



ARC Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes – Microsoft Teams
May 26, 2021

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Julie Arnold | Lin Chao | |
| Kerry Armstrong | Aysha Cooper | Mildred Schmelz |
| Romona Jackson-Jones | Brandi Hackett | Richard Sylvia Jr. |
| Cynthia Tucker | Darlene Kimes | Wayne Stokes |
| Tammi Brewer | Liane Levetan | Herman Weil |

STAFF

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|-------------|-----------------|
| Doug Hooker | Maria Sotnikova |
| Becky Kurtz | Megan Malasarte |
| Liz Sanford | Kim Yawn |

GUEST

Rosa Marroquin

CALL TO ORDER by Co-Chair Romona Jackson-Jones at 1:02pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD There was no public commentary at this time.

MANAGER’S UPDATE For Older Americans Month, ARC has spotlighted a couple staff members that have demonstrated the theme in the work that they do for older adults. This year’s theme was, Communities of Strength. See [Empowerline](#) blogs to read their stories.

Becky Kurtz does a State Legislative Recap regarding CO-AGE Issues. For the FY22 budget, there will be no increase for AAAs within Home and Community Based Services; but there is a 10% increase for Medicaid HCBS providers. Stimulus funds helped expand community-based services. There were increases in funding for adult protective services and public guardianship. ARC Behavioral Health and Housing received state dollars to expand services towards another region: Albany and Tifton. No expansion in ARC.

Coroner Notification, Disaster Planning Equity and Telehealth for Dentistry were the three legislative CO-AGE Issues. Coroner Notification and Telehealth for Dentistry were both delayed action until 2022. There was success for the Disaster Planning Equity – directs GEMA to prioritize long-term care providers. House Resolution 406 did pass the House. These were some additional issues covered: Hidden cameras (HB 605), Elder Abuse Clean-up Bill which did pass, GA Medicaid express eligibility for children (HB 163) which did pass and helps grandparents raising grandchildren. If you would like more information, visit www.gcoa.org.

ARC is still working remote but actively working on their integration plan back into the office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Co-chair, Cynthia Tucker, requests approval of minutes from March 24, 2021. Liane Levetan makes a motion to approve the minutes. Lois Ricci seconds the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously and the motion carries.

Co-Chair, Romona Jackson-Jones, honors Cynthia Tucker's time as co-chair and her contributions to the committee. Chairman Jones turns it over to Becky Kurtz for additional comments, also thanking Cynthia for her time and service. Cynthia Tucker will move on from co-chair position but will remain on the committee. There were no volunteers to fill in as co-chair, but there will be a follow-up election in July for the role.

BOARD/COMMITTEE PORTAL Liz Sanford goes over the soft launch of the new Advisory Committee on Aging Portal via the ARC website. The portal has access to the Committee meeting to Join/Register. You can look at the Meeting Calendar, Meeting Materials, Committees and Board Members within the portal. This was designed to enhance the experience and provide better access to meeting information. There is a tab to search for each individual board member to view profiles and meeting materials.

REGIONAL SNAPSHOT Maria Sotnikova ARC's Research and Analytics presents on Aging Snapshot: Regional Trends in the Metro Atlanta Older Adult Population. The Atlanta region is relatively young compared to the rest of Georgia, but the proportion of 65+ has been increasing for decades. The 65+ age cohort in the Atlanta region will increase more than all other age cohorts combined, growing by over 200% between 2015 and 2050. The pandemic has disproportionately affected older adults in the Atlanta region. Despite the devastating impacts of COVID-19, older adults in the Atlanta region remain resilient and optimistic about the future.

In the Atlanta region, older adults tend to live in suburban and exurban areas where accessing services can be more challenging due to geography. Questions regarding Aging Snapshot can be sent to msotnikova@atlantaregional.org

COVID-19 UPDATE Becky Kurtz addresses COVID-19 and the challenges it brought this year. ARC's Aging and Independence Services Group quickly shifted their messaging to the public through ways they provided information and how they contacted us. For the general public, a self-search was added to Empowerline. For professionals, Aging and Independence Services Group maintains a robust database called Empowerline Pro.

There has been a significant increase in isolation and loneliness amongst older adults. Senior centers, faith communities and volunteer activities closed temporarily due to the pandemic. There was a decline of in-home services: personal care, homemaker, and in-home respite.

ARC's response to the social isolation challenges included a new service, One2One Telephone Reassurance Program, using trained volunteers. AmeriCorps Seniors shifted their programs to online. ARC expanded its behavioral health coaching service. COVID-19 has exhausted caregivers due to a range of factors. 83% of caregivers have experienced an increase in stress due to COVID-19. As a response, ARC provided assistive technology, expanded care consultation service, launched respite voucher service and CARES Flex program.

In 2020, over a million meals were provided in 2020. There was a 13% increase in clients served. Resources like transportation have shifted, from senior center trips to food delivery. About a third of the COVID-19 deaths occurred in nursing homes which led to an increased reluctance to choose long-term care. ARC counselors have transitioned 91 nursing home residents to community settings.

ARC has received \$8.3 million in federal funds to help support COVID-19 relief services.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Lois Ricci mentioned the aging issues in Tucker and if the committee would like to contribute their solutions to these issues of concerns. Cynthia announced that a memory café is being created in DeKalb County at the Lou Walker Senior Center. ARC Executive Director, Doug Hooker, announces his retirement for next year.

Next meeting – July 28, 2021 at 1:00pm on Microsoft Teams.

MEETING ADJOURNED The motion to adjourn was made at 2:20pm.