

**Franklin County Office on Aging (FCOA)
2017 1.3 Mill Renewal Levy with .45 Mill Increase Proposal**

**HSLRC Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2016**

The Human Services Levy Review Committee (HSLRC) meeting was called to order by Jessie Hemphill on November 10, 2016 @ 3:19 pm.

ROLL CALL

HSLRC members present: Jesse Hemphill, Denise Bronson, Zak Talarek and Jean Carter Ryan

HSLRC members absent: Jerry Friedman, Jim Bowman, Nathan Wymer

Office of Management and Budget (OMB): Heidi Hallas and Garrett Crane

County Administration: Erik Janas

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Hemphill stated the next agenda item is the review and approval of the October 13, 2016 minutes. Ms. Carter Ryan made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Talarek seconded the motion. All members voted “Aye” and Mr. Hemphill said motion carried.

DISCUSSION OF LEVY REQUEST

Mr. Hemphill: The next item on the agenda is the HSLRC levy recommendations. Do you want to discuss Ms. Hallas?

Ms. Hallas: I can go over the things in your packet. I sent them in advance so you can look at it and hopefully it addresses some of your outstanding questions. I went to the Scripps website and was able to pull some of their projections over the next 10-20 years for our aging population here in Franklin County (see Projections and Characteristics of the 60+ Population handout). The next handout is the Property Tax Levies in Ohio. It gives you a great overview of what is occurring in Ohio. This handout was produced in 2012 and the data collected was from 2011, which is why I did a one sheet comparison (see 2015 Countywide Senior Services Levies in Ohio handout).

Ms. Carter Ryan: This handout really surprised me. When you look at the revenue that Franklin County gets for their programs and compare it to the other urban counties, it is kind of shocking that Cuyahoga and Hamilton are not close. It is almost three times more.

Ms. Hallas: It is my understanding that Senior Options was started here in Franklin County and was supposed to be a model that was replicated throughout the state. We had the support of the state and the infrastructure to build it, but it was never fully implemented. The intent was to start here as a pilot and move out, but it didn't.

Dr. Bronson: There are very different models, if I remember Ms. Carroll's presentation. It was set up totally different.

Ms. Hallas: Correct. They are spending \$43, but a lot of these other counties are doing just transportation or congregate meal sites. Not to the full breath of what we do here in Franklin County. I think Ms. Carroll is mentioned that Cuyahoga County is talking about it and coming here to the program here. They are seeing the need. They are looking at our model to try and adopt it. Most of these communities do not have what we have. We are providing a more robust list of services. The report gave us this picture about the different counties. What counties are embracing a more robust senior services model? These are the other ones. Delaware County surprised me. They just passed a levy increase. The last document I put together is what a renewal scenario would look like (see Franklin County Office on Aging Historical Revenue and Expenditures handout). You can go many, many different ways. The agency would be the experts on what would be the appropriate to down size. I was looking at what dollars are available, and what would they need to do to continue to provide service. They would have to start reducing the number of slots through attrition to cap those spaces to 8,000. It will be letting only folks in an emergency need on. Senior Options is going to have around 10,000 next year. That is going to be 2,000 less slots and reducing staff through attrition. The new group of case managers they just hired will not be needed. They could not do investments in IT and the like without hurting additional services. The real driver behind that is that there is not much levy growth. You look at cost of living and CPI-U, it is 2-3% growth annually and we are projecting levy growth at .5%. Between 2013-2014 growth was negative and in 2014-2015 it was .2%. The .5% growth is pretty generous. To maintain to where the agency is currently at, they will need additional dollars. If we say renewal, it will significantly change what they do. I sent you all of these things so we could have some additional information. The decision needs to be made at this point in our timeline of the recommended levy amount. Are you comfortable with the 1.75 mill or you can adjust it between that. I will leave it to the committee if you have any questions.

Mr. Hemphill: When do we as a committee need to make a decision on the amount of the levy?

Ms. Hallas: Today, if we are going to meet all of our deadlines. We are already delayed from the first meeting and the presentation by Direct Effect Solutions. I added two more meetings after this, but it needs to hit the agenda for approval in January to meet the election deadline. It is the first week of February to go to the ballot. If they are going to go on the ballot in the spring, that was the intent. If it doesn't pass, they will have another opportunity in the fall. The deadline is today in order for us to meet crunch time.

Mr. Talarek: It is February 1, 2017.

Ms. Hallas: We are going to need about a month to move it through the Commissioners. This is up to you guys. This is where we are at this time. No one has asked for any additional information.

