

## **COA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 19, 2015**

**COA Members:** Noelle Heyman, Miriam Kelty, Sam Korper, Judy Levy, DaCosta Mason, Barbara Multz (by phone), Rudy Oswald, Reuben Rosenfeld, Isabelle Schoenfeld, Spencer Schron, and Grace Whipple

**HHS Staff:** Odile Brunetto,

**Non-COA Member:** Austin Heyman

### **COA CHAIR REPORT - JUDY LEVY**

- VLN-Sally Shea and Judy met with Donna Mason to discuss collaboration between the two groups. Sally will be the representative from COA and Donna and/or Sandra will attend our meetings.
- Austin Heyman announced that Grace Whipple and The Gaithersburg Senior Center received an award for their diversity program. Grace mentioned that there will be a name change to Benjamin Gaither Center and will serve a broader population- new logo 55+.
- Reviewed the COA's Annual Meeting basic outline which will be forwarded from Myrna Cooperstein who will be organizing the meeting. She needs volunteers. At this point possible invitees are Uma, AARP representative, Glenn Wright. There was a suggestion that the panel be linked to the 2014 Planning Process Summer Study Age-Friendly City/County Task Group recommendation in that the Annual Meeting Panel could explore what a Task Group needs to explore (e.g., what will it take to get to AFC).
- Post-Retreat Follow-up Team: Reviewing and will propose updates/modifications to specific sections of the By-Laws. This review is taking into consideration certain recommendations developed at the retreat.
- MCPS eliminated funding (\$50K) from their budget for the InterAges program. The county provides \$90K to InterAges. COA is writing a letter of support for InterAges urging the School Board to restore the funding. The School Board could reconsider this in May. There was a question raised related to whether COA has a policy about supporting a specific organization vs a program in general. Some thought there was precedent in that we wrote letters of support for Village Rides and Senior Connection, for example. Suggestion that the retreat committee deal with this as a policy issue. Noelle Heyman with input from Sam Korper will modify the letter to the School Board President.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- COA members to be made aware that volunteers are needed to work on the Annual Meeting.
- Letter from COA to President, Board of Education, in support of the InterAges Program.

### **AAA DIRECTOR'S REPORT - ODILE BRUNETTO**

- AAA still has two frozen positions, but have been allowed to recruit for one nurse and one billing specialist.

- State FY15 reductions \$61,000 in the Senior Care grant. We will work with the State MDoA to use personnel lapse funds from a position vacancy and we are freezing any new admissions into the program for now. For this program, the State FY16 reductions are expected to double the FY15 amount of reduction, unless the General Assembly acts otherwise.
- There was a brief discussion regarding what's happening to folks on the Group Home Subsidy waiting list. Odile said that her staff called everyone on the waitlist and 10% did go to nursing homes, which is very expensive. Judy mentioned that some states are prioritizing waiting lists, i.e. triage lists vs. first come first serve. Odile mentioned that the State has contracted to contact each person on the state waitlist for CFC Medicaid with a screening tool to triage by severity of need. They are doing this in the Spring. It's a long-term problem and we need to educate ourselves about this
- The FY16 budget for the State DHMH includes several reductions to the Medicaid rate payments for physicians, nursing homes, and long-term care community based services. Those proposed cuts total \$6 million. In addition, the FY16 budget includes the elimination of a State funded subsidy program of Medical Adult Day Care. Unless the General Assembly is able to reverse this cut, 500 persons statewide would be affected.
- The White House Conference on Aging is having special on line listening sessions. The COA is working with the Vital Living Network (VLN) to host such an event either on March 31st or April 27th. More details will follow.
- The COA had been informed that the MCPS budget for FY16 eliminates \$50,000 for the InterAges program. COA is preparing a letter to the President of the School board urging reconsideration of that decision. InterAges has been funded for over twenty years jointly by both MCPS and HHS. InterAges presented to the COA in November 2014.
- We encourage all COA members to attend the COA Committee Meetings. These meetings are also open to the public and so interested persons can attend.
- Two Spring House long-term care facilities are closing in the County (one in Silver Spring and one in Bethesda). The closing affects a total of 95 residents who need to relocate. Some are receiving assisted living services, others are in independent living. Our Long Term Care Ombudsman Staff and volunteers are involved in assisting during this transition.
- The County Office of Economic Development, the WIB and JCA are sponsoring and seeking nominations for the *Experience Counts Award*. The closing date is March 27. Please share this opportunity to recognize businesses in the County with exemplary practices in the employment of Older Workers. Please call 240-777-2000 or see: [ChooseMontgomeryMD.com/business-community/experience-counts](http://ChooseMontgomeryMD.com/business-community/experience-counts). The award ceremony will be held on June 1st during the JCA Senior Job Expo.

