



ACA Committee Meeting  
Meeting Minutes – Microsoft Teams  
March 24, 2021

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members**

Chair Jones  
Chair Tucker  
Julie Arnold  
Karen Ashley  
Tammy Brewer

Linn Chao  
Aysha Cooper  
Brandi Hackett  
Darlene Kimes  
Lianne Levitan

Lois Ricci  
Richard Sylvia  
Herman Weil

**Staff**

John Bayalis  
Mary Blumberg  
Sue Burgess  
Wendy Butts

John Hammond  
Becky Kurtz  
Aixa Pascual  
Shane Patilla

Katie Perumbeti  
Elizabeth Sanford  
Connie White  
Kim Yawn

**CALL TO ORDER** by Chairman Romona Jackson-Jones at 1:00pm.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD** Chairman Romona Jackson-Jones called for public comments. There was none.

**MANAGER’S UPDATE** Becky Kurtz wished everyone a Happy Spring and noted that with the vaccination, there is reason to be optimistic. As detailed in a slide presentation, she reviewed Federal issues and new AIS grantees that will be starting soon. The Consolidated Appropriations for COVID Relief will provide approximately \$1.3 million to ARC in nutrition funds through September 2022. The American Rescue Plan was signed by President Biden on March 11, 2021. ARC is awaiting the specific funding allocation amount but expects it to be higher than the CARES Act provided. Four new grantees will begin providing services soon. The Latin American Association will provide culturally appropriate Information and Assistance, and Home Repairs and Modifications will be provided by Habitat for Humanity, House Proud, and Meals on Wheels Atlanta.

**Approval of Minutes** ACA Co-chair Tucker asked for a correction to the January minutes noting that Mildred Schmelz did attend. Co-chair Jones moved to approve, Lois Ricci seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously with the one noted change.

**ACA Bylaws**

Lois Ricci, Bylaws Committee Co-chair reviewed the draft bylaws as previously sent to all members. Herman Weil offered an amendment to Article VI Section 1 to insert “(every two months)” after “bi-monthly” to further clarify meeting frequency. Co-chair Jones asked for a motion and second to approve the ACA bylaws as amended, Brandi Hackett offered the motion, Aisha Cooper seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

## **Legislative Update**

John Bayalis provided an update on aging related legislative issues. Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services and Behavioral Health Coaching both had a bump in state funding. There are no direct funding increases expected for ARC, however. HB 112 which provides COVID liability protections was extended. HB 363 revises elder protections that were passed last year. HB 163 provides Medicaid “Express Lane” enrollment and eliminates duplicative steps. HB 752 was introduced too late to advance this session but can go forward in the 2022 session (as the second year of the 2021-2022 two-year session); it provides for psychiatric Advance Directives so that patients can direct mental health care preferences.

HR 130 provides for the realignment of Forsyth County to ARC Regional Commission. If it passes, ARC will have 180 days from July 2021 to complete redistricting with the General Assembly and to hold new Board elections. Regional Commission (RC) and Area Agency on Aging (AAA) boundaries do not have to match, so if Forsyth County desires Aging Services to transfer to ARC, they will have to petition to DHS for AAA boundary change from Legacy Link to ARC. ARC’s position is neutral on this issue.

## **Distributing Aging Services Funds to Grantees and Prioritizing Client Access to Service**

Becky provided details as outlined in the slide presentation of the formula used to distribute funds. Both the distribution of funds and client prioritization are determined by Federal and State guidelines. ARC receives about one-third of the State’s Aging Services grant for the state and federal governments. Most of the funding goes to county-based agencies and a portion also goes to non-profits and specialized service providers.

Wendy Butts provided an overview of how the Home and Community Services team at ARC processes service requests and referrals received by phone or email. Each county maintains their own waitlist for services in demand greater than the supply.

## **Social Isolation and Policy Brief**

Katie Perumbeti shared the recently released Social Isolation and Loneliness Policy Brief which can be found at [direct link here](#) or on [ARC’s Policy Briefs webpage](#). Nearly one in four adults aged 65 and older is considered to be socially isolated. Social isolation and loneliness can lead to serious health problems and increased healthcare costs for both the individual and the community. As many older adults avoided social interactions this past year to keep themselves safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, they are now especially at-risk of social isolation and loneliness.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Next meeting – May 26, 2021 at 1:00pm on Microsoft Teams.

N4a – Aging Policy and Advocacy Summit – April 27-29 virtual

**MEETING ADJOURNED** Co-Chair Jones called for the meeting adjournment at 2:30 pm.