

COMMISSION ON AGING RETREAT

Meeting Summary Notes
Wednesday, September 17, 2014

COA Members

Sam Korper
Arva Jackson
Isabelle Schoenfeld
Spencer Schron
Miriam Kelty
Revathi Vikram
Myrna Cooperstein

DaCosta Mason
Jerry Morenoff
Tammy Duell
Charles Kauffman
Sally Shea
Noelle Heyman
Reuben Rosenfeld

Syed Yusuf
Rudolph Oswald
Barbara Mulitz
Song Hutchins

Staff

Odile Brunetto
John Kenney
Shawn Brennan
Tremayne Jones
(recorder)

Guests

Judith Welles
Leslie Marks
Marcia Pruzan
Elaine Binder
Sara Gotbaum

Introduction and Overview-Judith Levy

Chair, Judith Levy opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the meeting. Judy introduced guest speakers Shawn Brennan, Mobility Manager and Dr. Odile Brunetto, AAA Director who updated the COA on the behalf of Pazit Aviv, Village Coordinator.

New Position Updates

Shawn Brennan, Mobility Manager was introduced to the COA meeting where she discussed transportation options within Montgomery County. Shawn addressed the COA members on the following Q &A's.

1. Would you please share a couple of successes related to your work?
 - Developing strong relationship with Department of Transportation staff. We are working together on a project to promote free and discounted bus service (Ride On and Metrobus) and the availability of the Call 'n Ride program. Venues could include bus sides, bus shelters, postcards, flyers and newspaper ads.
 - Involved in helping County advocates and colleagues to convince Maryland's Transit Administration (MTA) to include an elevator at the Laytonsville station of the purple line.
 - JCA's inclusive coordinated transportation grant has spread the word about the existence of Connect-a-Ride, most notably through the inclusion of information about the program in over 300,000 property tax bills mailed to residents this summer. JCA likely to receive additional grant funding beyond the original grant cycle.
 - The escorted transportation pilot program managed by JCA (and funded by the County) saw an almost four-fold increase in the number of rides from FY13 to FY14. The amount of the contract budget spent on rides increased 26%.
 - The Village Rides program managed by JCA is dealing well with the challenges of facilitating collaboration among participating villages and incorporating new technology—the web based "Ride Scheduler"

- The Senior Subcabinet expressed concern about the safety of older drivers in the County. I am now finalizing with the Police Department an information sheet on this topic that the Office of Public Information will design and help make available to the public.
 - Invited to present “The Five A’s of Older Drive Safety” to the Maryland Gerontological Association.
2. Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in your work?
 - Connecting with the Maryland Department of Transportation staff member who is the State’s liaison with Metro Access.
 3. What has been the biggest challenge(s)?
 - Discerning what is within my control and what is not. Our specialized transportation system is complex. The people responsible for these programs have a lot on their plate—engaging them toward common goals will take time.
 4. Would additional funding help to overcome these challenges? If so, how? Please be specific.
 - We hope to pursue funding through the Transportation Planning Board (managed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments) due October 17th to achieve goals such as providing more support to Connect-a-Ride callers; reaching out to non-English speaking populations; and studying how the various transportation providers can both work together and utilize technology to better serve the community. Matching funds of 20% from the County will be required.
 5. Is funding adequate to meet your short and long-term goals? If not, please be specific about the needs.
 - Some programs need more funds to meet existing and future needs. For example, between 2005 and 2013, The Senior Connection delivered more than double the units of service to County Seniors with only a 5% increase in County funding. Demand has so outpaced capacity that riders now need to request rides up to three weeks in advance of need for transportation.
 - We anticipate that we may need to scale back the Escorted Transportation Program as the funds may be depleted before the end of this fiscal year. Increasing funding to accommodate increased needs in FY16 likely will be needed.
 - To expand free Ride-On services to all day and weekends, more funding is needed to the Department of Transportation.
 - Commitment to funding outreach on a continual basis will ensure that all people who need existing services are aware of them.
 6. Please add any other brief comments that you think would be beneficial for the Commission to know and understand.
 - The “elephant in the room” of senior mobility is the growing number of individuals who will continue to drive even though their ability to do so safely is compromised. Dealing sensitively and effectively with this issue is going to be vital moving forward.

Odile presented on the behalf of Pazit Aviv the Villages Coordinator. Odile addressed the COA members on the following Q &A's.

