



**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of
Council on Aging St. Tammany – COAST**

Held December 19, 2024

At the Covington Activity Center, 19404 N. Tenth Street, Covington, LA 70433

The following directors were present/absent (*indicates absence): *Joyce Donohue (President), Martin Lapari (Vice President), Janice Roussel (Secretary), Kelly Walgamotte (Treasurer), Conie Abernathy, Amanda Mason, Scott Wallace, Marcus Wallace, Jamie Gabourel, Kimberly Henry, Al Hamauei, *Jackie Landry, Kandise Wilson and Bruce Margetson.

The following staff members were present/absent (*indicates absence): Amy Kudel (Executive Director), Syeda Naeem (Finance Director), George Nicoll (Operations Director), *Chris Hodge (Transportation Director), David Ray (Human Resources Director), Claudia Warner (Client Services Director), Fabianne Faciane (Client Services Deputy Director), Kristy Livaudais (Wellness Coordinator) and Deidra Chiasson (Executive Assistant).

A quorum was Present.

Call to Order

Vice President Martin Lapari called the meeting to order at 3:01 PM in President Joyce Donohue’s absence.

Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance – Kelly Walgamotte (Treasurer) led the Board in prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Welcome and Introductions

Martin Lapari welcomed Marie Antoinette Wright to the Board of Directors.

Success Story of the Month

Kristy Livaudais (Wellness Coordinator) presented the success story of the month to the board. She told the Board about the success of the exercise program provided by the organization.

Secretary’s Report

Acceptance of Minutes – Resolution for Acceptance of Minutes for Regular Board of Directors Meeting November 21, 2024 - #12-2024-1 states be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby accept the minutes of the November 21, 2024 Regular Board of Directors Meeting as submitted.

There was no discussion.

On motion made by Conie Abernathy, seconded by Kelly Walgamotte, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted Resolution #12-2024-1.

Treasurer’s Report

Finance Committee Report – Kelly Walgamotte (Treasurer) gave the Finance Committee report. Kelly told the Board that the Finance Committee meeting was held on Monday, December 16, 2024 at 3:00 PM. During the meeting, Kelly confirmed that he had reviewed, signed and approved the Bank Reconciliations and Credit Card Reports. Syeda Naeem (Finance Director) reviewed the November Financials with the committee. The committee approved the financial reports to go forward to the Board. The committee also reviewed both the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff’s Office Cooperative Endeavor Agreement for a new Bush Activity Center location and the Engagement Letter for a new labor law attorney.

Monthly Financial Reports – Syeda Naeem (Finance Director) reviewed the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures as of November 30, 2024 and the November Balance Sheet with the Board.

There was no discussion of the Balance Sheet. A discussion followed regarding the Statement of Revenues and Expenditures.

Syeda Naeem reviewed the Capital Project Hwy 434 Statement of Revenues and Expenditures and Balance Sheet with the Board.

There was no discussion.

Executive Director's Report

Louisiana State Legislature House Bill 10 – Amy Kudel explained to the Board that she has discussed House Bill 10 with them last month. As a reminder, at one point the tax exempt status for Louisiana Councils on Aging had been taken away. It was added back into the bill. The bill was signed into law on the 4th. So, the Councils on Aging continue to have their tax exempt status.

Volunteers of America – Amy stated she and Claudia Warner (Client Services Director) met with the local chapter of Volunteers of America (VOA) in December. Claudia and Amy were hoping to get the sitter program re-established using volunteers. Unfortunately, the VOA Director does not have the staff to help with that. However, the director pointed them in the right direction. Amy will reach out to AmeriCorps Senior Companion Program to see if COAST can work with them. It seems like a good fit. Amy will continue to update the Board regarding progress on the sitter program.

Slidell Activity Center Lease Update – Amy said that the Slidell Activity Center lease was signed through the current physical year, which ends June 30, 2025, under the current terms.

A discussion followed.

Lawsuit– Amy told the Board that on November 15, 2023 a Transportation Driver made a U-turn on Highway 190 in Slidell. In doing so, the driver hit another vehicle injuring both the vehicle's driver and passenger. They are going through the discovery process now. Amy will provide updates as she has them.

