

*Amended MINUTES*  
**New Hampshire State Commission on Aging**  
**Organizational Meeting**  
**Monday, September 16, 2019**  
**10:00 a.m.-noon**  
**Legislative Office Building 205, Concord, NH**

**Present:** Rep. Polly Campion; Rep. James MacKay; Richard Lavers, DES; Wendi Aultman, DHHS; Patrick Herlihy, DOT; Susan Buxton, Long-Term Care Ombudsman; Perry Plummer, DOS; Sunny Mulligan Shea, DOJ; Lynn Lippitt, NH Housing Finance Authority; Appointed by the Governor: Rep. Harry Viens, Kenneth Berlin, Kathy Baldrige, Pamela Jolivette, Mark Frank, Carol Stamatakis, Susan Ruka, Roberta Berner, Susan Abrami, Kristi St. Laurent, Daniel Marcek, and Susan Nolan. Guests: Charlie Arlinghaus, Commissioner of Administrative Services, and Mary Ann Rechy, Classification & Compensation Administrator, NH Division of Personnel; 27 members of the public.

**Absent:** Sen. Ruth Ward, Susan Emerson, John Kennedy.

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Rep. Polly Campion, prime sponsor of the legislation that created the Commission, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She briefly discussed the challenges and opportunities that New Hampshire faces as the second oldest state in the nation. She recognized the long-standing State Committee on Aging. Its members have now transitioned to the Commission as gubernatorial appointees. The new Commission will build on and expand the work of the previous Committee, addressing issues beyond just the scope of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Rep. Campion asked Ken Berlin to lead the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance. Following the Pledge, each member introduced herself or himself by name and role within the Commission. The list of members was circulated so that entries could be corrected if necessary.

**II. Election of Officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Clerk)**

Ken Berlin made a motion to nominate Rep. Campion as Chair of the Commission; Rep. MacKay seconded the motion; with no discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

Kathy Baldrige made a motion to nominate Ken Berlin as Vice Chair of the Commission; Rep. Campion seconded the motion and noted that the Commission would not have come into being without his leadership and support; with no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

Pam Jolivette made a motion to nominate Roberta Berner as Clerk of the Commission; Patrick Herlihy seconded the motion; with no discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

### **III. Review Charge to Commission (HB 621)**

RSA 19-P:1 was attached to the meeting agenda and membership list. The RSA includes the Commission's Charge. Rep. Campion summarized the key points:

- The Commission is charged to recognize issues and opportunities relative to older adults and healthy aging in New Hampshire.
- The Commission will recommend solutions to improve the status of older adults in the state via Rules, Legislation, Waivers, addressing fiscal and other impacts.
- The Commission will follow-up on recommendations of various State Plans that address issues regarding the older adult population. Those will include the State Plan on Aging, the Mental Health Plan, Transportation and Safety Plans.
- The Commission will work in a coordinated and inter-departmental manner to meet its charge.

The RSA also addresses the issue of quorum. Ken Berlin asked if there was an option to dial in to meetings. Rep. Campion replied that members could dial in, but would not be counted as part of the quorum and would not be able to vote.

There is no stated "sunset" date for the Commission; it is intended to be ongoing. An Annual Report is due by November 1 each year (including 2019) to the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President of the Senate, and others as noted in the RSA.

Online information is available through the General Court Committee Details Information Page and the State Commission on Aging Webpage. Mark Frank asked if issues of concern could be addressed publicly on the webpage. Rep. Campion replied that the Commission will need to establish procedures to assure that issues are addressed in the right format.

### **IV. Identify process of hiring an Executive Director**

Among the charges to the Commission are selecting and hiring an executive director by a majority vote of the members. Commissioner of Administrative Services Charlie Arlinghaus and Classification & Compensation Administrator Mary Ann Rechy addressed the Commission regarding the process.

The State Commission on Aging is considered a separate state agency at this point, but Commissioner Arlinghaus recommended that legislation go forward next year to position the Commission with an existing agency. The Commission on Aging is the hiring manager, and Commissioner Arlinghaus suggested that the Commission appoint a subcommittee to go through the hiring process and present its recommendation to the full Commission.

The first step is to write a job description, with the assistance of Ms. Rechy. She will assist with the classification process and will review other state Executive Director position descriptions for comparability.

Patrick Herlihy asked about the time frame for hiring. Commissioner Arlinghaus said that the process could be expedited with the job description based on a template created from other comparable job descriptions. Once it is finalized, the job can be posted internally and externally and the application process can begin.

Ken Berlin made a motion, seconded by Rep. Champion, that a subcommittee screen and recommend a candidate to the Commission for vote and approval. In discussion, Patrick Herlihy reminded the group that these deliberations must be held in executive session. The motion was approved unanimously.

Rep. MacKay asked about budget for staffing. Commissioner Arlinghaus said that funding for the position, by statute, comes from monies in the state treasury not otherwise appropriated. The budget also includes funds to cover office expenses, including space rental. Administrative Services also will work on space options with the Commission. A subcommittee will work on identifying space for the Commission.