1. Would you please share a couple of success related to your work?
 - Creating a presence for existing and developing Villages in the County through meetings, attending Villages' events, creating a monthly email update, updating the County website and facilitating groups and more.
 - Facilitating an increase in the exchange of information and wisdom among villages.
 - Currently, there are 12 active Villages, 7 in development and 16 in seed stage.
2. Have you experienced any unexpected challenges in your work?
 - Finding affordable insurance, office space, meeting spaces, and other infrastructure support for several Villages.
3. What has been the biggest challenge(s)?
 - Triaging priorities. There is so much to do and not enough time in the day.
 - Outreach to diverse communities has begun with the Hispanic community and there is a need to invest a significant amount of effort into building meaningful and trusting relationships with the community.
4. Would additional funding help to overcome these challenges? If so, how? Please be specific.
 - It would be great to have a way to offer start up costs support for new Villages. They are now going through the annual County Council or County Executive grant process and it is not easy to jump through all the hoops. Villages at that stage are sometimes in need of easier processes. I would like to have a small discretionary fund that will be designed to serve this function and the priorities villages that serve diverse communities and those that are just starting up.
5. Is funding adequate to meet your short and long-term goals? If not, please be specific about the needs.
 - Other than what I have just stated, I think funding is not the issue, but continue to push through all the challenges. With time, I may have a better sense of where investing more funds would be a wise suggestion.
6. Please add any other brief comments that you think would be beneficial for the Commission to know and understand.
 - Building a Village requires time and effort of local leadership. There are actions steps I can take to help the process along but also much that I do not have control over. This is a long term investment that will yield results in a span of a few years.

There is a tremendous amount of excitement and interest in many neighborhoods all over the County. But it takes more than one person in a community to get a village going.

HHS/A&D Report

Jay Kenney, Chief of Aging and Disability Services addressed the Commission on Aging members and guests with details on the budget. Jay spoke about the HHS Senior Leadership Meeting that he attended and the priorities that were discussed at the meeting.

- Protecting public health was listed as a top priority
- Protection of individuals such as Child Protective Services (CPS) and Adult Protective Services (APS)

- Meeting basic human needs such as food, clothing, basic shelter for homeless persons
- Housing
- Prevention–Quality of Life
- A unified message from all HHS related Boards and Commissions could gather around prevention, mental health, multi-generational poverty

Odile Brunetto, Director of Area Agency on Aging addressed the Commission on Aging the following information

- Current Waitlist information
 - Case Management 173
 - Senior Care 106
 - Group Home Subsidy 99
- MAPC 410 new applicants in 6 months in FY14
- APS investigations: FY13: 709 FY14:776
- APS financial exploitation cases: FY14 203, about ¼ of investigations, FY13: 138
- Public Guardianship caseload increased by almost 25% over last year from 77 to 101
- Senior Nutrition expanded cold lunch meals serving close to 900 seniors residing in 18 low income housing sites
- Respite 453 served, 23% are seniors
- Adult Day Health Center subsidies: 30 served
- Position recruitments: CFC Nurse Managers, Billing Specialist, Long Term Care Ombudsman and part-time Senior Fellow for Caregiver Supports

Odile also discussed the following

- COA advocated last year for a multi year effort to increase Adult Foster Care payment to small group home providers. COA successfully advocated in FY15 (additional \$116,565) in the Council. COA needs to focus on second year (FY16) of this initiative.
- On September 18th the State Attorney's office will present on their work related to Financial Exploitation. This office has seen a gigantic increase in workload and needs additional resources.
- The Office of Legislative oversight will conduct 2 studies in FY15:
 - a) Mental Health Services
 - b) Affordable Housing

COA may wish to advocate for these studies to include older adults needs. COA Chair and Senior Housing Senior Fellow have contacted Office of Legislative about the second study.