Ms. Carter Ryan: I am comfortable with us making a decision and recommendation today. I feel like we have gotten a lot of really good information throughout the process.

Dr. Bronson: I have missed a couple of meetings, and I feel a little off balance. I have read everything and the minutes from the last meeting about the recommendations. I think they are doing good work. I do not want to see them cutting back on services. I will defer to the other committee members because you have been so much more involved in the process. I think I can come up with a decision.

Mr. Hemphill: I think we can make a decision today with only the existing members here today, but I am concerned that three of our members are not here. Especially Mr. Friedman. I value his input. I do not know if we can have an in between meeting before the one next month for the purpose of having all members present to make a decision.

Ms. Hallas: If the committee would be available next week because Thanksgiving is the following week. We are scheduled to meet the week after that. With the three members not here, I am not sure what their calendars look like to say if they can make it.

Mr. Talarek: Maybe the other alternative is that we vote on it, knowing that the full committee has to vote. Do some outreach to see if there are any concerns and provide some feedback. If we need to revise the recommendation, we can get the ball rolling with the draft report. If we have two more meetings, I think the next meeting would be the opportunity for the three members who are not here to voice concerns. We can adjust or amend any motion at that time to revise what we would consider today.

Ms. Hallas: I believe that Mr. Wymer had reached out to Mr. Janas. He told Mr. Wymer to call us, but he is out of town. I have not heard from Mr. Bowman at all.

Mr. Hemphill: Being that there has been no discussion, as I am aware of, in reducing the requested amount, is it a consensus of the members here today to leave it as is?

Ms. Carter Ryan: To leave at the recommended level with the increase? Then yes.

Mr. Hemphill: I am ok with that.

Mr. Talarek: I am ok with that as well. I think as everyone has said, in terms of the presentation and the operations review and the common knowledge of the aging population and demand, unlike some of the last levies where demand has flat lined and there is a surplus. This is one where they only have about three months of a surplus and the demand is up if we want to keep meeting those services. I think with the numbers proposed to Ms. Hallas from the Office on Aging that I am comfortable with the request.

Mr. Hemphill: There is a cost on implementing the recommendations. Ken Wilson, County Administrator, mentioned that this will be something that the County would support in the event that we have a successful vote on the levy.

Ms. Hallas: Correct. The full ask of the 1.75 mill, there was some cushion built into that knowing that they have already started the review. They can make it work within the 1.75 mill. If they are able to implement a new model of answering the phones and team approach, there may be some cost savings.

Mr. Janas: I texted Mr. Wymer about not being able to attend today's meeting, and asked if he had communicated with Mr. Talarek or Ms. Hallas your position and I have not gotten a response either way.

Ms. Hallas: He seemed at the last meeting comfortable after the review.

Ms. Carter Ryan: I thought he was supportive, but I cannot speak for him. He did not seem concerned at all.

Mr. Janas: Your concern is about making that decision at this point with only four. Was Mr. Friedman supposed to be here today?

Ms. Hallas: I haven't heard anything from him.

Mr. Janas: Do we know where Mr. Friedman's position is on this?

Ms. Hallas: No.

Mr. Janas: I guess the question is, are the four of you that are here in general agreement?

Mr. Talarek: We have kind of discussed moving forward since we have two more meetings. If we reach out to the other three saying that this is what we have done, and see if we need to modify the motion after. At least we could get the report going.

Mr. Janas: I was going to say one of two things. You can either take a vote now and modify the motion to get their votes or give the informal feedback as the majority of the committee to allow them to start to write the report and take the formal vote when everyone is here next time.

Mr. Hemphill: I think just before you came in the consensus of all four of us is to move forward with the request as is. I am particularly concerned with Mr. Friedman, who has been very vocal, and the absence of the other three members.

Mr. Janas: It would be my judgment, if that is the case, if you want to feel good where Mr. Wymer and Mr. Friedman are, don't take a vote now and add them to it later. I would rather you vote next time. The majority of the committee here can instruct staff to give direction to begin writing the report as if it has been passed.

Dr. Bronson: That makes a lot of sense.

Mr. Janas: Ms. Hallas, are you ok with that?

Ms. Hallas: Yes.

Mr. Janas: I do not think it is going to be an issue. I think we will have a comfort level that we will have around five or six committee members in agreement.

Mr. Hemphill: I am concerned about giving Ms. Hallas the ability to use her time wisely. I know the tighter it gets the more we wait.

