions and an emergency clause will make it effective immediately. APS will be doing outreach to these professions and will be monitoring for increased reporting. DES is focusing on recruitment and hiring for APS investigators to meet the need of increased reporting. APS is expecting to receive a total of \$6,000,000 in funding however the specifics on the use of funding is still pending. DES expects further details on this funding this week. **Virginia** asked Councilmembers to help spread the word on the [Emergency Rental Assistance Program](#). Many seniors qualify if they were impacted by the pandemic and are having trouble paying their rent and/or utilities.

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **James Fitzpatrick** for an update from the Desert Southwest Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. **Terri** informed Councilmembers that June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month and the Chapter asks that people wear purple to show their support. The Chapter is holding its Annual Education Conference, virtually, on June 18 from 9AM to 3PM. The event is free to anyone and will feature experts in dementia, research, health and travel. The Chapter also has close to 100 teams raising funds and awareness to support the mission of the Alzheimer's Association. The Association will be back with in-person operations on August 2. **James** added that the Food and Drug Administration approved the use of aducanumab, which is the first medical intervention that has shown to slow the progression of early stage Alzheimer's.
- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Gina Whittington**, Deputy Director of Western Arizona Council of Governments, for an update from the Arizona Area Agencies on Aging (AZ4A). **Gina** informed Councilmembers of AZ4A's legislative priorities, vaccination access among the regions, caregiver social isolation support, and region specific reports. At the end of May, Arizona legislative leadership introduced budget reconciliation bills. Within these proposals were funding increases for the AAAs for Home and Community Based Funding with a \$1 million increase and Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) program. The AAAs are appreciative to legislative leadership for their recognition of the need in these two priorities. The AZ4A continues to work with legislative leaders to increase the funding for home and community-based services. Currently there is \$31 million earmarked to come into Arizona under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The ARPA did not waive matching requirements for states, thus, the AAAs need an additional \$2.477 million to draw down these federal funds. AZ4A continues to request an addition of \$1.4 million to the home and community-based services line item to accommodate for these matching requirements.
  - Region 1: In regards to vaccination access, Region 1's Elder Refugee Program has been working closely with the Maricopa County Department Public Health (MCDPH) to educate elder refugees and help reduce stigma and fear around receiving the vaccine. **Gina** noted that having the vaccine on-site at events made it easier for everyone. In regards to providing caregiver social isolation support, Region 1 contracted to work with Canadian based company, Trualta, to expand its caregiver education. The content will be customized to be reflective of local caregiver needs and resources. Region 1 was notified that they were awarded a contract with the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System for primary prevention through a Substance Abuse Block Grant (SABG).
  - Region 2 : Continues to focus additional time, energy, and resources towards addressing vaccine hesitancy by launching the *Take YOUR Shot* campaign.
  - Region 3: Started a voucher program with LYFT on May 10 in Prescott/Prescott Valley, Chino Valley, and Flagstaff. Lyft service hours were extended on weekday evenings and weekend hours when public transportation was not available. The ride vouchers totaled \$100 per month over a period of three months. Region 3 is focused on their waitlist, which has 424 clients as of May. **Gina** noted that many AAAs are experiencing waitlist numbers that are due to a lack of direct-care workforce available in the regions and not due to funding resources. Region 3's Health & Wellness Social Isolation Program is developing a social network among seniors using Ipad technology.
  - Region 4 partnered with the Yuma County Department of Health and Catholic Community Services for their homebound vaccination program. They continue to offer online support groups for Caregivers and conducted a Caregiver Virtual Training in May. Region 4 continues to partner with their Community Action Department to provide utility and rental assistance through several COVID-19 related funding sources.

- o Region 5: Pinal-Gila Council Board of Directors and staff held a formal dedication ceremony of the Jim Norris Central Kitchen on Friday, May 21, 2021 in Casa Grande. During the last week, they have been closely monitoring the Telegraph and Mescal fires, which have burned through more than 100,000 acres of land along the Pinal and Gila county line.
- o Region 8: The ITCA-AAA conducted a cooks training program on April 16, 2021 for tribal staff, covering the topics of: Food Safety and Sanitation, Diabetes and Kidney Disease, Diet/Menu Planning, Converting and Adjusting Recipes, Inventory, Ordering and Substitutions, and a Cook-Along session. They also created a new toll free helpline for assistance with Tribal Ombudsman services at 800-591-9370. 23 tribal fitness instructors will receive EnhanceFitness Training, ACE Group Fitness Instructor Training, and A Matter of Balance fall-prevention training for older adults between April and June.

### Workgroup Update

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, introduced **Carol Brown** and **Brenda Holt** for an update on the Aging in Community Workgroup. **Carol** informed Councilmembers that the Workgroup met on May 9 to have an initial discussion of their focus and develop their objectives for the remainder of the year. Two of their objectives will be tied directly to raising awareness on Alzheimer's Disease. They have requested a presentation from the Alzheimer's Taskforce, which was involved in producing the Alzheimer's State Plan, for a future meeting. The third objective will focus on falls prevention and have also requested a presentation be given to the Council on that topic. The fourth objective will focus on advocacy and support of elder abuse prevention. The next meeting of the Workgroup will take place in July.

### Future Meeting Topics

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, requested topics for future meetings from the Councilmembers. Councilmembers suggested the following topics and presenters: Alzheimer's Taskforce and Arizona Falls Prevention Coalition. All further recommendations should be sent to **Kim Brooks**.

### Upcoming Meeting

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, reminded Councilmembers to mark their calendars for their next meeting on August 11, 2021 and hopefully, as conditions improve, in a hybrid format, with in-person and virtual (as needed) options.

### Adjournment

- **Lisa O'Neill, Chair**, thanked everyone for being part of the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.
  - o **Virginia Rountree** moved to adjourn.
  - o **Barbara Marshall** seconded the motion.
  - o The motion passed with no dissenting votes and the meeting adjourned at 10:54 a.m.

Dated 9 of June 2021  
Governor's Advisory Council on Aging  
Respectfully Submitted By:  
Vianney M. Careaga  
GOYFF