- The Hebrew Home has received a grant this fiscal year from the County Council to provide an emergency bed for up to 60 days when an abused older adult needs to be removed immediately from an abusive household. This is the first time that this service is available in our County. The Hebrew Home is working in collaboration with APS and the police.
- Leslie Marks, Jay Kenney, Emily Glazer and Odile are planning a meeting on September 24th with PLC to invite a small number of non-profit agencies that could apply for grant funding identified by PLC. The goal is to engage non traditional partners focusing on health and wellness of low/moderate income seniors. Small grants of \$2,500 are anticipated for the non profit agencies who participated by invitation.
- Holy Cross hospital reports operating 29 support groups for Family Caregivers in the County. Also, the new Germantown Hospital is opening first week of October.
- Parking issues at 401 Hungerford Drive creates challenges for all. The company next door is enforcing towing very strictly and thus visitors are being impacted. A&D

staff is in the process of scheduling meetings for 2015 in different locations for COA meetings

- HOC Elizabeth House will be renovated. COA may be interested in having a presentation about this existing project.
- County Council Bill 41-14 has been drafted. It proposes to ban use of styrofoam products and use recyclable items instead in all food services. The fiscal impact on Senior Nutrition Program is being developed.

Summer Study Recommendations-Summer Study Chairs

Noelle Heyman presented to the COA about the Family Caregiver Summer Study

(A) Family Caregiver Support: An Exploration of Best Practices and Approach Models

Executive Summary

The Commission on Aging (COA) sponsored two activities to identify issues that are of concern to caregivers of older adults. These activities were a 2013 COA Summer Study and a COA Stakeholder Forum in February 2014:

The 2013 Summer Study identified the most significant challenges faced by family caregivers, educated Commission members about these challenges and developed a number of recommendations including 'an expansive investigation by the Commission on Aging's Health and Wellness Committee to gather information related to existing legislation, resources, and programs in order to establish a baseline of knowledge specific to this issue'. Following the 2013 Summer Study, the Health and Wellness Committee continued to focus on the caregiving issue and supported the COA recommendation to fund a Caregiver Coalition Coordinator position. It was determined, at that time that a caregiver coordinator would be better equipped to conduct an investigation and map caregiver resources.

The 2014 Stakeholder Forum resulted in caregiver recommendations including the benefit of a single point of contact and a centralized information source to address caregiver concerns and easy access to critical information. Specifically, caregiver participants requested:

- Focus on the coordination, organization and leadership of caregiver support activities, information and services in the form of a caregiver coordinator, coalition or council
- Easy access to culturally relevant information about assistance and resources available to caregivers
- Enhanced respite care availability and accessibility
- Information about and access to available mental health resources

The 2014 Summer Study builds on recommendations from the 2014 Stakeholders Forum. We explored best practices for and approaches to meeting caregiver support needs and challenges implemented by State, local governments and caregiver support organizations across the country.

Findings:

- There is no "one size fits all" caregiver support approach. Caregiver support needs are as varied as the caregivers and those for whom they care.
- Technology is challenging for some and navigating through myriad websites for resources specific to personal need can be overwhelming.

- In person support groups make arranging time away from the loved one difficult and potentially expensive.
- Easy navigation through culturally relevant, varied, flexible and inclusive support approaches and communication channels will provide the greatest level of support for the greatest number of caregivers.
- Creation of an effective, efficient and sustainable Caregiver Coalition or Council requires careful thought and planning.
- The Alzheimer's Association provides a great example of caregiver support via multiple multi-lingual and culturally relevant communication channels—including the development of spontaneous and informal caregiver support coalitions-- across the country and the world: phone, web, print, support groups (online and in person), resources, education, service providers and more.
- Local hospitals must now develop and implement Community Plans to help address community health care and mental health needs.
- Funding and sustainability are major challenges to caregiver support initiatives, programs and approaches. Partnerships enhance funding opportunities.

Our high level recommendations:

- Montgomery County HHS approved FY15 staffing support for a Caregiver Coordinator—a part time Senior Fellow (caregiver coordinator) position. HHS will recruit for this position once it is established in the County Human Resources System. While we greatly appreciate funding for the Senior Fellow position, we strongly recommend funding for a full time permanent caregiver coordinator position.
- The caregiver coordinator will share with Commissioners (for feedback and insights) plans to develop a public-private Family Caregiver Coalition or Council charter and options for creating an effective, efficient and sustainable operating infrastructure for said Coalition or Council.
- The AAA Staff or the Montgomery County Caregiver Coordinator, when hired, will investigate the possibility of working with Alzheimer's to enhance Montgomery County caregiver support. Determine if there is an opportunity to utilize their caregiver support communications for County residents (perhaps co-opted branding on the Montgomery County website and other materials).
- The Commission on Aging should invite the CEOs of the 5 local hospitals to 1) share findings from the Stakeholder Forum and the COA Family Caregiver Summer Studies, 2) learn about the "Community Plans" for each hospital, and 3) identify opportunities to work together to support the needs of caregivers and those for whom they care.
- The Montgomery County Caregiver Coordinator, when hired, should work with the Weinberg Foundation in developing an initiative/model for Montgomery County that would help coordinate family caregiver services and qualify for support funding from the Foundation

Summer Study 2014 findings and recommendations will assist Montgomery County in determining which approaches and models might best address the needs stated by County residents who are family caregivers and enhance family caregiver support services currently offered by the County.