Agreeing to serve on the hiring subcommittee are Patrick Herlihy, Ken Berlin, Pam Jolivet, and Rep. MacKay. The subcommittee will work directly with Ms. Rechy. Rep. Champion, as Commission Chair, is an ex-officio member of subcommittees.

Agreeing to serve on the space subcommittee are Perry Plummer and Wendi Aultman, again with Rep. Champion as an ex-officio member.

Commissioner Arlinghaus will attend the October meeting as updates are presented regarding progress toward hiring an Executive Director and securing space.

**V. Roundtable discussion: Describe agency work that affects older adults (members from State Agencies) and identify hopes for the Commission.**

Each member was asked to contribute. Among the comments were the following:

- It is a big step forward to have the Commission because aging issues should not just be the concern of DHHS. We need to have a vision regarding the quality of life for New Hampshire's older adults and work toward making that vision a reality. This gives us the opportunity to hold a holistic view of aging—with both challenges and opportunities.
- (From Richard Lavers, DES): The Department of Employment Security is concerned about workforce issues. DES is seeing growth in the older labor force, particularly among those older workers who are seeking a sense of

purpose from their work. DES has cosponsored mature worker job fairs with AARP-NH.

- The Commission needs to address issues around housing adequacy, particularly for low-income older adults. What are the options? How could we address some of the restrictions that limit the ability of older adults to share homes? How do we address the tremendous lack of resources (e.g., assisted living), particularly for older adults with limited means?
- (From Wendi Aultman, DHHS) The State Plan on Aging will be an important primary document for the Commission. Fifteen listening sessions and 3,000 survey respondents provided vital information for the document. While the State Plan is specifically meant to address issues related to New Hampshire's programs under the federal Older Americans Act, it also addresses more broadly issues of healthy aging, age-friendly communities, and advocacy and could provide a vision for this Commission.
- (From Patrick Herlihy, DOT) It would be good to change the paradigm regarding how services are delivered to focus on more collaboration and coordination. The Commission should have a liaison with the State Coordinating Council for Community Transportation (SCC) and commissioners should be aware of both the SCC and the nine Regional Coordinating Councils for Community Transportation (RCCs).
- It will be important to think through the lens of older people as we build partnerships to improve the environment for the state's older population. We need to keep in mind groups that are already working toward some of the same goals—groups such as the Alliance for Healthy Aging and EngAGING New Hampshire.
- The Commission needs to build members' awareness of the state's current deficits and assets in this arena, and particularly should be cognizant of public funding that does not take into account the dramatic growth of the older population in New Hampshire.
- It is imperative that we understand issues of exploitation and abuse of older and vulnerable adults as they seek to down-size, look for financial advice, etc.
- We can learn from local communities about programs that work.
- The Commission needs to draw upon other plans, including the Mental Health Plan and Suicide Prevention Plan. We need to take all of the information and make it pertinent to the work we do. Some elder service facilities need serious attention.
- We need to get away from the "us: them" mentality. We should see this not about the aged, but about the process of aging; and we should see our older population as a valuable commodity and include older adults in this work.
- Could we think about having an interdisciplinary "volunteer license" that would vet potential volunteers for all kinds of volunteer jobs (in the schools, delivering meals...)? It's also important to think of opportunities to enhance joy.

- The best thing about having this Commission is its interdisciplinary nature. By making connections and breaking down the “silos,” we will come up with solutions.
- (From Perry Plummer, DOS) The Department of Safety deals with motor vehicles, emergency management, fire prevention—many issues that intersect with concerns of the older adult population.
- (from Sunny Shea, AG’s office) Her division addresses the real and growing issues of abuse and exploitation of vulnerable adults.
- We should take a look at the options technology opens up for older adults and those who serve them.

## **VI. Describe Future Work**

Discussion of future work included bringing in key stakeholders to discuss specific issues:

- Drivers licenses and older adults (DOS) (per Rep. MacKay);
- Outstanding programs at the local level;
- State Plan on Aging;
- Home-share Vermont and challenges and opportunities regarding housing for older adults in New Hampshire
- Learning about other groups working on aging issues outside of state government:
  - Tri-State Collaborative
  - Alliance for Healthy Aging including the healthy aging data report and the reframing aging (messaging) movement.

## **VII. Public Comment**

- Cheryl Steinberg, NH Legal Assistance, spoke about the Alliance for Healthy Aging’s environmental scan.
- Kelly LaFlamme, Endowment for Health, spoke about the need to keep in the forefront diversity and inclusion in the aging population.

**VIII. Meetings of the Commission** will take place nine times per year on the third Monday of the month at 10 a.m. The next meeting of the Commission will take place on **October 21, 2019**.

Among agenda items for October will be:

- Sharing a draft annual report (due November 1) focusing on organization of the Commission.
- Reports from the two sub-committees on hiring the Executive Director and securing space.
- The State Plan on Aging

**IX.** The meeting was adjourned at noon.

*Note: The Executive Director hiring subcommittee will meet on September 26, 3:30 p.m., at the Department of Transportation.*