



Report to the Commissioners
Area IX Agency on Aging, Flathead County
June 17, 2013
Prepared by Lisa Sheppard, Director

Story: Customer Satisfaction – Good Outcomes through Good Service

Courteous Drivers and Dispatchers Make the Flathead Better than California!

from Susan D. Thomas, 6/11/2013

“I moved here nine months ago from San Diego, California. I use city transit and Dial-A-Ride quite often, it certainly is a lot different from California. The city bus drivers are so courteous, that’s where I first met Alan and now ride a lot with Ernie, he is very nice. I use Dial-A Ride a lot. It was \$4.95 one way in California no matter what your age. Alan, Kristina and others are very nice and courteous setting up my appointments. I enjoy dealing with them. The Dial-A-Ride drivers Jeff, Dale, “Mr. Pickles,” Samson and Jim are excellent drivers. They make you feel safe... Eagle Transit is an excellent operation and I am so glad that it is available to me. Thank you.”

RSVP Cribbage Program –Intergenerational Program Build Skills and Relationships

from 4th Grade Teacher Kim Lister, Peterson Elementary, 5/21/2013

“I am a teacher at Petersen Elementary and wanted to thank you for this amazing program. My fourth graders looked forward to the weekly Cribbage game as much as any field trip. I really appreciated the time spent investing in our kids, teaching them a life-long game as well as honing in on several math skills. Many of my students don’t have grandparents in their lives and spending time with senior citizens that cared about them was an important aspect of the program. Thank you for organizing this and thank you to the many that made the time to make it happen.”

AOA Administration

Budget

- FY 2013:
 - Admin staff worked closely with DPHHS staff to complete the revised FY 2013 state contract to reflect federal sequestration cuts and other needed budget changes.
 - Higher than anticipated fuel and technology costs required adjustments to the transportation portion of the budget
 - We requested adjustments to the county budget to align with the final revised DPHHS contract and allow for higher than anticipated transportation costs. County Commissioners approved the changes on 6/13/13.
- FY 2014:
 - **DPHHS contract:** Admin staff are in the process of completing the FY 2014 DPHHS contract budget for submission to the state for review this week. As noted in last month’s report, initial FY 2014 estimates from DPHHS include the next round of federal funding cuts due to sequestration. We recently received word that we will receive a small additional cut, but we do not have actual numbers yet. However, these cuts will in large part be offset by new state funding that includes additional money for aging services. Because the allocations are based on population increases

recorded in the 2010 census, Flathead County will receive a net increase. The increase was initially estimated at \$27,725, but we expect this will be reduced.

- **Technology:**
 - IT recently reviewed AOA's computer needs as part of an overall effort to help us upgrade hardware and software to bring us in line with the rest of the County. We have identified several computers that we can retire in the near term without replacing. However, we also need to replace all but a few of the remaining computers with new ones that will have upgraded operating systems and other software that can be supported. We anticipate that most of them can be purchased through programs that have a substantial fund balance. We will be asking for modification to the FY 2014 budget to allow for these purchases.
 - Other increased IT costs in FY 2014 include internet usage charges for Eagle Transit due to use of the RouteMatch software (paid to IT) and the annual software support contract for Routematch (paid to Routematch). We will also ask to adjust the FY 2014 budget to allow for these costs
- **Fuel Costs:** The FY 2014 budget recently reviewed by the Commissioners did not include the increased fuel costs and so should be adjusted accordingly.
- **Note:** The increases in fuel and technology costs for Eagle Transit will be managed by reducing personnel costs (currently 2 vacant driver positions) and modifying service routes as necessary.

Legislative Issues

- **Community First Choice**
 - Lisa was appointed by Governor Bullock to the Community First Choice (CFC) Development and Implementation Council and participated in the first meeting on 6/13/13 in Helena. Representation of aging services is critical as the aging population has concerns and issues that are distinctive from and in addition to disability-related functional needs. Existing AOA services complement CFC service in two ways:
 - 1) AOA provides in-home services to individuals whose incomes are too high for them to qualify for Medicaid and/or who may not yet meet the level of care criteria for nursing home or other institutional care (required to receive CFC services) but who need help to maintain their independence, and
 - 2) AOA provides some services (like Meals on Wheels and I&R) in conjunction with and in some instances paid for by Medicaid home and community-based services. There may be other opportunities for AOA to provide Medicaid-paid services as CFC unfolds.
 - The Affordable Health Care Act established CFC as part of a package of federal initiatives intended to reduce expensive institutional care by encouraging states to provide more cost-effective home and community-based services.
 - To support states to "re-balance" their service systems, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will fund CFC services at an enhanced 6% federal match (that does not phase out). For Montana, that means the federal government will cover 72% of the cost of the program (as opposed to the current matching rate of 66%).
 - Montana already offers Personal Care Services (PCS) as part of its Medicaid State Plan and so will use that service as the platform upon which to build the more comprehensive service array for CFC. Eligibility will be expanded to include those who meets the level of care criteria for any institutional setting.
 - Montana is one of just a handful of states that are in the process of amending their state plans to include CFC. California is the only state that already has a functioning program.