(A) An Exploration of Caregiver Support Models and Approaches
Summer Study Recommendations

- Look at what local hospitals are doing to support caregiving.

- Gather CEOs from the 5 local hospitals for a meeting with the Commission on Aging. Share recommendations from the Stakeholders Meeting and the Summer Study for their feedback.
- Engage in focused and coordinated advocacy efforts in support of caregiving legislation. Advocate strongly for funding OAA.
- Make Montgomery County government a model employer for caregivers.
- Advocate for the County and State to adopt “paid sick leave” for caregivers.
- Follow up on the federal perspective on caregiving. Learn what the Administration for Community Living can do to support County efforts.
- Look at international efforts to address caregiver support needs.
- Follow up with the Weinberg Foundation re: funding for Montgomery County caregiver support efforts focused on increasing cultural relevancy and reducing ethnic and health disparities.
- Consider partnering with and/or building on Interfaith Works efforts around Caregiving.
- Enhance Montgomery County website to ease access to the caregiver support portal. Create a “one stop shop” Caregiver portal for all caregiver information easily accessible, multi-cultural throughout multiple agencies
- Consider partnering with the Alzheimer’s Association differently to gain access to their on-line support tool with revised branding that is not specific to Alzheimer’s disease.
- Consider producing an online video about caregiver support available from the County.
- Create on-line chat for Caregiver support.
- Create ethnically focused Adult Day Centers. This is already happening. I would change to- Create ethnically focused caregiver support and services.
- Encourage business to develop culturally and ethnically relevant support services.
- Create/support a business coalition to explain and support caregiver services (e.g., GROWS).
- Explore the Arts and Medicine movement. Consider alternative options to caregiver support including: visual arts, painting, dancing, story telling, journaling, gardening and music.
- Enhance ADRU call volume and issue tracking. Track and report on the numbers of residents on service wait lists. Determine how best to track the quality of recommended service providers and develop a process to address complaints of residents referred to vendors by the County. Look for ways to connect and collaborate with contractors/vendors to ensure a seamless experience for clients. Consider a specified caregiver call hour once a week.
- Identify potential caregiver support pilot projects and programs. Meet with the Weinberg Foundation to share ideas and obtain feedback. Apply for grant funding of approved pilots
- Perform a County needs assessment to determine available home care workers vs. current and anticipated resident needs. Use resulting data to develop strategies to address identified needs.
- Perform a County needs assessment to Partner with local hospitals, schools, nursing home and assisted living providers, home health and nursing organizations, businesses and others to create and pilot caregiver support training programs—perhaps with Weinberg funding.
- Help businesses learn about County assistance available to caregivers.
- Help businesses understand when and how to refer those with overwhelming needs.
- Vet recommended mental health programs and services recommended by the County.
- Develop strategies to encourage and sustain caregiver support programs, models and approaches implemented by the County.

(B) Charles Kauffman presented to the COA the Summer Study on Montgomery County (Planning Processes). The recommendations will include

- Senior concerns are recognized throughout the planning and development process
- all sectors of the County are working towards a livable community
- there is improved communication and coordination between government entities

- the COA's advocacy role is strengthened
- Montgomery County will consider implementing AARP's "Livable Communities" and the World Health Organization (WHO) "Age Friendly Cities" program and checklist, providing global stature and economic growth for the County and fulfilling its Senior Agenda and Community for a Lifetime goals.

