Clark County Commission on Aging
1300 Franklin Street, 6th Floor
Vancouver, Washington

MEETING NOTES

Wednesday, June 19, 2019
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chuck Green, Amy Gross, Franklin Johnson, Marjorie Ledell, Meghan McCarthy, Larry Smith, Pam Wheeler

Absent: Linda O'Leary

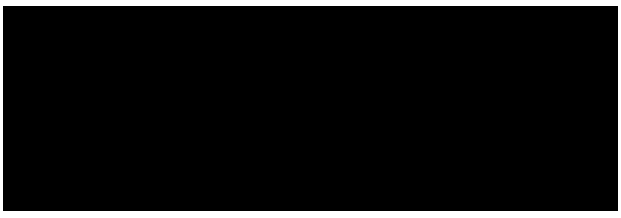
1. **Welcome and call to order**
   Marjorie Ledell opened the meeting. The group approved Marjorie to serve as acting chair for the meeting.

   New member introductions
   Marjorie introduced three new Commission on Aging members: Pam Wheeler, Meghan McCarthy, and Franklin Johnson.

   Approval of agenda
   The agenda was approved.

   Approval of meeting minutes
   The May 15 meeting minutes were approved.

   Aging and Disability Resource Network (ADRN) and Public Health Advisory Council Updates
   Amy Gross provided the following updates:
   - ADRN: Angela Brosius with Vancouver Parks and Recreation gave a presentation about individuals she works with who are old and lively. Chris Goodwin, with Clark County Public Health, presented on an organization called Community Health Access Resource Group (CHARG) which is working on community health and health access in the county.
   - Public Health Advisory Council: Amy continues to talk monthly with David Hudson and discuss what opportunities overlap with COA's work. Most of the advisory council's work is on kids, but more topics involving older adults may be coming because of our relationship.



2. **Presentations: Food Access and Health**
Details on each presentation are available in the CVTV video recording and presentation slides.

Presentation #1: Food Access and Health
Presenter: Melissa Martin, Clark County Public Health

Presentation highlights:

- 21% of adults age 65+ eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- 9,000 adults age 64+ have low access to a grocery store (>1 mile in urban area or >10 miles in rural area)
- Adults age 55+ visited food pantries 81,272 times last year. This number does not include hot meals or food directly delivered to homes.
- In WA, 11% of seniors are identified as food insecure.
- Public health largely focuses on organizational and community approaches to addressing food access and health.
- Recent strategies:
    - Healthy neighborhood restaurants. Asked restaurants to offer reduced sizes, healthy sides, etc. When evaluated, the program was very popular for older adults and helped reduce food waste.
    - Healthy neighborhood stores. The program involved work with convenience stores, primarily along the Fourth Plain.
    - Sodium reduction in the community. This was a three-year initiative on providing culinary assistance to local chefs on how to reduce sodium without reducing flavoring.
    - Nutrition standards/policies in community settings and worksites.
    - Complete streets/active community environments. Relates to food access, ensuring that our planners bring a health lens and equity lens to planning.
    - Coalitions and collaborations. Facilitate or sit on many coalitions and collaborations, often focused on the social determinants of health.
- New and future opportunities
    - Local Strategies for Physical Activity and Nutrition (LSPAN) grant. Interested in Commission on Aging ideas on where to focus energy.

Presentation #2: The Benefits of Clark County's Farmers' Markets
Presenter: Ann Foster, Food Systems Council and Farmers' Markets

Presentation highlights:

- Access to healthy foods: food that is locally grown and locally produced, grown by the vendors themselves, fresh, nutrient-dense fruits and vegetables
- Farmers' markets in Clark County are: Camas, Salmon Creek, Vancouver, East Vancouver, Ridgefield and Esther Short.
- Location, vendors, and sponsorships are all needed for farmers markets. All market managers work closely together and get help from WSU-Extension.
- Farmers' markets offer programs for those needing food assistance:
    - SNAP/EBT benefits can be used at five farmers markets: Vancouver, East Vancouver, Esther Short Park, Salmon Creek and Camas. SNAP tokens can be used to buy certain foods specified by the program including loaves of bread and cereals, fruits and vegetables, meats, fish and poultry, dairy products, seeds and plants which produce food.