A discussion followed.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Complaint – Amy said she had just received word regarding an EEOC complaint against the organization. The EEOC found no evidence of discrimination by COAST.

Medical Alert Waitlist – Amy reminded the Board that, back at the June Board meeting, the Board had agreed that the organization could take leftover funding for fiscal year 2023-2024 and put it towards the Medical Alert Waitlist. This will allow everyone on the Medical Alert Waitlist with a Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs (GOEA) score above 10 to receive the service.

Personal Care Staffing Issues – Amy stated that the Personal Care waitlist had 23 clients as of November. Claudia's team is going to revisit the issue with the vendor. COAST does have the funds in place to service the individuals on the waitlist.

Board Member of the Month – Amy announced that the Board Member of the Month is Kelly Walgamotte.

Committee Reports

Personnel Committee – Conie Abernathy (Committee Chairwoman) stated that the Personnel Committee met on December 5. They reviewed the organization's new logo policy. Then, they reviewed revisions to the 2025 Employee Handbook. The revised handbook had been sent to and approved by COAST's Employment Law attorney Michael Wiener. The committee recommended the Board of Directors accept the Employee Handbook in its entirety.

Resolution for Approval of 2025 St. Tammany Council on Aging, Inc. Employee Handbook – #12-2024-2 states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby accept the St. Tammany Council on Aging 2025 Employee Handbook in its entirety.

There was no discussion.

On motion made by Al Hamauei, seconded by Kelly Walgamotte, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted Resolution #12-2024-2.

Title III Services Committee – Marcus Wallace (Committee Chairman) told the Board that the Title III Services Committee met on Thursday, December 12. There was not a quorum for the meeting. This meeting was purely informational for the attendees. Chris Hodge presented the Transportation reports. Chris went over the Transportation Department’s accidents & incidents for October and November with the committee. There were two incidents and three accidents. One of our Drivers backed into a pole in the Rouses parking lot. The driver was written up and suspended for 3 days. Another Transportation Driver was driving down a narrow road and hit a trash can that was left in the road. The driver shattered the glass on the bus. This driver decided to quit after the accident. One of our Drivers was in a turning lane waiting to turn when the bus was rear ended. Our Driver was not at fault. The Transportation Driver was transported via ambulance from the scene. Our Driver was seriously injured with a C3 fracture and is still out due to the injuries. Our bus was totaled. We will discuss this in more detail later in the agenda. Chris presented the Transportation Revenue Monthly Summaries for October and November and the passenger break down by city, race, age, and gender. During the meeting, Fabianne, the Client Services Deputy Director went over the Client Services Reports with the committee in Claudia’s absence. Our Chore Service, which is the grass cutting service that runs from March through October, currently has a waitlist. This service will start again next year in the Spring. The Homemaker, Personal Care and Respite services currently have waitlists as well. Amy and Claudia are working on restructuring the units for our Personal Care service in order to reduce the waitlist for that program. Finally, the Medical Alert service waitlist was discussed. Now that the audit is complete and COAST knows exactly how much of its funds are remaining from last fiscal year, the medical alert wait list will be cleared. Any remaining funds will go toward reducing the waitlist for Respite. The committee reviewed the hold harmless agreements for Home Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals. They have both been reviewed by COAST’s attorney.

Resolution for Hold Harmless Agreement for Home Delivered Meals states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby accept the St. Tammany Council on Aging Hold Harmless Agreement for Home Delivered Meals.

Resolution for Hold Harmless Agreement for Congregate Meals states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby accept the St. Tammany Council on Aging Hold Harmless Agreement for Congregate Meals.

Jamie Gabourel stated that the hold harmless agreements should not only include the organization but also the Board of Directors.

A discussion followed.

On motion made by Jamie Gabourel, seconded by Marcus Wallace, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously tabled Resolutions for Hold Harmless Agreements for Home Delivered Meals and Congregate Meals to the January 23, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting to allow the Board of Directors to be added to both resolutions.

