AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION WORKGROUP MINUTES

Date: April 16, 2020
Time: 1:00PM
Facilitators: Terri Hansen and Kim Henry

In Attendance

Jill Kamenetz	Kelly Kesler
Lucky Sohi	Kim Henry
Scott Ripley	Mae Beale
Diane Leonard	Jim Sanders

Minutes Approved

Minutes were sent late. If changes are needed, send to Terri Hansen

Announcements:

- No announcements

New Business:

- Kim Henry and Terri Hansen spoke about developing a vision statement for our work group. Need to identify those areas that really speak to what we are all about in communication. There seems to be confusion as to whether we are about communication for our group or for the whole Age-Friendly concept. Are we addressing gaps in service? Need to narrow the focus of communication for our work group. Have a lot of talent in our group related to keeping older adults informed through various resources such as newspapers, LHIC inventory of resources, etc. It is not the responsibility of our group to come up with gaps in service; instead, find the gaps in communicating about existing services, and eventually communicate what the other groups come up with. We really need to focus on:
  - Where are the gaps in services?
  - What are the areas that we are getting the ideas out there to well?
  - What are some of the lesser known venues that we need to include?
- Kim mentioned that Kelly was going to bring a list of LHIC resources. For our vision statement, we need to draft a couple of sentences based on what we feel can be accomplished.
- Terri asked if anyone had a chance to look at the Montgomery County and Maple Grove plans on the AARP website.

- Kim read from the AARP website for Montgomery County – AARP website. This is an Age-Friendly Report with a 3-year action plan; one of the domains is communication and outreach.
    - To distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible information on County and Public resources and services for older adults.
        - Raise awareness among seniors of County communication channels including general telephone help numbers and the senior help line.
        - Raise awareness among older adults of County programs, services, and resources. Including those for whom English is not their first language.
- Kim and Terri felt that it echoes what we have in Howard County. The County needs to be sensitive to those who are not English-speaking. We need to be able to get the information out about resource lines like Maryland Access Point (MAP). Based on the Age-Friendly survey, there was not a lot of knowledge about MAP, yet that is the number one resource line for the Office on Aging and Independence. We need to let all of Howard County that this resource is available.
- Jill said it has been years since any promotion has been done for MAP. She liked the idea that Montgomery County is putting that information out front.
- Kelly advised coming to a consensus about the resources that we need. She liked that the Montgomery County plan was clear and concise with a clear sense of direction. She wants to make sure we go about it uniformly as best as we can.
- Jill believes that 211 and MAP will cover it all in terms of a community resource.
- Jill: If a person is looking at topics like we are currently talking about, then something like the CARE app works. It is very user-driven. In other cases you may need to have experts to staff a line, whether it is 211 and or MAP; because individuals may need people to talk to unlike CARE app where you need to know how to do research and use key terms. An information specialist will have the right information and can direct you appropriately.
- Terri: what will the work group's values be? If we get down into the nitty gritty of what our accomplishments and priorities are, we will miss our value statement. Let's focus on asking ourselves: Where do we want to go? What is our long range for this work group? Deciding what the Communication and Information workgroup wants to accomplish will give us a focus to set our priorities.
- The group continued to look at important elements to be included in the vision statement: inaccessibility, inclusivity, serving all ages—not just older adults, addressing cultural differences and physical abilities, recognizing communication deficits, training. It was also mentioned the vision state e t should be catchy so members can remember it
- Then the group read the mission statement from Maple Grove, Minnesota which is a much smaller town – different wording and written in a different way than Montgomery County. One member liked that this statement included programs, services, activities, and events and that it focused on keeping older adults connected to their community.
- Kelly typed out a vision statement and a mission statement:
    - Howard County residents will be connected to resources and services that are timely, accessible, and inclusive of all
    - To effectively disseminate accessible, inclusive, understandable, and timely information about County and Public resources and services that foster community connection inclusive of all.
- Jim: there is a bias in many of these communication discussions about service providers sending out messages and hoping people will receive them and care. Real communication happens when people want something and ask questions, or when people are receptive to the message. It is a relationship exchange model, not just received information.

- With more work the group finalized the vision statement to read:

Vision: Howard County residents will be connected to resources and services that are timely, accessible, and inclusive of all.

Mission: To effectively communicate and share accessible, understandable and timely information about community resources and services that foster connectedness inclusive of all.

Other notes/values:
- To distribute and publicize recognizable, understandable, timely and accessible information about county and public resources and services inclusive of all.
- Effective dissemination of information promotion of and access to technology
- Address social isolation – facilitate/support/enhance/foster connectedness
- Must allow for inquiry and sharing of messages in bi-directional ways

New topics
- Mae stated she wanted to get more into the survey and discuss how we can make sure the underserved and low income are not always at the bottom of what matters.
- Terri wants to stress to everyone that everyone should review the survey and she reminded the members they will be getting some additional information regarding older reports and surveys that have been done in the past. This will give you more information into your thinking.
- Lucky had a couple of questions under housekeeping.
    - The Age-Friendly webpage itself on the County Website is basically information from the survey that was completed. Believe that is a good place to start by updating the webpage. She also believes the minutes from the meetings should be on the web site.
    - Terri stated that Kim Henry is currently working on getting the minutes on to the website.
    - Lucky stated she worked on websites in the past and is willing to help out if needed.
    - A central location on the google drive was sent out and could not get access without a verification code. One place for information would be helpful.
    - Kelly stated that she has the ability to house the minutes or anything else we need to share.
- Jim asked how to do we better communicate with people of different languages? How do we reduce duplication among the different programs? What are ways for corporation? Can we make it easier for the audience to do problem solving around the areas of interest?
- Kim stated that given the current environment we need to come up with no or low-cost ways to get the information out there.
- Jim stated we are feeling a 5-year strategic plan of what we want to happen over time. The value of this whole methodology is that we create a vision of what we want year by year. There will be a lot of communicating to be done.
- The issue of using lessons learned from the pandemic was discussed. Putting together plans for the next several years that incorporate what we have all done to enhance communication during the pandemic would be useful.
- Mae said that we need to make sure that people have access and know how to use the current technology. Be very mindful and be able to train to others.
- A member stated that is why training is a sub-component of accessibility. What can we learn from Howard County now? Really has been a big grassroots effort and ties the

community idea together. Having a really big grass roots effort at the church level, neighborhood level, and so on. We should have a grassroots program piece in our big plan.

Homework Assignments:
If you have not already read the survey you need to do that.
Submitting comments, questions regarding the survey
Be on the look out for the report coming out soon.
We still need another community co-chair
How are we going to go forward with this group?
What other information do you need for this workgroup? Do we need speakers to come in, do we need information sent to us about existing programs?
Check out the County Website
Go to AARP website and look at Montgomery County and Maple Grove Minnesota

Next Meeting:
 May 20, 2020 – 9:00 AM - (will be a WebEx invitation will be sent before the meeting).