

**Meeting of the Board of Directors of
Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging (M4A)
June 28, 2023
Shelby County 280 Building Birmingham, AL**

The M4A Board of Directors met for regular business on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, at the Shelby County 280 Building, located at 19220 US-280 Birmingham, AL 35242. Board members who were unable to attend in person were able to participate virtually using Zoom. Board members in attendance: Ms. Vicki Letlow (Board Vice-Chair), Ms. Bonnie Montey, Ms. Pam Boykin, Ms. Senta Goldman (Board Secretary), Ms. Emma Barclay, and Ms. Lee Ann Clark. M4A staff members in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Fortner (Executive Director), Ms. Maranda Johnson (Assistance Director), Ms. Crystal Crim (Director of Operations and Strategy), Ms. Cayla Jones (Director of Finance), and Ms. Lisa Adams (Director of Human Resource. Board Members in attendance via Zoom were Ms. Gay West and Ms. Katrina Hennings. Proxy for Ms. Amy Burgess was held by Ms. Bonnie Montey.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Vicki Letlow at 10:03 am. Ms. Letlow thanked everyone for being in attendance and stated there was a quorum. Ms. Letlow offered prayer. Then, she shared that Commissioner Jean Brown with the Alabama Department of Senior Services would be attending today's board meeting as a special guest.

- A. **Approval of Agenda:** Ms. Letlow asked for motion to accept the agenda as outlined. A motion was made by Ms. Bonnie Montey and seconded by Ms. Emma Barclay. All were in favor. The agenda was approved.
- B. **Approval of Minutes:** Ms. Letlow asked for motion to approve the previous Board minutes for March 29, 2023. A motion was made by Ms. Senta Goldman and seconded by Ms. Emma Barclay. All were in favor. The minutes were approved.
- C. **Executive Director's Report (Mrs. Carolyn Fortner-handouts)**
 - a. **Special Guest:** Ms. Fortner shared with the Board that Commissioner Jean Brown with the Alabama Department of Senior Services (ADSS) will be attending today's Board meeting to discuss the contract between ADSS and TRIO Community Meals (new food service vendor).
 - b. **Nutrition Update:** Ms. Fortner updated the Board on the new food service vendor, TRIO. She shared that this is a new contract that begins in July, taking over the contract from GA Foods. Ms. Maranda Johnson shared her thoughts on the recent meeting between the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and TRIO, noting that it was a good meeting where they were able to test the new food. Ms. Fortner provided Board members with the new meal prices from TRIO noting that some meal prices had increased. She also provided the Board members with an analysis of how the meal price changes may affect M4A's nutrition budget. She also shared a handout of the locations of TRIO's kitchens, especially those that would serve the M4A region.
 - c. **ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA) and Office Building Update:** Although ARPA II funds have been allocated to help Alabama populations most

impacted by COVID-19, Ms. Fortner reported that Alabama senior citizens were only one population outlined in HB-1 that would benefit from ARPA II funds. The funds, additionally, cannot be used for building or office space.

- d. Meeting with River Bank & Trust (RB&T): Ms. Fortner shared that M4A's Administrative and Finance teams recently met with RB&T to discuss the possibility of M4A moving its financial accounts from Bryant Bank to RB&T. Ms. Cayla Jones shared details of the meeting between M4A and RB&T: the services were the same such as remote deposit, online banking, and positive pay. However, RB&T offers a significantly higher interest rate on money market accounts than Bryant Bank. Ms. Fortner requested approval from the Board to move M4A's financial accounts from Bryant Bank to RB&T.
- e. Initiatives and Events:
 - i. LIFT Project with the Holle Family Foundation and Cawaco Resource, Conservation and Development Council: Ms. Fortner shared that M4A recently received \$5k to assist individuals with critical needs in the M4A region. She reported that the Holle Family Foundation has pledged an additional \$5k for 2024. Currently, M4A has helped 51 individuals with critical needs such as utility bills, supplies, food, and medical needs.
 - ii. Senior Resource Directory: Ms. Fortner shared that M4A is looking at publishing a Senior Resource Directory, which two other Area Agencies on Aging currently publish every two years. She would like for this project, through paid advertisements, to raise money for the Kimberly Payne Memorial Critical Needs Fund, a fund which M4A uses to help people who have critical or emergency needs that cannot readily be met with current M4A services and projects (transportation, temporary housing, medical copays, medications, supplies, food, utilities, home repairs).
 - iii. Older Americans Month Picnics: M4A co-hosted picnics in each of its counties in May. M4A's theme was "Join Us Under the Big Top." Several hundred people turned out for the picnics which were a mix of games, vendors, door prizes, food and entertainment.
 - iv. Bombas Socks: Ms. Fortner explained to the Board members what Bombas is and that Bombas had donated 3,000 pairs of socks to M4A to distribute to people in need. Many socks were distributed at the Older Americans Month picnics. Next year, Bombas will, again, donate socks to M4A to distribute to people in need or to donate to agencies that serve people in need. In addition, Bombas, next year, hopes to be able to donate tee-shirts or other clothing to their community partners like M4A.
 - v. The Elder Justice Center (EJC): Ms. Fortner reported that the EJC is doing well. However, due to mold, the Adult Day Center (ADC) is temporarily closed for remediation.
 - vi. Other Outreach: Ms. Fortner updated the Board on other initiatives from M4A, namely the M4A Newsletter. Ms. Fortner encouraged all Board Members to add their email addresses to the contact list so they could receive the newsletter.