Executive Committee – Martin Lapari (Vice President) gave the Executive Committee report in President Joyce Donohue’s absence. Martin said that the Executive Committee met at 2:00 PM on Monday December 16 to make a compilation of and discuss the Executive Director’s Performance Evaluations received. This will be discussed in detail with the full Board later in the meeting.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

Resolution for St. Tammany Parish Sheriff’s Office Cooperative Endeavor Agreement for a new Bush Activity Center - #12-2024-5 states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby authorize Amy Kudel, Executive Director, or her successors in office to do all things necessary to sign the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement(CEA) with the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff’s Office for use of the property located at 81635 Louisiana Highway 41, Bush, LA 70431 for the new location of the Bush Activity Center.

A discussion followed.

On motion made by Janice Roussel, seconded by Kelly Walgamotte, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted Resolution #12-2024-5.

Resolution for Relocation and Expenditures for New Bush Activity Center Location- #12-2024-6 states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby authorize Amy Kudel, Executive Director, or her successors in office to implement the relocation of the Bush Activity Center to the property located at 81635 Louisiana Highway 41, Bush, LA 7043 and to make expenditures for the relocation of the Bush Activity Center not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00).

A discussion followed.

On motion made by Kimberly Hendry, seconded by Scott Wallace, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted Resolution #12-2024-6.

Resolution for Engagement Letter with Blue Williams - #12-2024-7 states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby authorize Amy Kudel, Executive Director, or her successors in office to do all things necessary to implement, maintain, sign and execute a letter of engagement with Blue Williams to provide general employment consultation and representation at a rate of two hundred seventy-five dollars (\$275.00) per hour in billable time for work performed by partners, two hundred twenty-five dollars (\$225.00) per hour in billable time for work performed by associates, and eighty dollars (\$80.00) per hour in billable time for work performed by paralegals along with any additional costs as set forth in the letter of engagement.

A discussion followed.

On motion made by Janice Roussel, seconded by Kimberly Henry, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted Resolution #12-2024-7.

Annual Staff Recognition Reminder – Amy Kudel (Executive Director) told the Board that the January 23 Board meeting would include our annual Staff Services Awards ceremony. The meeting will be held in the conference room of St. Anthony's Gardens. Amy thanked Board member Kandice Wilson for procuring the conference room for the meeting and ceremony.

A discussion followed.

Addition of Resolution to Agenda – Martin Lapari informed the Board that there was a time sensitive item that needed to be added to the agenda. Martin asked for a motion to add Resolution for Purchase of Replacement Transportation - #12-2024-8 to the agenda.

There was no discussion.

On motion made by Kimberly Henry, seconded by Marcus Wallace, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the addition of Resolution #12-2024-8 to the December 19, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting agenda.

Resolution for Purchase of Replacement Transportation Vehicle - #12-2024-8 states: Be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the above corporation does hereby authorize Amy Kudel, Executive Director, or her successors in office to purchase a replacement vehicle in an amount not to exceed \$60,000, replacing a bus that was totaled in November 2024.

A discussion followed.

On motion made by Scott Wallace, seconded by Kelly Walgamotte, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously accepted Resolution #12-2024-8.

Board Activity Center Visit – Martin Lapari (Vice President) reminded the Board that the December Board Activity Center visit was here at the Covington Center on the 2nd. The attendees spoke about their visit.

Executive Session for Executive Director Annual Evaluation – Martin Lapari requested a motion for closure of the meeting to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Executive Director's evaluation.

On motion made by Kelly Walgamotte, seconded by Conie Abernathy, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the motion for closure of the meeting to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the Executive Director's evaluation.

At 3:43 PM the COAST Board of Directors entered into Executive Session.

***Note: Al Hamauei left the meeting at 3:49 PM. A quorum remained intact.**

On motion made by Conie Abernathy, seconded by Kelly Walgamotte, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the motion to enter into open session.

At 4:01 PM the COAST Board of Directors entered into open session.

On motion made by Bruce Margetson, seconded by Scott Wallace, and so carried, the Board of Directors unanimously approved a 3% pay increase for Amy Kudel.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Martin Lapari, Vice President COAST Board of Directors, adjourned the meeting at 4:03 PM.



Janice Roussel - Secretary, COAST Board of Directors

**The above meeting minutes constitutes the general understanding by Janice Roussel, Secretary - COAST Board of Directors, of the meeting content. Please advise Deidra Chiasson, Assistant to Executive Director COAST, of any errors or omissions.*