Mr. Janas: The other thing you can do Mr. Chairman is, if you want to over the next day or two, call those three members individually as say "we delayed the vote because we wanted to make sure we spoke for the full committee, but wanted to get a sense of where you are at so if we feel like it might go a certain way we have instructed staff to get started and hope they do not get too far down the road." That may be another way to do it.

Mr. Hemphill: I will take the liberty of making those phone calls to the members who are not here.

Mr. Janas: It sounds like this is how it is going to go. I think it is comfortable for you to get started. It is not like you are going to get a whole lot completed today or tomorrow. Mr. Hemphill you call them. I think it is wise to wait to take the vote until more of you are here. That would be my recommendation.

Mr. Hemphill: When is our next scheduled meeting?

Ms. Hallas: December 1st. We have this meeting and then December 15th.

Mr. Janas: Try to nail them down because you do not want to interpret their absence as a lack of support. Even if they are not here for the vote, have something in the record that would suggest what they communicated through the Chair.

Dr. Bronson: Is it possible to have people call in to a meeting? Now that we are modern age.

Mr. Janas: This is an ad hoc committee, so the rules would be a little bit different than a committee that is in statute. This committee was made by resolution of the Commissioners, so there is more flexibility. We may be able to provide that as an option to vocalize where they are at. If someone cannot be here to vote, make sure the conversation is in the record. I would advise that you wait until you have more members here to vote and give direction to staff to get started and Mr. Hemphill to reach out to the committee members that are absent today. Are you comfortable with that?

Mr. Hemphill: Thank you Mr. Janas.

Mr. Janas: Sure. If you need me, I am around.

Ms. Hallas: That was helpful. What I am hearing is that is where we are leaning, and I will start crafting the report in that way. If you can let me know by early next week, after you speak to the other members.

Mr. Hemphill: Is there something I have that have their contact information?

Ms. Hallas: I can send it to your email. We had just updated it and I will resend to you. I think we mentioned that I can begin drafting. There are a couple of major items that we usually include. The first topic is why we are recommending what we are recommending. The aging population. I will look at those demographics and what is increasing. Also what is interesting is the migration piece. Not only the folks that are aging here, but older folks coming here. The demand for services, obviously. People are coming through our doors and are waitlisted as we speak. The other item that Aging had brought up, which I think is important and want to talk to you about, is increasing functional limitations. Seeing folks with multiple limitations obviously becomes more costly. These are the limitations that keep them out of their homes. I believe that Scripps have some information on this and what it means and how it affects folks. I think this is another justification. We are seeing this increase. The fourth one I heard during all of our conversations is the stagnant levy revenue. They are not seeing the compounding growth anymore that would help with the growing costs. It is pretty flat. Were there any other things the committee felt to would justify that you are comfortable with this request?

Mr. Hemphill: Will funding the recommended implementations be another item?

Ms. Hallas: I have that under the committee's recommendations for their next levy cycle. I have that number one to go ahead and implement the operational assessment recommendations. This is why you are saying ok in this moment. Next time the agency comes to this committee, this is what we want to see.

Ms. Carter Ryan: Did you say in the list that it is not just the fact that the population is growing, it is the fact that there has been increases in the program function area?

Ms. Hallas: Yes, that was number two. The first was just the aging and also the demand. They are still coming through the door. I had the aging, the demand for service, functional limitation increasing and the stagnant levy revenue. Was there anything else?

Dr. Bronson: Do we have a way of documenting that maintaining the elderly in their homes is cost effective overall versus more residential?

Ms. Hallas: The Office on Aging did have that number in here, so I can include it.

Dr. Bronson: The longer we can keep them in their homes, the less costly it is.

Ms. Hallas: Anything else for that list?

Dr. Bronson: Do we want to include anything about quality of life? The services that we are providing is intended to keep older people in the community, more comfortable and the ability to stay in their own homes. Wrapping the kinds of support around them to allow them to...

Mr. Hemphill: Enabling them to stay in their homes is consistent with the quality of life issue. Having a good quality of life includes allowing them to stay in their homes and not be institutionalized.

Dr. Bronson: The breadth of services that we are able to provide in Franklin County contributes to that. The breadth of services are supported by levy dollars.

Ms. Hallas: I think we can combine the last two. It would enable seniors to live in their homes. Then the two prong is that you are saving dollars and increase quality of life.

Dr. Bronson: That sounds good.

Mr. Hemphill: Correct me if I am wrong, is this the first levy request, we as a committee, have approve an increase over the last four or five requests?