- f. Alabama Select Network (ASN) Contract for Medicaid Waiver Case Management: Ms. Fortner shared that M4A has submitted its Letter of Commitment in support of Alabama Select Network (ASN); she will keep the Board updated.
- g. Advisory Council Update: Ms. Fortner discussed M4A's needs for its Advisory Council. She asked Board Members to email her the names of any individuals in their communities that may be interested in serving.
- h. FY24 County Funding Requests: Ms. Fortner shared that all County Funds Requests have been sent out. All counties were asked for level funding except St. Clair County where M4A requested an increase of \$2.5k from the St. Clair County Commission for senior center transportation services.

D. Administrative Updates (Mrs. Crystal Crim-handouts):

- a. Conflicts of Interest and Evaluation Forms: Ms. Crim reviewed the required forms and requested Board Members return them completed as soon as possible.
- b. In-Kind Forms: Ms. Crim reviewed the in-kind form and its need. She asked all members to return their form as soon as possible, if applicable.
- c. Changes to M4A's Employee Handbook: Ms. Crim reviewed the following updates to the employee manual-
 - i. Telework/Hybrid Schedules: M4A has been approved to offer such schedules. We are adding the policy to the manual for staff.
 - ii. Relationships upon Separation: Due to recent terminations and departures, M4A consulted with the Dunson Group (HIPAA Contractor) on creating a policy that prohibits former employees from contacting clients, their caregivers, vendors, or direct service providers.
 - iii. Solicitation: M4A consulted with the Dunson Group (HIPAA Contractor) on creating a policy that prohibits employees from soliciting services, goods, monies, or employment recruitment from vendors, contractors, direct service providers, partners, supplemental providers, etc. We placed examples in the employee manual as well.
 - iv. Workers' Compensation: M4A used language from the City of Alabaster to clarify its Workers' Compensation policy. Due to changes at HWCF (Healthcare Workers' Compensation Self-Insurance Fund), which is M4A's workers compensation carrier, agencies like M4A are being encouraged to incorporate drug and alcohol testing into its post-incident process.

E. Financial Report (Mrs. Cayla Jones-handouts):

- a. Quarter 2 Report: Ms. Jones discussed the financial position of each program through the end of Second Quarter. She reported that she did not see areas of major concern and shared that most programs were on target with spending.
- b. Medicaid Waiver Savings Update: Ms. Jones shared how much we have been able to save in our money market account so far with our Medicaid Waiver profit. She noted that these funds are unrestricted and are at the agency's discretion.

- c. Comparison of costs (Bryant Bank versus River Bank & Trust): Ms. Jones requested that the Board consider moving M4A's accounts to a new bank (RB&T). She reported that RB&T transfer will offer 4% interest rate for M4A's MM account. This is more than a 3% increase from our current bank, Bryant Bank. There will be no additional charges to swap banks, as the costs/fees are all comparable with what we currently have. M4A will see a much larger annual return with the increase in interest rates.
- F. Program Report: (Maranda Johnson-handout):**
- a. Quarter 2 Programs Update: Ms. Johnson shared that the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) has seen an increase in calls over the last quarter. The call increase has also affected the number of requests for our Critical Needs Fund, which assists with prescription costs, utility assistance, and incontinence supplies. She also shared that all the picnics were a success with over 1,200 seniors in attendance across the 5 counties. Medicaid Waiver Services (MWS) continues to grow and has added 122 slots in the first three quarters. M4A has completed our first successful Veteran-Directed Care transition. Hospital to Home (H2H) has facilitated 10 transitions.
 - b. TRIO (Meeting and Training): Ms. Johnson reported that M4A attended the TRIO meeting to meet the staff of the new meal contractor. The meeting was encouraging, and the team seemed to be very organized and excited to get started.
- G. Old Business:** None
- H. New Business:** Ms. Letlow asked for motion and vote on the following items.
- a. Approval of Executive Director's Report, Finance Director's Report, Director of Operations' Report, and Assistant Director's Report: A motion was made by Ms. Boykin to approve the reports as shared. This motion was seconded by Ms. Clark. All were in favor. No one opposed. The reports were approved.
 - b. Approval to move M4A financial accounts from Bryant Bank to River Bank & Trust: A motion was made by Ms. Montey to move M4A's accounts from Bryant Bank to River Bank & Trust. This motion was seconded by Ms. Barclay. All were in favor. No one opposed. The reports were approved.
 - c. Approval of Changes to the M4A Employee Manual: Telework and hybrid schedule post-PHE: A motion was made by Ms. Goldman to approve the changes to the Employee Manual as presented. This motion was seconded by Ms. Barclay. All were in favor. No one opposed. The reports were approved.
- I. Motion to Adjourn:** Ms. Letlow requested a motion to adjourn the Board Meeting. Ms. Goldman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Ms. Clark. All were in favor. No one opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10am.

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, September 27, 2023 (St. Clair County)

Kristi Letlow
Sept. 27, 2023