

Heritage AAA Advisory Council  
October 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Present: Shirley Gadelmann, Larry Kudej, Rep. Elinor Levin, Stephanie Schmidt (Guest – Horizons)

Excused: Judi Hertle

Staff: Harrison March

### **Call to Order, Introductions**

Harrison March called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Those present introduced themselves.

### **Acceptance of Agenda**

Larry Kudej motioned to accept the meeting agenda as presented, Shirley Gadelmann second. Motion passed, 3-0.

### **Review of Meeting Minutes – September 2025**

No changes proposed to September 2025 meeting minutes. No quorum present, so Harrison will send the minutes again via email for an electronic vote. (11/18/25 Harrison's note: electronic vote passed, 6-0.)

### **Agency Report**

Harrison March provided the Agency Report:

- There are no immediate impacts of the federal government shutdown on Heritage AAA operations.
- Registration is ongoing for Caregiver Wellness Day on November 6 in Iowa City. The event is on track to be at or near capacity.
- Heritage AAA is restarting live call answering full-time during business hours.
- Heritage AAA is starting new “office hour” type of programs once per month in each county. The events will be at the same time and place each month. Some counties start in November will all expected to begin by January.
- Heritage AAA has two job openings posted online: Elder Rights Coordinator and Options Counselor. Referrals for qualified applicants are welcome.
- Harrison is partnering with a staff member at Kirkwood Lifelong Learning to host the first Corridor Conference on Aging in May 2026. It will be a free event covering a variety of general interest topics for older adults with two keynote speakers and a handful of breakout sessions. Registration information will be available sometime in December.

### **Partner Agency Report**

Stephanie Schmidt of Horizons, A Family Service Alliance, joined the meeting to report on Horizons' current initiatives and recent events. Horizons is one of Heritage AAA's subcontractors providing home-delivered meals in the region. The report included:

- Horizons operates three core programs: Meals on Wheels, Financial Wellness Center and Neighborhood Transportation Service (NTS).
- Meals on Wheels served 268,000 meals last fiscal year and had 365 clients enroll in the new AniMeals program for pet food.
- NTS served 850 riders last fiscal year with 19,000 rides to work and school. A new partnership with Eastern Iowa Health Center provides rides to appointments at their clinic.

- Financial Wellness Center served around 600 households with 96% reporting improved financial readiness.
- Fundraising efforts include Catering for a Cause, the annual Meals on Heels event and the Hawkeye Huddle Lunchbox.
- Horizons will soon enter the public fundraising phase for Our Place, a new senior center located within the Horizons building. They anticipate opening in 2027.

### **Older Iowans Legislature Update**

Larry Kudej provided a report from the Older Iowans Legislature (OIL) annual meeting in September:

- OIL hosted around 50 members at this year's meeting, which has been about average for the past few years.
- Guest speakers included then-Iowa HHS Director Kelly Garcia, ADS Director Zach Rhein and then-DIAL-now-HHS Director Larry Johnson.
- 2026 priority advocacy issues as voted on by the members will be enhanced waged for caretaker workforce, enhancing Iowa Return to Community and other programs to Age in Place and financial literacy to combat scams/fraud.

Shirley asked for key talking points to stress to her legislators. Larry said that HHS does not currently plan to introduce any bills, but the Insurance Division likely will so those are good to focus on. Representative Levin noted that before the session it's helpful to give legislators a heads up on new bills that are expected.

### **Service Data Review**

Harrison reviewed FY2025 service data across Heritage's core programs. A copy of the report was provided before the meeting, but if another copy is needed please reach out.

### **County Updates**

- **Cedar:** Cedar County Senior Center has a community meal fundraiser coming up for \$10 per person. Shirley plans to help out and promote Heritage services to attendees. Volunteers are also working on plans for the annual Fill the Plate fundraiser at the local grocery store the weekend before Thanksgiving.
- **Johnson:** Larry said the Johnson County Healthy Aging Fair in October was so busy that he couldn't find a place to park, but all indications are of a successful event.
- **Benton, Jones, Iowa, Linn & Washington:** not present
- **Statewide:** no report given from those present

### **Open Agenda**

Nothing presented.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m. The next meeting date is January 22 in Cedar Rapids. Harrison will schedule an 'office hour' on Zoom sometime in November in case anyone needs to touch base before the January meeting.