

The Egyptian Area Agency on Aging held three public hearings on the FY2018 amendment to the FY2016-2018 Area Plan. A news release was distributed to area media to announce the time and location of the public hearings. The news release specified the opportunity and deadline for written testimony, and listed locations where the Area Plan Summary public information document could be viewed.

The Area Plan Summary public information document was distributed twenty-one days in advance of the first public hearing, and was mailed to all aging service provider Directors, senior center focal points, regional planning agencies, Illinois Department on Aging, and state legislators.

Below are the locations and approximate number of persons who attended each public hearing site. There may have been more people at each public hearing as some people arrived late and may not have signed the attendance form.

10 people	45 people	25 people
May 31 Senior Meal Site City Hall Grand Tower, IL 10:30 am	June 1 Happy Hearts Senior Center 701 Market Street Metropolis, IL 11:00 am	June 2 Herrin Senior Center 1201 Weaver Road Herrin, IL 10:45 am

Individuals attending included senior adults, Egyptian AAA Board and Advisory Council members, aging service providers, Department on Aging, and other social service agencies. Staff of the Egyptian Area Agency conducted each of the public hearings.

At least 20-40 copies of the Area Plan summary public information document were available at each public hearing site. The Area Plan summary public information document was referenced frequently. An audio tape of each public hearing was made.

Each hearing began with an explanation of its purpose and the Area Plan Summary public information document, the activities of the Egyptian Area Agency, the Area Plan development process and identification of initiatives. Other topics of discussion included service information, funding policy, service waivers, major issues in our area, the description of areas not served by the home delivered meals program, and the funding available for services.

Everyone attending the public hearing was encouraged to make comments and / or ask questions. The opportunity to submit written testimony and the deadline for submitting testimony was explained.

**WRITTEN & OTHER FORMS OF TESTIMONY**

No written correspondence or other forms of testimony were received.

**TESTIMONY AT GRAND TOWER**

1. How are the numbers obtained on the number of people who need Home Delivered Meals (HDM)?

Response: The local senior centers give us their best estimates of people living in rural areas where meals are not delivered but who need HDM and the number of people on their waiting lists where meals are delivered.

2. Why can't the State administer the Ombudsman program from Springfield?

Response: The main obstacle seems to be the difficulty the State has in subcontracting with local provider agencies and the bureaucratic "hoops they must jump through" to issue multiple local contracts.

3. Does the Ombudsman program help people in their homes?

Response: The Ombudsman only helps people in private homes if they are recipients of a state-waivered program, like the Community Care Program.

4. Is there any agency that helps people in homes and living in extremely unsanitary conditions?

There was a very long discussion about an older woman who kept a hog inside her mobile home and was subject to MRSA infections (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus) due to unsanitary conditions. She refused help and public health would not intervene. Discussion of other examples of people refusing help and living in unsanitary or unsafe conditions were also discussed.

Response: It's sad to see people live this way. Unless there is a local zoning/building code that addresses issues like this or becomes a safety issue, it is difficult to get people to accept help when they refuse it.

5. We moved our mother to Illinois from Missouri. She is having trouble receiving Medicaid help in Illinois even though she was eligible in Missouri. Is there anyone that can help us?

Response: The Place in the University Mall in Carbondale can help your mother with the paperwork to get help through the Department of Human Services.

6. There were several questions about family caregiving and grandparents and other people raising children of their relatives. What is your agency doing to help with these (family caregiving) situations?

Response: The services that are available under the Family Caregiver program and client eligibility were explained and discussed.

## TESTIMONY AT METROPOLIS

1. Is the Veterans program only for veterans that live in Illinois?

Response: The Veteran-Directed Home Care program, that we administer, and all of their other in-home programs are offered to veterans regardless of where they live in the U.S.

2. What is going to happen to these programs if there is no State budget?

Response: So far, State courts have ordered or the State has agreed to pay for some services in Illinois. The senior adults' community programs like those provided at senior centers have been included in the distribution of funds, although at a slightly reduced rate. Last year, the State passed a "stop-gap" budget that made our senior service programs "whole" for FY2016. We are hopeful that the State will pass either an entire years' budget or another "stop-gap" budget.

The senior programs in our area can operate through June 30. A few senior programs have a small reserve to continue operating through September 30.

3. Why do places like Chicago get all the money and we don't get any here?

Response: The federal government, state, and our agency distribute funds to local areas based on a funding formula that includes the senior population in each, state, county, and/or large metropolitan area (like Chicago). Therefore, areas where a larger number of senior adults reside will receive a larger amount of funding.

4. It seems that from Marion south there is no funding.

Response: Same answer as the previous comment.

5. Why don't they consolidate agencies that do the same thing in order to save money?

Response: After some clarification, it was noted that this question pertained to agencies that provide services under Medicare. A long discussion of Medicare and their practices ensued.

6. If the money (from the State) doesn't come down will Happy Hearts close?

Response: If the State stops sending our federal and State funds to us, then eventually all senior centers and meal sites will close. I hope that that will not happen.

7. If someone comes up with the means to provide money for this site, could we keep it open on our own?

Response: I suppose that if someone had the means to donate enough money that this center could then stay open. Unfortunately, it would take a considerable amount of money.

8. Could our county keep all the sale tax money it collects without it going to Springfield first?

Response: No, that is not allowed under current law.

### TESTIMONY AT HERRIN

1. Can you explain to us what will happen if the State does not pass a budget?

Response: So far, State courts have ordered or the State has agreed to pay for some services in Illinois. The senior adults' community programs like those provided at senior centers have been included in the distribution of funds, although at a slightly reduced rate. Last year, the State passed a "stop-gap" budget that made our senior service programs "whole" for FY2016. We are hopeful that the State will pass either an entire years' budget or another "stop-gap" budget.

The senior programs in our area can operate through June 30. A few senior programs have a small reserve to continue operating through September 30.

2. Did you send a survey to the senior centers about how long they can remain open without a State budget?

Response: Yes, the survey was conducted a few months ago. At that time, a few senior centers that indicated if funding stopped they would close at the end of June. Most of the senior centers indicated that they had sufficient reserves to stay open until the end of September.

3. Does that include the money the State needs to borrow to pay bills?

Response: The State has been very good about paying us for senior services. The bills that have been submitted for senior center services have been paid relatively promptly by the State. We are grateful for the Department on Aging for advocacy for prompt payment on our behalf.