Ms. Hallas: No, the last two were renewals. In fact, Aging was three ago and that was an increase.

Mr. Hemphill: The last time we did Aging was an increase?

Ms. Hallas: Yes.

Mr. Hemphill: Was Children Services our first?

Ms. Hallas: Correct. Children Services we did not. They did not have the justification in their report. They had a declining service levels and a lot of cash reserves. Then ADAMH was another one we told no. We shortened the levy period because of the dynamics of their system. They also had almost a year's worth of cash. Their services were declining due to Medicaid expansion and parity in insurance. They really had some declining numbers. It is hard to go out and say we need more money when their spending is down, their numbers are down and they have cash. That is not the case in this levy request, which is the same conversation they had last time around. This is a growing population. This is an immediate need in the next 10-20 years. It has been well supported by the voters.

Dr. Bronson: It is not just them saying it either. There is plenty of data to support it.

Ms. Hallas: The biggest dynamic here is the property tax picture. In the 2000s, you could come in and capture a lot of growth. Between 2000-2010, a lot of our levies were coming in and it sounded easy. They collected a lot more money. We are just in a different economic environment.

Mr. Talarek: Because of the way the law changed, I think four years ago, if you go from a renewal to replacement, you lose the 10% and 2% rollback. If you go from renewal to replacement, that is like a built in 12% penalty to the taxpayers in the counties because the state is not picking that up. Some of these increase numbers has been so large too because you can't do a replacement and capture new growth. In addition you lose the rollbacks. That is why when you do a renewal plus an increase...

Ms. Hallas: It is a larger number, but you are not getting what you are used to with a replacement and increase.

Mr. Talarek: In the 1990s with all the growth, you could do a replacement, you could get 20% growth if you hit the different sizes of the reappraisal. The millage number look the same. The taxpayers will pay a little more because of the way the reductions factors work, but you will always have the same as the .9.

Mr. Hemphill: The key is educating the public because when they see a renewal, they just figure it is more money. This needs to be dealt with through education.

Ms. Hallas: Sure. That is why I wanted to make sure one of your reasons was the stagnant revenue. We have to ask for a renewal so you do not penalize the taxpayers for that piece. I think that would be part of their levy campaign. It is a message that other folks have been saying that we are doing renewals so we do not get the 12% on levies. It is a different time and scenario. There is increasing demand and no money is left. Do we want to say that is just it or continue to support that? You have had increases over the last sixteen years, but it was a replacement and there was huge growth in capturing that. Now you have to go for big numbers to get additional funds.

Mr. Hemphill: I think that message should be part of our report.

Ms. Hallas: Absolutely. I have a segment titled Levy Revenue and will include that as one of our talking points. If there is nothing else on the recommendation piece, now is what we want to see the next time around. What do they need to respond to? They did a really good job with that this last time. The first one is to implement the operational assessment recommendations. I know that County Administration is committed to that. In fact, they told us that OMB is going to keep an eye on it.

Dr. Bronson: There are a lot of changes in that assessment. Everything from organizational structure to their IT system to succession planning. As I was reading the assessment, if those are our recommendations that is a lot to do for their next levy. If they were to manage to pull it off, bravo.

Ms. Hallas: I think what is great is that Ms. Carroll and her staff have seemed to embrace it and see the value in a lot of those changes. County Administration is supportive and have tasked me, as part of the annual budget process, to provide dashboards to them.

Dr. Bronson: Some of those concerns were some that we had previously. This now gives them the wherewithal to focus on it and get it done and have the oversight and support from the County.

Ms. Hallas: That is number one. I came up with a few more, based on what we have been hearing over and over again as the committee talked. Another one is, tell me if you agree, I know Mr. Bowman brought up was better pricing. Coming up with some way to purchase in bulk if it is with other county aging services or with the COAAA. Can we do a bulk statewide? A lot of these agencies are purchasing the same things. Even going out of their own services and looking for joint contracts. Any thoughts on that?

Dr. Bronson: I do not know how easy or difficult that might be.

Ms. Carter Ryan: Exploring it is something that we can recommend.

Ms. Hallas: We do it on a lot of different things.

Mr. Talarek: Our Purchasing Department will usually open up contracts to be cooperative contracts. For instance, we have a cell phone contract that we allow all the municipalities and townships use. When we

put out to bid, it is usually what Franklin County has, but if we could aggregate those numbers on the front end... If we have 100,000 units but if we partner with enough and have 150,000-200,000, we may get better pricing at the start of the process instead of opening it up after the fact.

