

Community Action presents Older Americans spending plan

by Renée Shreve
STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND — Community Action representatives recently presented an overview of their 2019 and 2020 federal spending plan to the Garrett County commissioners.

“Every couple years, as the designated Area Agency on Aging, we’re required to submit a plan for how we’re going to propose to use the Older Americans Act money that flows through the state down to the local level,” Community Action President Duane Yoder told the commissioners. “As a part of that, they ask that we provide a report to you all.”

He noted that Pam Hageman, aging and nutrition director, has worked to make programs more self-sufficient through Medicaid reimbursements and other funding sources.

“We’ve made some real progress with that,” Yoder said.

He indicated this “shift” in funding is beneficial, given that actual OAA money keeps decreasing each year. The allocation for fiscal year 2019 will be \$137,851, which is \$2,239 less than Community Action received for FY 2018.

“The formula is based on population, the number of lower-income people and minority persons living in the community,” Yoder said about allocations.

Hageman presented an overview of where funds are coming from and “where they are going.”

OAA funding allocations for FY 2018–2019 were as follows:

- Supportive service (health promotion, nutrition education, information and assistance, elder rights, minor home repairs, telephone assurance, legal assistance, outreach, etc.) — \$35,831 (down \$883).

- Congregate meals (dine-in) — \$48,229 (down \$430).

- Home-delivered meals — \$24,893 (down \$297).

- Health promotion (specifically evidence-based pro-

grams only) — \$9,000 (same).

- National Family Caregiver (Personal Emergency Response Systems, respite, supportive services) — \$16,047 (down \$201).

- Ombudsman (advocacy for nursing home residents) — \$2,914 (down \$415).

- Elder abuse (mitigate abuse through education, options counseling, etc.) — \$937 (down \$13).

In addition, federal Nutritional services Incentive Program funding from the Administration for Community Living are used to bolster congregate and home-delivered meals. Funds are divided in half and distributed to both programs, Hageman noted.

AAA will receive \$32,959 for FY 2019, which is \$568 less than the agency was allocated for FY 2018.

“We’ve had over 5,000 people age 60 and older coming through the doors of Community Action from our community,” Hageman said about a recent fiscal year.

The nonprofit organization provides a wide ranges of services for seniors, including those related to health, fitness, nutrition, insurance and tax preparation assistance.

“We really are a crucial service center in Garrett County in terms of what seniors are looking for,” Hageman said.

The director announced she will retire at the end of July. Hageman was hired by Community Action in April 2013.

Commissioner Jim Hinebaugh thanked Hageman for her efforts to help local senior citizens.

“A lot of people couldn’t make it without your services,” Hinebaugh said.

Hageman obtained her master’s degree in sociology from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Prior to joining Community Action, she was a community development specialist, technical assistance provider to rural communities in the Midwest and land surveyor in the west-

ern mountains.

“This has been a true blessing,” Hageman said about being director of aging and nutrition. “This is a dream job. I wish I had stumbled upon this 20 years ago.”

She plans to “stay on” until Community Action opens a medical adult day care facility in the Thayerville Center, Oakland.

“I’m really committed to staying involved with that,” Hageman said about the project. “I’m passionate about it. We’ll make it happen.”

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