

SLOCOA Chair's Report

SLOCOA has grown in membership and public interest while at the same time experiencing a decrease in DSS administrative support (because of State budget cuts). This report will show how COA has adjusted and improved because of these changes.

Change leads to Internal Strengthening

- ◆ Increase in membership has led to
 - 1) Clarification of our mission to newcomers. A Job Description for Supervisor Representatives has been written. A job description for Commissioners has been revised and hopefully will be approved at the June meeting.
 - 2) The Nominating Committee, in its second year, setting a foundation for a consistent COA appointment and re-appointment process, guided by the Bylaws.
 - 3) Our first Advocacy Committee formed to increase awareness of County Seniors with hearing loss.
- ◆ DSS budget and staff decreases have led to
 - 1) Chair's duties increasing and need to form an Executive Planning Committee. This committee incorporated the duties of the Planning Committee to reduce the number of outside meetings. Besides conducting the annual planning process, the members of the Exec Planning Committee assist the Chair in preparing the agenda and in Speaker selection.
 - 2) COA members took on new duties i.e. responsibility for Minute Taking, for supplying updated materials to website, for mailings to members, etc. Members have risen to this challenge and this has increased cohesion in the group.

What have we achieved by this emphasis on Internal Strengthening?

SLOCOA now has full membership (17) and full alternate membership (5) for the first time since the Chair has been a member, 2006. Public attendance at our meetings has exceeded past years. This new interest in the Commission has tested COA to show how it is useful to the community. COA has attracted people who want to learn about Community resources available to themselves and their elderly family members. They want to utilize their wisdom and talents while they still have the vigor to do so, and they don't want to waste their precious time!

Recent work in the last few years to clarify the purpose of COA, through bylaw changes, a planning process established for setting goals, and an appointment process that is transparent have set a foundation of understanding about what the Commission means to the Community. Excellent monthly presentations about current community resources, as shown in Attachment A, continue to provide all members with valuable information to disseminate to family, friends and neighbors.

This year's internal strengthening through establishment of COA committees that allow for meaningful member involvement beyond the work done at monthly meetings and the definition of Commissioner's duties has added substance to the meaning of being a Commissioner. If COA benefits by retaining motivated members, this year's focus has been an achievement.

We hope that this summary and the Attachments provided will help clarify our activities in the past year and goals for the next fiscal year. Please feel free to offer any suggestions or requests that would facilitate our communication with the Board.

Sincerely,
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