    - Farmers' markets offer FreshMatch as well, a program that matches up to $5 of an EBT transaction with an additional $5 for the purchase of fruits and vegetables. This is a USDA program to help increase consumption of fruits and vegetables among SNAP users. When you buy $5 tokens with EBT, you get $5 additional tokens to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. FreshMatch tokens can be used for any whole fresh fruit or vegetable.
    - Market Fresh Tours (exclusive for SNAP/EBT users) will be held at two farmers markets this summer: Vancouver Farmer's Market and Camas Farmer's Market. You can reserve tickets at: https://extension.wsu.edu/clark/healthwellness/market-fresh-tours/.
    - Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) for Seniors is accepted at five markets: Vancouver, East Vancouver, Esther Short Park, Salmon Creek and Camas. The program provides vouchers to seniors 60 and over with an annual income at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. Checks are issued through Clark County Meals on Wheels People in early summer. Checks are $4 each, issued in blocks of ten. Checks can be used to purchase from the farm vendor fresh fruits, vegetables and honey.
- Farmers markets encourage a sense of community, engagement, and an opportunity to be outside.
- Clark County Food System Council. The Clark County Food System Council was formed in 2007 as part of the Steps to a Healthier Clark County initiative. Council members are citizens interested in helping to shape community policies that support a healthy local food system. And who are interested in advocating for the importance of buying and eating locally grown and produced food. Encourages and promotes a food system that is sustainable and healthy for all residents.
    - What is a food system? Production, processing, distribution, access, consumption, and waste management.
    - Goals and activities, 2019: cultivate an informed and engaged community; hosted in partnership with Clark College the 2019 Food Summit at Clark College, February 2019; support food education and community advocacy; support sustainable food production by increasing local farm stability, tax structures, prioritization farmland preservation; and, interest in keeping farm land available for growing food.

Presentation #3: Nutrition Programs for Older Adults
Presenter: Nina Davenport, Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of SW Washington

Presentation highlights:

- Food insecurity in older adults. USDA defines food insecurity as a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food. As of 2017, 7.3% of older adults in the Portland Metro area have food insecurity. This is slightly higher than the WA statewide figure. There are other barriers that may contribute to food insecurity not captured in the USDA definition including: disability, site impairment, cognitive impairment, etc., which could make it difficult to cook meals on one's own.
- Risk factors that increase the likelihood of food insecurity: living 200% below the federal poverty level, race impacts, housing and employment status.
- Senior nutrition programs in Clark County are operated through Meals on Wheels People. Programs include: Congregate Nutrition Services, Home Delivered Nutrition Services, and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These programs work to

reduce food insecurity and work on addressing social isolation (meals are best had with other people).

- Meals on Wheels People completes a nutrition risk assessment to evaluate nutritional risk and connect participants to resources. The assessment includes ten questions related to eating.
- Congregate nutrition program. Eligibility: All people 60+. An older adult can attend with a spouse, unpaid caregiver, or individual residing with them who has a disability, regardless of their age. There is no income eligibility component. There are meal sites in Amboy, Battle Ground, La Center, Vancouver, and Washougal. Sites are welcoming and inclusive. 36,000+ meals were provided in 2018. 29% of people who attended were new participants.
- Home delivered nutrition services. Eligibility: People 60+ who are primarily homebound. The participant's spouse, unpaid caregiver, or individual residing with the them who has a disability, regardless of their age. Meals on Wheels People also assess additional factors when checking in on people at home. The program has been really helpful after a hospital stay or an exacerbated medical condition and is helpful both short- and long-term.
- Menus are developed in partnership with a registered dietician. Meals meet 1/3 of dietary requirements for the day.
- Senior farmers market nutrition program. Eligibility: 60+ (55+ if Native American or Alaskan Native), resident of WA state, at or below 185% Federal Poverty Level. The program provides vouchers as described in Ann Foster's presentation. A lottery system is used to select voucher recipients. Clark County has the highest redemption rate in the state, demonstrating the need here. Vouchers can be used at farm stores in addition to farmers' markets.
- Innovations: The Diner Vancouver is operated by Meals on Wheels People and is a restaurant model. It was developed in response to feedback that senior centers can feel institutional. There are more menu options/choice, additional hours (7am-2pm), and the restaurant is open 7-days a week.
- Opportunities: build awareness of food insecurity, strengthen understanding of nutrition resources, and collaboration among nutrition providers and with other providers.

