

# 2015 Senior Advocacy Training Evaluations Report

## 1. Programs and Services for the Elderly in Dane County: Joe Parisi, County Executive

Excellent: 13      Good: 2      Fair: 0      Poor: 0

Comments:

- Didn't speak long enough.

## 2. Role of Dane County Board of Supervisors: Sharon Corrigan (Board Chair), Jeff Pertl (Personnel & Finance Committee Chair) and Heidi Wegleitner (Health & Human Needs Committee)

Excellent: 9      Good: 5      Fair: 0      Poor: 0

Comments:

- There was some political posturing/negativity toward other parties.
- Need more time for three speakers.

## 3. Federal Issues: Mark Pocan (U.S. Representative, 2<sup>nd</sup> District)

Excellent: 14      Good: 1      Fair: 0      Poor: 0

Comments:

- Didn't speak long enough, needed more time.

## 4. State Issues: Jon Erpenbach (Wisconsin State Senator, 27<sup>th</sup> District)

Excellent: 12      Good: 3      Fair: 1      Poor: 0

Comments:

- Didn't speak long enough, more time needed.
- He was very helpful and down to earth.

## 5. Older Americans Act Structure and Programs: Jim Schmidlkofer (State of Wisconsin, Retired)

Excellent: 14      Good: 2      Fair: 0      Poor: 0

Comments:

- Needed more time.
- Excellent information.

**6. Advocacy Panel: Mickey Beil (Dane County Lobbyist), Tom Frazier and Esther Olson**

Excellent: 12      Good: 5      Fair: 0      Poor: 0

Comments:

- Mickey needs more time.
- Would like more time to talk about issues.
- Well informed.

**7. Dane County Budget Process: Esther Olson and Tom Frazier**

Excellent: 14      Good: 3      Fair: 0      Poor: 0

Comments:

- Very interesting.
- The story was good about the benefit specialist.
- Interesting, educational.

**8. Advocacy Exercise: Tom Frazier and Esther Olson**

Excellent: 12      Good: 2      Fair: 1      Poor: 0

Comments:

- I appreciated how down to earth they made the process.
- Very enlightening, a great walk-through process where to connect.
- This was difficult. Not enough information was available on the issue to feel competent to advocate for said issue.
- Hard to hear; felt too chaotic.
- Very well put together, which enabled the group to set up a process which should help with their understanding of how the budget works.
- Great info as to how to go about it.

**What did you like best about the training?**

- Explicit and thorough. Getting to meet our legislative representatives in person.
- Learning how the government works and how to approach politicians.
- Well organized. Good presenters.
- Featured presenters Senator Erpenbach, Congressman Pocan, Jim Schmidkofer, county board. It was nice how they put our issue into context with the overall political climate.
- All presenters were well versed and informative. All questions presented were answered to the inquirer's satisfaction. This has made me want to learn more and be more involved.

- Real information, especially details like website info.
- Really liked having speakers and representatives coming in and talking to us.
- I learned a lot about the overall budget process and how we can influence that process.
- Exposed to the county budget process.
- Understanding how advocates and lobbyists work, the layers of governments and how to access them.
- Speakers were well informed. Follow-up informational handouts are invaluable. I have no excuse not to take advantage of current resources to further educate myself.
- Your speakers, their knowledge, experiences. It was all too short.
- I really like the exercise of attending and participating in the budget hearing. It is a great motivation to be directly involved, even if only attending, with added motivation to register and/or testify on selected issues.
- Talk that Tom and Jim gave. Excellent.
- The “nuts and bolts” applicableness of the info we dealt with.
- Time allowed to ask questions. Handouts were helpful and a good resource for future use. I really liked how the program was laid out, starting with procedures of various levels of government followed by how to be an advocate. Learning how to follow legislature on computer.

### **What was the least valuable to you?**

- Every bit was valuable to this novice.
- It was all valuable as a refresher but was disappointed that Senator Baldwin or someone from her staff couldn't attend. Would have liked to ear about her new bill “RAISE”.
- Navigating websites, though I recognize that was helpful for others.
- I actually thought this was almost all of value. Truly useful.
- Realizing what an uphill battle it was to fight big lobbyists.
- Shortage of time.
- Working on the computer screens, can't be seen. The paper prints of the sites was better.
- Some of the website viewing was confusing because of trying to “hunt down” what page was where, etc. Maybe next time do a trial run before the meeting, and possibly a “click by click” instruction sheet to get to some important pages.
- Time. Would have liked one more session.

### **What suggestions do you have to improve future trainings? What would you change? What would you add?**

- A get-to-know-you exercise among participants.
- More question-and-answer time.

- I learned a lot from the exercise. Add additional exercises!
- Expand speakers, topics and time allotted.
- Announce that all phones should be turned off before each session.
- Add a resource sheet for important associations and advocacy groups. For the exercises, having more specific details on the issues (money currently budgeted, number of constituents potentially impacted, perhaps as percentage of population). Schedule training earlier so we can follow process all the way through.
- I appreciated this class very much. Couldn't improve.
- One more session and maybe a handout about how laws are passed.

### **What is your overall rating for the training?**

Excellent: 16

Good: 0

Fair: 0

Poor: 0

### **Any additional comments you would like to share?**

- Great resources, presenters!
- This is a great program. Just would like to find a group of people who like to talk about our important issues, such as how the government works. Good exercises.
- Thank you for this presentation.
- Keep doing this training – expand the knowledge base to help people know what they can do to make a difference. I appreciated this training in understanding the process of (getting) people involved and how I can get involved personally and professionally.
- Really enjoyed speakers and tips on making contact with representatives and process of public meetings.
- Every speaker was very educated and information passed on was valuable. I cannot remember a training program that distributed so much hands-on follow-up information to further educate ourselves at home. Keep up the good work.
- As we proceed, especially with the next steps in this budget process, would like more coaching on how to be involved – a little unclear on if we should be contacting officials, testifying, etc., this time around.