

April 7th, 2016 OAAB Minutes:

Meeting was called to order at 10:01 am; Pledge of Allegiance was said; a quorum was present and Introduction of members and guests was done.

Program Part 1: Monroe County Commissioner Danny Kolhage reported on the free bus transportation for seniors. The members thanked Danny & the other BOCC members for passing the free bus rides for those 60 or older. Mr. Kolhage stated he was concerned the buses would be inundated with homeless and that did not happen. He pointed out the city had purchased two new vehicles with the help of a grant. They will apply for three more buses next year. Mr. Kolhage briefly discussed the budget and expressed it will be for a 2 year span vs. 1 year and the budget should be revenue neutral as the county is expected to 'hold their own'. Emergency Management Director Irene Toner is retiring.

Members expressed concerns about the senior center in Key West. Mr. Kolhage stated the city has entered an agreement to use the Kennedy Dr. Senior Plaza building as a temporary site. There is also a Plantation Key courthouse renovation planned with a move of the Upper Keys Senior Center to the Jerry Ellis building which seems to be a much smaller site than the present PK Senior Center. AARP members asked that their input be included in planning the Senior Centers and Danny stated he would pass the request to Mr. Gastesi.

An update on the Key West Airport Director's work with the FAA to increase staffing and extend the west end runway for takeoff (and not landings) was reported.

Part 2: Marsha Jenakovich, Director of Planning and special projects for the Alliance for Aging explained how Monroe County is not considered rural (except for Layton) to the DOEA, however with other programs we are considered a rural County. Elders make up one third of the population. Marsha will be meeting with Seniors & local providers in Key West, Big Pine Keys and the Upper Keys during hearings on Senior services as well as deficiencies.

Marlene from Social Services reported we continue to be funded at last year's rates for most programs and there is enough funding at this time. She discussed various programs to help with home ownership that are available as well as the weatherization program. Check as with some programs, mobile homes are excluded and you may need to be a home owner vs a resident. Income criteria was reviewed.

Emergency Management Director Irene Toner announced her retirement after many years as Director. Irene reviewed the process for mandatory evacuation for Hurricanes category of 3 or above. She reviewed how challenging it can be to evacuate residents and how that decision is reached before a storm. Irene stated all the special needs information including pet friendly shelters is listed on their site. Her replacement will be Martin Centerfit and his title will be Chief of Emergency Management. He is from the Jacksonville Fire Dept. and starts May 16th.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by: Kathleen Ryzoc, OAAB Secretary