

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Services for Seniors Working Group

Tuesday, March 24, 2015 Meeting Minutes

By Jenny Rivera and Grace Farwell

In Attendance: Patti Wood, City of El Segundo; Shaunna Donahue, City of El Segundo; Diane T. Brown, City of Hawthorne; W.J. Bill Meyers, City of Hawthorne Senior Citizens Commission; Kristy Morris, City of Hermosa Beach; Britt Huff, City of Rolling Hills Estates Council Member, H.E.L.P.; Cindy Snodgrass, City of Torrance; Bea Virobik, City of Torrance Commission on Aging, South Bay Village; Ghislaine (Ges) Davis, City of Torrance Commission on Aging, South Bay Village; Alvina Narayan, Access Services LA; Kerianne Lawson, Beach Cities Health District; Rhonda Ozanian, Bluedot; Isabel Rodriguez, City of Hermosa Beach Resident; Sylvia Richardson, Palos Verdes Library District; Sherry May, Palos Verdes Peninsula Village; Kathy Macaraeg, TLC Senior Ride; Grace Farwell, SBCCOG; Steve Lantz, SBCCOG

1. Welcome and Self Introductions
2. Grace Farwell recapped highlights from previous meeting
3. Update on Volunteer Driver programs and Ride Scheduler
 - Grace Farwell reported on two programs in San Diego: Seniors-A-Go-Go (ElderHelp of San Diego) and On-The-Go (Jewish Family Services of San Diego).
 - Both programs utilize back up drivers, such as cab companies.
 - Both programs use the Ride Scheduler program.
 - Grace will be attending the June meeting of the San Diego Volunteer Driver Program Coalition.
 - Riders book ride for pick up, generally by calling in. rides are one way and trips are roundtrip.
 - Seniors-A-Go-Go has been in operation for 11 years.
 - Average price of a one way ride is \$17. The cost of operating the program is about \$34 roundtrip per rider.
 - In 2015 they provided 5,800 rides.
 - The program is funded through a grant: 80% is paid by the County of San Diego and 20% through match up funds.
 - Drivers are reimbursed 0.55 cents mile.
 - Volunteer drivers are the eyes and ears of the rider programs as they are required to report back and make appropriate referrals if there are any issues/situations impacting the “riders”.
 - The drivers’ liability insurance is the primary coverage and then program’s liability insurance pick up if need be.
 - Volunteer driver’s average age is 60 years old.
 - Question developed from discussions:
 - Are there any known programs in place here in the South Bay such as the one in San Diego?
 - Currently no programs such as the ones in San Diego but there is knowledge of a small organization composed of volunteers in Los Angeles that is very limited and localized to their small coverage area.

- Another organization locally based was ITN but it has now closed its doors. We had a presentation by ITN, when it was in operation, in May 2014.

4. Overview of TLC Senior Ride

- Kathy Macaraeg, Founder, provided an overview.
 - Specializes in door to door transportation for seniors.
 - Current service coverage is from El Segundo north to Sunset and La Brea west to the ocean.
 - Hours of operation are Monday through Friday 9am to 6pm and Saturday 9am to 3pm, closed on Sundays.
 - TLC can be reached at 310-338-7247 and on the web at www.tlcseniorride.com.
 - Future options for expansion as long as the demand merits expanding to surrounding cities.
 - TLC has been in business for six years.
 - Excellent option for seniors with disabilities as they are walked from vehicle to door and assisted if a need arises. Downside is current vehicles have no wheelchair access. Kathy explains that this rider program also works well with dementia seniors as the driver stay with rider; more so like a companion service.
 - Cost Rates are based on zone. A round trip can vary from \$30 to \$50 depending on destination needs, however most round trips average range is \$30 to \$35.
 - Most trips average two hours. If trip goes over the two hours, there is a \$5.00 extra fee incurred. No extra charge if a rider has guest riding along on a trip. Fees can be paid by Credit Card, check or cash. Drivers collect payment if a credit card is not on file. According to Kathy, prices are comparable to that of local taxi services on localized trips, but savings are better on long trips as her rates are lower in comparison.
 - The value of this service unlike other rider services is the personalized care of door to door service and companionship like interaction.
 - TLC is mostly managed by Kathy and her assistant. Kathy is involved on a more interactive level with the riders and she schedules most of the rides.
 - Currently there are 5 drivers and 3 vehicles (1 Mini Van and 2 SUVs). Vehicles are branded for visual access to riders. Drivers do not use their personal vehicle or personal insurance. The vehicles are covered under her private company insurance that covers the riders and the drivers.
 - The drivers must pass a criminal back ground check along with a drug screening and undergo a three week training course with Kathy. Drivers are considered part time hourly wage employees. New driver applicants are welcome to apply. Existing driver's age is 35 and older.
 - TLC is a for profit company self-sustained and not funded by outside sources. Kathy is open to partnering with others and expanding her services. Kathy's vision and the initiation of her company came from the apparent need she witnessed for a minimal wait, safe and caring personalized transportation services for seniors. Her company's clientele has been established by referral basis only as she has not used any marketing methods to advertise.
 - Attendees showed appreciation for TLC's senior service and suggested that Kathy considers expanding her services to the Torrance area and other neighboring cities. Kathy responded with positive interest in doing so as long as the demand and means exist in suggested area.

5. SCE and SCG Income-qualified programs update
 - Grace Farwell provided an overview on SCE and So Cal Gas income qualified programs
 - Energy Savings Assistance program provides a number of energy saving measures to be installed free of charge in households that meet a lower income level
 - Middle Income Direct Install program provides the same measures as the Energy Savings Assistance program but with a higher income threshold.
 - The program is a pilot program and it's not being advertised to its full capacity. Very little information is on the So Cal Gas website and no promotional material exists.
 - Grace has been in contact with So Cal Gas and can refer candidates that qualify.
 - Measures include energy saving attic installation, new refrigerators, door and window weatherization and other energy efficiency measures to aid in conserving energy.
 - Grace offered to go out and talk about this program to others if a request is made
6. "Best Cities for Successful Aging" Mayor's Pledge – to be presented to SBCCOG Board of Directors at the April 13 Steering Committee meeting; goal is to have it go before City Councils in May for Older Americans Month – attached
 - Congratulations to the City of Torrance recognized as best city for aging
 - Torrance continues to be very active and has brought forth to the Mayor items and suggestions for improvement
 - Pledge is to be presented at April's SBCCOG Board meeting to encourage all cities to work towards being the best cities for aging..
7. Update on LA County RFP
 - Grace Farwell reported that the anticipated release date of the LA County RFP is in June/July.
8. Older Americans Month in May
 - Flyers were provided as follows:
 - El Segundo Recreation and Parks Department April 2015 Newsletter.
 - El Segundo also presented a flyer on Elderfest "Get into the Act" Automotive Driving Museum happening May 8th, 2015 from 11 am to 2 pm.
 - Torrance Travelers provided Flyer on Spring 2015 Excursion on Wednesday, April 22, 2015 to sign up or for information please call 310-618-2720.
 - City of Torrance Community service will be hosting their 5th Annual Senior Prom happening Friday April 10, 2015 from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm, for more information call 310-320-5918.
 - City of Torrance Community Services Department - Recreation Division for AARP Tax Aide services. Services available from February 2nd to April 15th 2015 from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm, for more information call 310-618-2724.
9. Follow-up Actions
 - Grace is to check into Energy Efficiency Programs that happened in the 1980's, specifically attic programs, methods used and problems encountered causing excessive night heat retention.
10. Next meeting – Tuesday, May 26, 2015 @ 9:30 am