Conference Planning Subcommittee Meeting
May 20, 2019

A meeting of the Conference Planning Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Aging & Adults with Physical Disabilities for Sussex County was held on Monday, May 20, 2019, at the Sussex County Administrative Offices West Complex, 22215 North DuPont Boulevard, Georgetown, Delaware. The following Subcommittee members were present:

Will Childers  Barbie McDaniel
Linda Forte  Linda Rogers
Antionette Johnson  Larry Savage
Jamie Magee  Helen Smith

Call to Order

Antionette Johnson, Subcommittee Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

A Motion was made by Jamie Magee, seconded by Helen Smith, to approve the Agenda as posted. Motion Adopted by Voice Vote.

Approval of Minutes

A Motion was made by Barbie McDaniel, seconded by Larry Savage, to approve the minutes of April 15, 2019, as distributed. Motion Adopted by Voice Vote.

Correspondence

Antionette Johnson advised that an email was received from Amber Woodland stating that she is resigning from the Conference Planning Subcommittee.

Critique of 2019 Conference

- Pros
The venue was great. So many attendees remarked that it was such a lovely building and the perfect place to hold a conference.

The conference was well run.

Amber Woodland did a fantastic job as moderator of the morning panel and filling in for the welcoming and closing remarks. She was well organized and kept the presentations moving, allowing more time for questions. The attorneys also appreciated that she gave them a copy of her outline with questions beforehand.

Will Childers and Barbie McDaniel stated that from a vendor's point of view, the conference was very good. Vendors had excellent interaction with attendees, and all vendors could be in the same room. Even though it was a shorter conference than in the past, some vendors said they had a lot of traffic, spoke with a lot of people, and it was one of the best conferences thus far for them.

No one heard any negative comments from anyone about the conference.

Door prizes from the vendors were very nice. There was a good variety and quality of approximately 20 door prizes, making them very special for the winners.

One gentleman asked how often the conference is held and said he will definitely attend the next one. People seemed to really like the conference.

The Advisory Committee’s goal of reaching more of the public and less professionals was definitely reached.

Barbie McDaniel, Will Childers, and Scott Phillips did an excellent job on publicity and getting the word out about the conference. Antionette Johnson, Larry Savage, and Helen Smith also assisted in this effort.

*Linda Rogers added the flier to the Volunteer Delaware 50+ website, Facebook page, and newsletter as well.

Susan Webb in the County Administration Office was such a big help to Antionette Johnson and Helen Smith, who were both new to putting together a conference.

The food was very good.

Cons

Vendor tables seemed very close together, with back-to-back chairs behind the tables. Will Childers and Barbie McDaniel said it was tight but doable, and there were wide walkways for attendees to walk through to visit the vendors.
Food

- It was noted that bananas, children’s rice krispie treats, and another type of children’s bar were offered, along with potato chips (which were not ordered).

- Even though 81 people did not show up, the venue ran out of chicken salad sandwiches.

- There was no salad bar with fruit and nut toppings and cottage cheese as requested, just a small salad with the dressing already applied. Very little was available for vegans or vegetarians.

- Fruit cups were placed with the desserts; however, if someone chose not to get dessert and just wanted fruit instead, there was no way of knowing fruit was available on the back table in the conference room.

Questions, Ideas, Things to Think About for Next Year

- Vendors and Committee members should not participate in door prizes. There should be a separate sheet on which to obtain the vendor stamps that clearly spells this out.

- A separate evaluation form should be used for vendors to see if they have any ideas to improve the conference for the following year.

- Fliers and/or brochures from vendors should not be placed in the folder each participant receives. This doubled the work and time it took the Subcommittee to stuff the folders. These items can be picked up when visiting the vendor tables.

- There should be a separate list of vendors (apart from the program) with more room for stamps, if stamps are used for the next conference.

- Tote bags are nice for people to collect literature and giveaways from the vendors. If the Committee would like to purchase Sussex C.A.R.E.S. tote bags, that decision should be made early and the bags ordered as soon as possible. On the other hand, if Del-One would like to provide them in exchange for a free vendor table at the next conference, the person to contact is Brandy Buzzuto, Business Development for Del-One, in the Dover office. Her number is (302) 739-4496, extension 1494, and her email address is BrandyBuzzuto@del-one.org. Since she is frequently on the road, she can also be reached on her cell phone at (302) 922-0012. Ms. Buzzuto has advised that Del-One would like to be included next year as a vendor, even if they do not provide the tote bags.
A decision needs to be made as to whether everyone will be allowed in, regardless of being registered or not. If so, what is the purpose of registering at all? What happens if there are not enough tables and chairs? Will those who registered somehow receive first preference for lunch? How will this be determined?

* Linda Rogers stated that any questions, ideas, things to think about for next year should be discussed with Todd Lawson, County Administrator, first.

Consideration should be given to going back to an all-day conference, or at least until 2:00 p.m. This year’s conference seemed a little rushed – the afternoon panel could have used more time. The topic should determine the length of the conference.

A deadline needs to be set as to when vendors must have their money in, preferably at least two weeks before the conference, or their spot will be offered to another vendor. Once the conference is over, it is almost impossible to collect a vendor fee if it has not already been paid.

Chip Guy should be contacted early to get publicity out approximately 30 days prior to the end of registration (if registration is required). This year the article ran in the Seaford Star (and probably Laurel Star) only five days before the end of registration.

No more than two people should be seated at a vendor table since there is limited room, and the Advisory Committee should not be providing lunch for three or four people per vendor table.

Since there was a 30 percent no-show rate, the Advisory Committee may want to consider charging a nominal fee of $5.00 per person. This will help invest people in coming, not just signing up and deciding not to come at the last minute. The extra funds could be used toward a hot lunch.

The Advisory Committee may want to consider changing the vendor fee for agencies that are for profit back to $200.00 if the conference is longer. If the conference ends at 1:00 p.m., however, the fee should remain at $100.00.

Promises should not be made to send vendor brochures, programs, etc., to anyone who cannot attend. If someone cannot attend the conference and they would like to have specific information, it can be collected and taken to the next Advisory Committee meeting and picked up there.

The tables are 72 inches round, so 84-inch tablecloths are needed to cover them.

- Miscellaneous
  - Ideas for next year's conference topic
Fraud - especially against seniors

Future of Medicare

Anyone who had responsibility for a specific portion of the conference this year – such as, but not limited to, Scott Phillips - Eventbrite and Publicity, Will Childers - Vendors, and Barbie McDaniel - Marketing – should make note of their process and information on paper. This information can then be compiled into three notebooks for (1) the Chairperson of the Conference Planning Subcommittee, (2) the Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee, and (3) Susan Webb in the County Administration Office. Hopefully, this will prevent a repeat of the situation this year where there was no one with experience to conduct the conference and no written information as to what needed to be done, when, and how.

Will Childers asked if someone could take the bimonthly agendas for the Advisory Committee meetings and turn them into fliers that he can distribute to his network of people, pastors, etc., to get the word out about regularly scheduled meetings.

Linda Forte is storing the extra Del-One bags at Easterseals.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Conference Planning Subcommittee will be held on Monday, July 15, 2019, at 11:30 a.m. at the Sussex County Administrative Offices West Complex, 22215 North DuPont Boulevard, in Georgetown (following the regularly scheduled Advisory Committee meeting).

Adjourn

A Motion was made by Barbie McDaniel, seconded by Helen Smith, to adjourn at 1:00 p.m. Motion Adopted by Voice Vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Helen Smith, Secretary
Advisory Committee on Aging & Adults with Physical Disabilities for Sussex County