M4A

- The next M4A conference call will be on 6/20/13. The next quarterly meeting will be held in Havre the last week of August.

- As mentioned in last month's report, we've been approved to host the 2014 Governor's Conference on Aging. The conference provides two days of education on aging issues, offers the opportunity for stakeholders to network and share innovative ideas and supports the local economy. The dates have been set for May 6th and 7th at the Red Lion Hotel. We are already starting to work on the content.

Building

- New building: The Commissioners agreed to the addition of a new building for AOA in the Capital Improvement Plan at a cost of \$2 million.
- Kelly Road: The approved changes are complete. Staff have moved into the new office space up front, and the floors in the kitchen and dining area have been resealed. **Thanks again to IT and Maintenance for all their help!**

Advisory Council

- The AOA Advisory Council and Finance Committee meetings were not held this month due to a scheduling conflict with Lisa's CFC meeting on 6/13/13. Members agreed to substitute participation in the Older Americans Picnic on 6/21/13 for the official meeting.

Strategic Planning

- Focus groups continue to be in the process of being transcribed by an AOA Council member. Once the transcriptions and analysis are completed they will inform the strategic plan and the next Area Plan.

Research and Program Evaluation

- We volunteered to help facilitate a study by the U.S. Administration on Community Living on the effectiveness of different approaches to service provision to inform better delivery of long-term services and supports (LTSS) and are now screening clients for eligibility and interest in participating.
- We've been randomly selected to participate in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Eighth National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants in coordination with the Montana DPHHS and are now in the process of helping the state finalize the list of clients to be surveyed.

Outreach/Education/Media - Increased outreach is a goal in our Area Plan on Aging (Oct. 2011- Sept. 2015)

- On 6/4/13 AOA staff met with Ryan Murray, the new Senior Reporter at the Daily Interlake, to discuss education, outreach and human interest stories related to AOA.
- Insty-Prints donated free posters to advertise the Older Americans Picnic and these were placed in senior housing complexes and public places countywide. Thank you Insty-Prints!
- The Daily Interlake plans to cover the Older Americans Picnic.
- Transportation Manager Dave Polansky is scheduled to attend the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce meeting on 6/26/13 to discuss opportunities for public and private transportation collaboration.
- Lisa Sheppard gives weekly brief presentations about AOA events and services every Wednesday morning at BNI.
- Software for AOA that will allow us to post statistics, reports, menus, I&R info, newsletters and other items on the AOA page on the county website has arrived. We are in the process of scheduling with IT to train staff on its use.

Eagle Transit

- May 2013 ridership was 8,353 compared with 7,827 in May 2012. FY13 ridership to date is 86,930 up 2% from last year's total at this time of 85,167. Annual target is 78,750 or approximately 6,562 rides per month. The average for this fiscal year through May 2013 is 7,902 rides per month. We are on track to total more than 90,000 rides this fiscal year.

- LSC Transportation Consultants continue to work on the new Five Year Transit Development Plan. They completed the assessment of current demographics and services, have met with multiple stakeholder groups and plan to present the draft of the final report to the Transportation Advisory Board in July.
- On May 23, 2013 Eagle Transit underwent a surprise inspection from the Department of Transportation. DOT commended staff on their care of the fleet.
- The Eagle Transit Advisory Board met on 6/6/13. Topics of discussion included an update on the status of the Five Year Transit Development Plan, GNP service and contract, and pursuit of a grant for bus cameras.
- Activation of the Routematch automated call system is imminent. Rides can request automated confirmation of their pick-up times be made via email, text, phone message or by a live person.
- Training for Glacier Park drivers starts today.
- A bus accident occurred on 6/3/13. No passengers were injured but it did result in damage to the bus.