Presentation #4: The National Diabetes Prevention Program
Presenter: Zena Edwards, WSU-Extension

Presentation highlights:

- Risk of diabetes and prediabetes is increasing in the US. 30.3 million people have diabetes, that's about 1 in every 10 people. 1 out of 4 don't know they have diabetes. 84.1 million adults have prediabetes and 9 out of 10 people with prediabetes don't know they have it.
- Problem: by 2050, diabetes prevalence is projected to increase 2 to 3 fold if current trends continue. 25% of Americans 65 or older have type 2 diabetes, and almost half have pre-diabetes. Health care costs are ~$104 billion annually, and growing. The cost of diabetes per person is 2 to 3 times higher for people 65 years of age or older.
- Diabetes cannot be cured. But prediabetes can be reversed to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. Losing weight through healthy eating and being more active can cut your risk of diabetes in half. It's simple, but not easy.
- Blood glucose tests can be used to assess prediabetes.

- There are also several risk factors that increase your likelihood to have prediabetes. A "do you have prediabetes?" quiz handout was provided.
- The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is an evidence-based intervention program targeted to individuals with pre-diabetes with the primary goal of weight loss and behavior change. Delivered in community and health care settings by Lifestyle Coaches – trained community health workers or health professionals. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) administers the formal recognition process of organizations who would like to participate in the DPP under the Diabetes Prevention Recognition Program (DPRP). It's a year-long program with 16 1-hour sessions for the first 6-months and 6 1-hour sessions the next 6-months.
- The program is now covered by Medicare Part B benefit because it is so cost-effective. To be eligible, a participant must meet the body mass index (BMI) criteria, specific blood test results, and have no previous diagnosis of diabetes (gestational diabetes is allowable) or end-stage renal disease (ESRD).
- Return on investment: diagnosed diabetics incur about $13,700 on average in annual medical expenditures; $7,900 attributed directly to diabetes. Return on investment - year 1: $7,471; year 5: $39,071; year 10: $78,571.
- Based on the American Medical Association return on investment calculator, at https://ama-roi-calculator.appspot.com/, there are more than 36,000 people in Clark County that have prediabetes.
- Supporting prevention: encourage prediabetes screening. Two organizations provide MDPP in Clark County: Lifestyle Medicine Group and PeaceHealth. WSU Extension is CDC recognized and working on MDPP status.
- WSU Extension Clark County has Medicaid Transformation funding to expand DPP coverage to Medicaid patients at SeaMar Community Health Centers and Battle Ground HealthCare. This will strengthen screening and referral for DPP and increase capacity by providing Lifestyle Coach Training.

Q&A and Comments from Commission on Aging:

- **Larry**: can you speak about expiration dates on packaged foods and ways to stretch out timelines to address food waste? **Zena**: trying to reduce food waste is driving awareness with auxiliary benefits, i.e. stretching dollars and safety. US isn't consistent with food dates and there is need for more standardization. It is a policy issue and there is an educational opportunity around quality vs. safety.
- **Meghan**: is there a waitlist for home delivery Meals on Wheels programs? **Nina**: there is no waitlist right now for the congregate or home-delivered programs. The farmers' market program has more interest than vouchers. If you are interested in a voucher, you have an 85% chance that you will receive a voucher. If someone doesn't use the voucher, we have a waiting list to pull from. We have also seen an increase in vouchers allotted each year. **Meghan**: do you know much funding is needed to address the waitlist? **Nina**: I don't know number off the top of head.
- **Amy**: are specialized meals available at the congregate meals? **Nina**: yes, for more common diets like diabetic meals, we can make some swaps. The only restriction is that all meals need to meet the nutritional standards.
- **Amy**: what makes a good vendor a good vendor? **Ann**: it's a complex answer; each market is astutely aware of the product mix being offered towards its targeted customer. I'll speak for the Salmon Creek Farmers' Market, located by the entrance to Legacy Hospital, on Tuesdays. Our target customer is 60% employees of hospital and clinics in the area, 40% is general public. Out of the public, at least half are seniors. I pick vendors that will have the best product and do the best job to serve that target

customer. Our market is very focused on food and farm food in particular. All vendors are local to SW WA. Food vendors have priority over artisans and prepared food. The better vendors are those with a diversity of product and fresh grown options that will be affordable to the public. So, the good vendors are a function of their product. Personal characteristics help sell product. **Amy**: do vendors set their own prices? **Ann**: yes, they set their own prices. **Amy**: what's a farm stand? **Ann**: farm stands are permitted businesses on residential property where the person on the property is selling the product. **Amy**: how does a farm get approved? Ann: through the state, department of health.