## **STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING – GRACE WHIPPLE & SPENCER SCHRON**

- Judy met w/ Uma to get her support. (See handout). Judy is drafting an invite. October 21 and 28 are dates that are being considered. We would try to hold the next event in the Silver Spring Civic Building.
- Purpose: Bring awareness of the 2014 Summer Study on Family Caregivers needs/recommendations to policy-makers. Stakeholder Forum needs to be solution-focused.
- There was a brief discussion including “what is government doing wrong” that folks feel/need to go it alone? issues are: access, adequacy, application, also duplication and efficiency. Need a lot more specifics on the recommendations and best practices going into the stakeholder meeting. The stakeholders should address private caregivers needs; they need support as well. Perhaps we should have breakout sessions w/policymakers. We need to make linkages between the Summer Study report findings and local/state government agencies/services. We should also collaborate with other groups who are representing other generations. Non-profits should be part of this. Meals on wheels, family services. Who they are, what they do?
- Noelle mentioned that there was a state level task force who administered a caregiver survey to five thousand surveyees. They have the survey data.

## **PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT – DACOSTA MASON & RUDY OSWALD**

**State level:** There is a need to parse what's happening in legislation and what we can do. Monitored over 25 bills.

- Sent letters of support to various committees on bills. The bills dealt with various aspects of adult abuse: increasing penalties for adult abuse, requiring a registry of abusers, preventing the pre-trial release of accused abusers, the freezing of assets of abusers, and the seizure of property of the abuser.
- Provided written and oral testimony before House and Senate Committees on four bills. Two bills dealt with the transfer of a deed at death, and two with the provision of sick leave.
- Participated in the United Seniors of Maryland (USM) Lobby Day. John Honig's summary of this event was distributed to the COA members. Need to discuss COA's future participation in the USM lobby day.
- Sent a letter to the Health and Human Services Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee requesting restoration of cuts in the Governor's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene FY '16 budget regarding certain Medicaid services and non-Medicaid Adult Day Care subsidies.
- AARP wants us to get COA involved in opposing deregulation of telecommunications. It would remove oversight of utilities. We'll probably get involved.
- March 11 hearing on the Care Act. Hospital discharge training for caregivers; train caregivers on how to take care of patients in transitioning from hospital to home. Pushed nationally by AARP.

**County level:**

- Sent letter in support of County bill to provide more specific notice and information concerning sidewalk closures before and during construction work.
- Provided written testimony on County bill that will provide paid sick and safe leave to employees who work in Montgomery County.
- Provided comments at three of the five County Executive's budget forums.
- All Commission members will meet with County Council members in April.

**Federal level:**

- COA wrote letters to Senators Mikulski and Cardin requesting their continued support for the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. (Senate Bill 192).

**AGING IN PLACE COMMITTEE – MIRIAM KELTY**

- Prior to the meeting, COA member Chuck Kauffman suggested that the AIPC name be changed to Age Friendly Community Committee. There was agreement that it was premature to change the name and there was a consensus vote to table the proposal.
- In March AIPC will consider the framework to assess progress in the areas they monitor, starting with transportation.
- See AIPC February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting notes for the update.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS COMMITTEE – NOELLE HEYMAN & ARVA JACKSON**

- The Health and Wellness Committee met for the first time in February to review goals and objectives and develop strategies for moving forward in 2015. The Committee also coordinated with Public Policy on research and responses to legislative proposals and letters of support for proposed legislation.
- See H&W Committee February 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting notes for the update.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH COMMITTEE – BARBARA MULITZ & REUBEN ROSENFELD**

- Seniors Today Taping is on schedule with topics to include Senior Nutrition, Senior Transportation, and Senior Recreation Centers Programs

Respectively submitted by,

Isabelle Schoenfeld, Secretary