Nutrition

- Total meals served in May were 6,928. Congregate meals totaled 3,480 and home delivered meals totaled 3,448. There were 31 new home-delivered customers for a yearly total of 331 and 32 new congregate customers for a yearly total of 991. Total meals served this fiscal year as of 5/31/13 were 70,338. Average meals served per month to date is 6,394, which is slightly over the FY 2012 average of 6,370 meals per month. Our target for FY 2013 is 77,250 (monthly average 6,437).
- The “Bring a Friend” initiative continues in partnership with Senior Centers to encourage congregate dining.
- Nutrition staff met with Maintenance staff to discuss replacing kitchen mats for ease of cleaning and maintaining new painted surface. New mats were purchased as recommended.
- The Older Americans Picnic is scheduled for Friday June 21, 2013 at the Expo Building at the Fairgrounds. The doors open at 10:45 a.m. Food will be served from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m. RSVP members and 4H participants will volunteers for a variety of tasks, including set up, dessert preparation, decorating, sign-in tables, serving and clean up. We’d love to have Commissioners join us. **Thanks to Flathead Electric for their donation to the picnic!**

I & R/Assistance

- May 2013 Independent Living statistics include:
 - 235 hours of homemaker services (3,074 through 5/31/13, an average of 279 per month); our annual target is 3,675 or an average of 306 hours per month
 - 13 new clients in May; total number through 5/31/13: 162
 - 143 hours of escort/errand services (1,701 through 5/31/13, an average of 155 per month); there is no workload indicator for this service in the FY 2013 budget
 - 7 new clients in May; total number of escort/errand clients through 5/31/13: 67
 - 254 hours of respite (2,560 through 5/31/13, an average of 233 per month); our annual target is 3,500, which averages 292 hours per month.
 - 1 new client in May; total number of respite clients through 5/31/13: 68
 - All who were on the IL waiting lists are now receiving services
- May I&R statistics:
 - 12 clients provided legal assistance
 - 1,277 I&R contacts
 - 32 telephone reassurance calls
 - 161 hours of SHIP counseling
 - 207 home visits to at risk clients
- 20 Ombudsman visits to nursing homes and assisted living facilities
- AOA Program Manager Susan Kunda is also the only Ombudsman for all of Flathead County. We had anticipated that the state would have additional funding for AOA for another Ombudsman. However, we recently learned those funds will not materialize. We plan to request shortly to replace a now vacant OAIL position with an Ombudsman position.

- IT is working with AOA staff to replace an outdated database and we are looking forward to the much-needed new system. **Thanks again to IT!**

RSVP

- The RSVP Advisory Board met on 5/30/13.
- Grant update:
 - Program and federal financial reports were completed for last year's grant
 - Financial reports completed for first quarter of new grant cycle
 - Compliance monitoring visit scheduled for July
 - Sue participated in a series of new Director training teleconferences
- May Statistics:
 - 499 active volunteers
 - 2 new volunteers enrolled and placed
 - 215 volunteers served 5,902 hours (x \$10.58 = \$62,443)
 - 82 workstations
 - Volunteer opportunities are emailed bi-weekly
 - RSVP volunteers participated in the Veterans Stand Down on 5/11/13
 - RSVP facilitated the distribution of donated bedding from the Red Lion Hotel to area nonprofits
- Plans are underway for:
 - The Older Americans Picnic this week
 - The NWMT Fair in August
 - The annual Volunteer Recognition banquet in September.

Senior Mobile Home Repair

- The Advisory meeting was held 6/11/13.
- Two projects were completed; six are in progress.
- Funding:
 - \$200 received from Kalispell Rotary
 - \$500 pledged from Kalispell Soroptimists
 - \$5000 pledged from the Washington Foundation
 - Awaiting word on \$3,500 from BNSF and \$2000 from Plum Creek
- Discussed plan to showcase program at 2014 Governor's Conference.

Senior Centers - A primary AOA focus is outreach to area Senior Centers to build relationships, extend support, and explore new opportunities for partnership.

- Eagle Transit is providing transportation from the Whitefish Community Center to the Older Americans Picnic.
- RSVP and the Kalispell Senior Center are planning a collaborative gift-wrapping fundraiser.
- AOA admin staff will be meeting before the end of the month with Senior Center representatives to review changes to the FY 2013 budget and plans for FY 2014 budget related to payments to Centers.