- **Chuck**: recalled the growing healthier report. It included a statistic about the distance to fast food establishments vs. healthy food options. I used to be involved in the Healthy Neighborhood Initiative, related to my work with The Vine, along the Fourth Plain corridor. I notice while the ability to walk or take transit on Fourth Plain to a healthy food establishment is better, not as much has been made along Highway 99, Mill Plain, or other corridors. Are there plans/is that on the radar screen for better access? **Melissa**: yes, we have staff involved with planners throughout county. We are looking countywide and working with various jurisdictions. The planning community is acutely aware of this, though there are resource and capacity issues. **Chuck**: several of the farmers' markets are not accessible by transit, i.e. out by Ridgefield and Battle Ground. Is there any work underway with the Human Services Council (HSC) or C-Tran to encourage transit or alternative mode to get to a farmers' market? **Ann**: no, we haven't gone there yet. It's a huge problem that has been overlooked for a long time. We talked about an incentive program for senior living facilities that have vehicles to stop at a farmers' market and we discussed what we could do to incentivize the organization to have farmers' markets included on the route. **Nina**: I also coordinate the AAADSW senior transportation program and am part of the Accessible Transportation Coalition. HSC is working on vans/shuttles to be able to do more shuttling. At the most recent meeting, I mentioned the farmers' market transportation issue and there is interest in getting help from HSC. **Melissa**: that's the type of problem and solutions we are looking at social determinants of health and going more upstream with our work. I also think we can get Meghan a number on the dollar amount for the seniors farmers market.
- **Pam**: You talked about 21% of adults only eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables per day and 9,000 people have low access to groceries. We just discussed transportation. Is cost also an issue? **Melissa**: cost is a barrier with food security. There is good collaboration in our community, but it's a matter of resources, cost, transportation, and other barriers. Mental health and isolation can be significant barriers too.
- **Franklin**: given we have had some issues with vegetables and fruits being contaminated, are there any limitations on pesticides used by vendors at farmers' markets or advisements on washing fruits and vegetables once purchased? **Ann**: none of the farmers' markets require organic certification. We do all work at making sure produce vendors grow sustainably, which minimizes pesticide use but doesn't eliminate it entirely. I see customers asking growers directly if they use pesticides. Most market managers do get around to the farms. So, we can double-check practices. Produce is not required to be washed before being sold at farmers market, but I know that it's part of the habits of the better vendors. **Franklin**: any instructions for washing produce? **Zena**: we could do a better job and we know the older population is at higher risk for food-borne illnesses. Regarding produce, we recommend washing fruits and vegetables, but nothing special. Leafy greens have a higher risk for contamination than other vegetables. For melons, wash and refrigerate once cut. The food safety

Monitorization Act is for produce growers to go through an on-farm food safety program. We need good practices at the farm and once purchased.

Update from State Representative Monica Stonier's Office:
Sarah Kohout, Legislative Assistant to State Representative Monica Stonier, shared that there is a coalition of legislators in Olympia from around the state working on food-related issues. They have primarily focused on kid-related issues. However, they were recently approached by constituents to address nursing facility food interests, and will begin work on that topic.

Q&A and Comments from Public:
None

Debrief: What have we heard? Potential recommendations? Request(s) for more information?

- **Marjorie**: checklist for diabetes, could we include that in our annual report?
- **Chuck**: I would like us to note transportation access to healthy food supply, the HSC van initiative, and working that system out for those with mobility challenges.
- **Chuck**: I would also like to raise the topic of community gardens and having land available for people to grow their own food. Land is disappearing quickly, such as on Fourth Plain. There's one area that was recently lost to development. Maybe we can work through how that fits into the healthy communities topic; how to have access and preserve community garden land.
    - **Christina Marneris with AAADSW**: The Vancouver Housing Authority just completed a project with community gardens as part of it. It not only increased access to fresh produce, but also provided opportunity for social engagement, shared food with community members, etc. I love that idea and being able to broaden that where we have a cluster of older adults.

3. **Public Comment**
   No additional comments.

4. **New Business, Updates and Announcements:**
   - The next Commission on Aging meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 21, 2019 and the presentation will be on health and wellness.
   - On June 26 at 7pm at the Old Liberty Theater in Ridgefield, Meaningful Movies will be screening *Coming of Age in Aging America.*

5. **Adjournment**
   The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

The Clark County Commission on Aging provides leadership and creates community engagement in addressing the needs and opportunities of aging.