Ms. Hallas: We can definitely change it to exploring bulk purchases.

Mr. Talarek: Work with similar agencies to help facilitate that.

Ms. Hallas: Another one was to fully leverage grant and collaborative opportunities. We talked at the last meeting about setting up a non-profit to get more funding through a 501(c)(3). Looking at other collaborations like the Age Friendly Communities. Are there opportunities with that collaboration for possible funding? What does the SmartCities Grant look like for aging transportation as we move forward? To see what the seniors in our community may need. They can contact the National Association of Counties to see what is out there across the county. Really looking at any opportunity for collaborative funding or projects. The other piece is collaboration with hospitals. Reaching out to the hospitals and coming up with some new projects to address the readmission rates. Really exploring outside of the levy.

The other thing is analyzing the needs and the effectiveness of you addressing those needs. As they continue to age, we cannot continue to increase funding. They need to dig deeper and ask what is important to the community and what are the newer aging seniors looking for. What is the plan and where is the flexibility in the services you can possibly eliminate. What does your cost effectiveness mean? We should show that our clients have low readmission rate and we can prove that. What is the percentage? When you go to these collaborative folks, you can say look at what our program can do and have it backed by an independent study. Not only meeting those needs, but addressing them in a cost-effective manner. To look for opportunities to control growth and services. Any thoughts on that?

Mr. Talarek: That relates back to the IT structure. Once you get that built up, you can pull the data a lot easier and make the comparisons better. Then you can prove to the partners what the benefits are in the program. It is obviously cheaper for one to stay at home than in an institution, but you can have the data when you go to a funder and say here it is.

Mr. Hemphill: Do they have the resources, procedures, or programs to measure readmission rates? Meaning the hospitals.

Ms. Hallas: I believe they collect that information. That is part of their surveys if someone has been re-hospitalized. The comparison group could be questionable on that. The Ohio Department of Health collects this data. If you have any subgroups by age and readmission and get the rates. Then we could compare it to our clients. Hopefully they can break it down to a comparable group.

Dr. Bronson: How reliable is the data of readmission rates if people are moving around or going to different hospitals? I am not sure how those records are kept.

Ms. Hallas: I know with the new digital records keeping, that this is something they can look into. They can tap into Scripps since they work in this type of data. With the new IT system, Aging will be able to do more query. I know that is part of their assessment and ongoing case management.

Dr. Bronson: These are more self-reporting data than readmission data.

Ms. Hallas: If we have clients that are willing to let us get this data.

Dr. Bronson: I think logistically it is going to be a little bit of a challenge. Whether they have the internal resources to do some of this or working with someone else to get more information about those outcomes.

Ms. Hallas: I have been pulling some data from journals. Medicaid is looking at a program in Baltimore, when you are released from the hospital, you get a social worker and a handyman to make your home accessible and Medicaid is paying for it. John Hopkins is doing the study and so far so good. Office on Aging is doing this with their programs. There is an interest that these types of services matter. Any other thoughts? I will draft it and you can tell me if you want to keep it in.

Dr. Bronson: We may need to look at what they could do before they come back, instead of what they must do. It depends on the type of assessment and evaluation we will be looking for. Maybe letting them dictate on how they proceed. They will be able to do more with an upgraded IT system.

Ms. Hallas: I think that was the point of the Business Analyst position. A lot of the information is in the Q Continuum, but it is in a giant text box. I do not think it is going to change what they are collecting, but will be a better way of doing it. It is something to at least look at because a lot of times we hear the question how do we know if it is working. The list of services we are providing is what works. It has been proven in the literature, but we may need to pull the information from literature the next time. FCOA couldn't effectively study this, but here is what is coming out in journals. Any other thoughts?

Ms. Carter Ryan: I think this is a good start. I believe once we see it written out, we will be able to respond.

Dr. Bronson: Those are thoughtful additions too.

Ms. Hallas: If that is it, I can begin putting this together for the committee. We can plan to vote at the next meeting and have a draft to work from.

Mr. Hemphill: I will make the three phone calls to the members that are absent. I believe the consensus is that everyone will agree to go ahead with the request.

CLOSING REMARKS

The next HSLRC meeting will be held Thursday, December 1st from 3:00-5:00pm at 373 S. High Street, 26th Floor in the Briefing Room.

Dr. Bronson made a motion to close the HSLRC meeting and Ms. Carter Ryan seconded.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 pm.