



## **IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING REPORT FY2025 - FY2027**

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

The FY2025 Public Hearing took place on Tuesday, June 4th, 2024, at the Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia Administration Office located at 2551 Eltham Avenue, Suite Q in Norfolk. The purpose of the Annual Public Hearing was to present the agency's existing programs and services, report on the budget, and receive comments on the Strategic Plan for the period spanning from October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2027. Written comments were solicited until May 31st, 2024, addressed to Monika Zajac-Lorke, EA, at [MZLorke@ssseva.org](mailto:MZLorke@ssseva.org), or to Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia, 2551 Eltham Ave, Ste Q, Norfolk, VA 23513. Additionally, a Survey Monkey link for the FY2025-2027 Public Hearing Survey was provided. An invitation to attend the Public Hearing was extended for both in-person and virtual attendance via Facebook Live and Zoom.

The speakers for the event were Amy Pucci, 1st Vice President of the Board of Directors, and Steve Zollos, CEO of Senior Services. The audience comprised Senior Services staff members, Senior Advisory Council members, Strategic Planning Committee members, Community Partners, and public attendees, both in person and via Facebook Live stream and Zoom.

Amy Pucci commenced the Public Hearing at 1:00 p.m., welcoming all attendees, including those viewing the live stream. She introduced the Senior Services Mission Statement and highlighted the agency's ongoing efforts to combat ageism and ensure equity in aging, along with providing an overview of the organization and the individuals and jurisdictions it serves.

Mr. Zollos then delivered a PowerPoint presentation, briefly outlining the purpose of the hearing, which included the presentation of priorities for the FY2025 Area Plan, an opportunity for professional and public input on the needs of older adults and caregivers, and the development of effective Area Plan Priorities. He stressed the significance of input and observations from the Public Hearing in crafting a new Area Plan.

Steve presented the agency's primary focus areas for FY25, which included addressing food insecurity and hunger, affordable housing and homelessness, and mental health and social isolation. He further elaborated on the significant challenges faced by seniors, including the lack of resources for the surging senior population, high living costs, inflation, and inadequate affordable housing.

Steve outlined the services provided by Senior Services to meet community needs, such as options counseling, transportation, in-home services, veterans directed care, home-delivered meals, Medicare benefits counseling, affordable housing programs for homeless seniors, health and wellness classes, and socialization programs at 15 senior centers.

He also reported on the agency's accomplishments over the past year:

- 4,700 People Served
- 225,000 Meals served

- 30,000 Rides provided
- 2,100 In-Home Services provided
- 200 Clients in Emergency Needs
- 130 Clients in Veterans Care Program
- 2,900 Medicare Consults
- 663 Re-admits Avoided

Additionally, Steve presented information about Hayden Village Center Apartments and Senior Center. He concluded by reiterating the agency's mission and how it is being achieved, emphasizing the value of older adults in the community, advocating for equity in aging, and expanding services to accommodate the growing older adult population.

During the event, Steve Zollos, the CEO, invited questions and comments from the live audience, as well as through Facebook and Zoom chats.

Regarding critical challenges, Steve Zollos addressed the increasing demand for services and programs due to the growing population of older adults, the severe effects of social isolation revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the housing crisis affecting older adults, food scarcity, transportation issues, and the invisibility of older adults in the job market. He also addressed inquiries pertaining to the Healthwise Program, Emergency Funds, Meals on Wheels at Portsmouth, and transportation.

The Public Hearing adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Monika Zajac-Lorke, Executive Assistant