

**Minutes**

Monday, April 10, 2023  
10:00 a.m.

**RAAC Members in Attendance:**

Walter LaRoque, Chairman (Lenoir County)  
Woody Brinson (Duplin County)  
Elliot Ashburn (Greene County)  
Elaine Patterson (Lenoir County)  
Sandra Crane (Onslow County)

**RAAC Members in Attendance by Zoom:**

Victor Heinrich (Carteret County)  
Lavick Williams (Craven County)  
Matthew Brinkley (Jones County)  
Ann Holton (Pamlico County)  
Linda Harper (Wayne County)  
Jimmie Ford (Wayne County)

**ECCAAA Staff in Attendance:**

Heather O'Connor, AAA Director  
January Brown, Deputy Aging Director  
Kim Baker, Lead Aging Programs Consultant  
Melissa Ross, temporary employee  
Nora Avery, temporary employee

**1. Call to Order and Welcome** – *Walter LaRoque, Chairman*

Chairman LaRoque called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. A quorum is not met.

**2. Adopt Agenda** - *Walter LaRoque, Chairman.*

**3. Approval of Minutes** – *Walter LaRoque, Chairman.* A quorum was met at 10:27 am.

January 9, 2023 - Walter LaRoque, Chairman. The motion was made by Elliot Ashburn and a second by Woody Brinson. The motion to approve the January 2023 minutes was accepted. The motion to approve the December 2022 special meeting minutes was accepted with a correction to the minutes regarding the Lavick Williams appointment to STHL.

**4. Director's Report** – *Heather O'Connor, AAA Director*

- a. Budget/Funding Updates FY 22/23: Director Heather advised RAAC members that ECCAAA does not have a budget yet from DAAS for fiscal year 23/24 due to DAAS being down staffed. She discussed the updated budget sheet included in the agenda

packet that shows current spending by county. She advised that most of our providers are running behind on their spending for the year. Director O'Connor advised that ECC is working with our providers to shift funding to where the money can be better used because we do not want to send money back to the state at the end of the fiscal year.

- b. Grocery Reimbursement Update. Director Heather O'Connor gave an update on the grocery reimbursement program. She advised that we have suspended the grocery program temporarily. We have roughly 540 applicants that have not submitted any receipts. We want to give the people who have already applied to the program, the opportunity to send in receipts. We are working on getting letters out. We do not project the program opening back up due to the volume of response that we have had. After we get the existing applicants paid, we will re-evaluate where we are at.

Director O'Connor advised that she is working with the providers to distribute ARPA money to them July 1, 2023. She is working to find out what their needs are. She advised that providers must use ARPA funds for a new or expanded service and cannot request funds to supplement HCCBG. There were questions and a discussion among the members in attendance and ECCAAA staff about using ARPA funds for chore services, housing, and home improvements, IIID, congregate meals and transportation needs as well as some other programs. Director O'Connor gave information on the Owl Systems and Obie Systems that ECC purchased with ARPA funds for the senior centers in our region. See ECCAAA handouts included with agenda packet for additional updates.

#### **5. Staff Reports – ECC AAA Staff**

- a. Family Caregiver- see FCSP handout included with agenda packet.
- b. HCCBG- none at present time. We are waiting for the new year budget from DAAS.
- c. IIID- none at present time.
- d. Ombudsman – Director Heather O'Connor gave an update and background information for our new Ombudsman, Lauren Latshaw. Lauren is working on her certification from the state. She is currently in CAC training and could not attend today's meeting.
- e. Outreach Plans – Deputy Aging Director January Brown spoke briefly about activities for May which is Older Americans Act month and the upcoming Elder Abuse Awareness events.

#### **6. County Comments – RAAC Members**

- a. Carteret – Mr. Victor Heinrich spoke about events at the senior center for Easter and St. Patrick's Day plant swap. The Friends of Aging had the first post Covid dance and barbeque. He also spoke about the Scam Presentation, shredding event, and an upcoming trip to Pigeon Forge.
- b. Craven – no update.
- c. Duplin – Mr. Woody Brinson spoke about the income tax preparation that is ongoing. They have nine volunteers that have given 767 hours of service as of two weeks ago. Duplin has a dancing group now. They are the Duplin Sparklers and will compete in the senior games. There was an overnight trip to Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, then to

- d. see an Easter production in SC and the Ava Gardner Museum in Smithfield. On April 19, there will be a volunteer celebration for our 100 volunteers. May 3<sup>rd</sup> is our senior fun dance. We will have our annual Elder Abuse Walk and our 30-year anniversary celebration of STHL.
- e. Greene – Mr. Elliott Ashburn spoke about their newly elected sheriff that gave a scam report. They had a 30-year anniversary celebration of STHL. They are doing a Family Caregiver Support Group via Zoom and a Stress Peer Group on Fridays. Their Older Americans Month and Elder Abuse Awareness fair will be May 18. We will be having a spring bake sale on May 11.
- f. Jones – no update.
- g. Lenoir – Ms. Elaine Patterson spoke about the Elder Abuse Awareness Walk and Older Americans Month celebration. It will be at the Kinston Community Center in May. Mr. Walter LaRoque said they will get updates at their board meeting on Wednesday.
- h. Onslow – Ms. Sandra Crane spoke about the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Lasagna dinner. There is a meeting with the sheriff's department on scams and a seven-night senior trip planned to Scotland on October 23-30, 2023. January Brown spoke about the renovation of the current senior building instead of a new build that will take about 18 months.
- i. Pamlico – Ms. Ann Holton spoke about Pamlico going for their Senior Center recertification and their monitoring that went very well. She mentioned that they are running short of funds for congregate meals and wanted to speak to Heather about it.
- j. Wayne – Ms. Linda Harper spoke about the orientation for their new CAC volunteers. Mr. Jimmie Ford spoke about a volunteer appreciation they are having on April 27. He also mentioned they have two or three dances and a lot of activities going on.

**7. Additional Comments/Concerns:** Vote for STHL reappointment of Lavick Williams (this was done prior to county comments).

*Walter LaRoque, Chairman*

A STHL reappointment application was received via mail for Lavick Williams after the December 2022 special meeting and the January 2023 regular meeting. A motion to approve Mr. Williams as a delegate was made by Elliot Ashburn and seconded by Woody Brinson. The vote was unanimous to approve by all voting members present and on zoom.

**8. Meeting Calendar Dates:**

- a. July 10, 2023
- b. October 9, 2023

**9. Adjourn** – Mr. LaRoque adjourned the meeting at 11:08am.