Charles addressed the recommendations that were conducted during the summer study:

- The COA should advocate for inclusion of a "Senior" section in all Master Plans and Sector Plans.
- The COA should expand the Senior Agenda, using resources cited in this report (e.g. the World Health Organization (WHO) checklist of essential features of age friendly cities) and other resources. This would ensure comprehensive coverage of all the key features of an Age Friendly County and will guide the County Council, County Departments, Planners, Developers, and Advocates in making the County a more livable community for older adults.
- The COA should recommend that a high-level staff position be created on the County Planning Board to advocate and promote senior issues.
- The COA should recommend that the County Executive and the County Council coordinate to have a representative from the Planning Board on the Senior Sub-Cabinet, engaging fully as a member with senior County department heads.
- The COA should provide leadership and strong advocacy for older adults in the planning process by building relationships and strategic partnerships with the government, for-profits and non-profit sectors.
- The COA believes that Montgomery County should become a WHO Age Friendly City (County) because it is a comprehensive approach to ensure that the needs of older adults and everyone else in the community are met. Therefore, COA should advocate with the County Executive/Council that a task group be formed to explore the steps and resources involved in Montgomery County joining the WHO Age Friendly Cities program.

Senior Agenda and Budget Recommendations-Judith Levy/Odile Brunetto

Chair, Judith Levy and Odile Brunetto discussed the Senior Agenda and Budget Recommendations with the COA.

Possible budget impact items for FY16

1. FT position for Planning Board
2. FT position for Caregivers Supports
3. Increase adult foster care small groups home provider rate
4. Increase Senior Connection funding
5. Increase JCA Escorted Transportation funds
6. Additional positions for APS, State Attorney's Office & Police
7. Create a flexible pool of money for start up villages
8. Dedicated funds for publicity promoting senior transportation services/etc
9. Expand free Ride-On 24/7 for seniors with disabilities
10. Respite Care increase subsidies
11. Adult Day Care subsidies increase

COA members began prioritizing and items 1,2,3,6,7 were reviewed as highly priority.

Small group discussion of Pre-Retreat Questions-Elaine Binder/All

Elaine Binder who facilitated the meeting dispersed the COA members into 3 groups to discuss the questions from the pre-retreat questionnaire. The groups were rejoined together to discuss the

questionnaire and the topics of the COA retreat, the following responses were compiled together with these responses.

Annual Meeting

- Should be continued
- Date(s)–Should it be September to start the year rather than May, with a second one in May
- Focus:
- Planning
 - A retreat experience
 - Inspirational element
 - Establishing priorities–using Senior Agenda
 - Selecting Summer Studies

Summer Studies

- Important opportunity for in-depth study of issues
- Help define policy/budget issues
- Should emerge from the Senior Agenda
- Implementation is critical–assign responsibility to committee/subcommittee
- Need to debrief with lessons learned for the future

General

- Role of Committees need to be defined
- Need more time for discussion and deliberation
- Public input is important

Senior Agenda

- Define how we will use this
- Helpful to have metrics
- What is the relationship to committees?
- Shouldn't we do some priority setting?

COA Members

- Need orientation and a social component
- Need to be educated before meetings such as a Legislative Breakfast and Council meetings
- Need an “elevator speech” about the Commission
- Have a mentor or buddy system for new members

Relationship Building is important

- Council members
- Department heads
- Liaisons to various groups, both internal and external
- Formal to informal

The last two questions of the questionnaire were discussed amongst the COA members and their responses to each question were:

Question #8

What are the ways that COA's visibility can be enhanced to the residents of the County? For example:

- a. Report on and answer Qs on COA activities at e.g., neighborhood citizens association meetings, village meetings and faith groups?
 - b. Name tags for COA members to wear at public meetings
 - c. Business cards for COA members
 - d. COA brochure describing COA activities at a high level that can be distributed at public hearings
 - e. Other
- County should assume more responsibility and promote role of COA as an advocate for older adults
 - Ask the Public Information Office to include information in the "Paperless Airplane"
 - Focus on a specific member who is part of a community
 - COA members need to attend Town Hall meetings and identify themselves as a COA member speaking out on issues of concerns to the COA
 - Particularly important in diverse communities
 - Hold a candidates forum in partnership with other groups such as the Commission on Health and the Commission on People with Disabilities
 - Brand the COA
 - Get credit for what the COA does
 - Include a "call to action" component
 - Press Releases
 - Link to Annual Reports online
 - New COA members
 - Other issues of importance— e.g., releasing Summer Study reports
 - Leverage partnerships as COA expands relationships and liaisons with other groups
 - Publicity—members can write
 - Column in *The Beacon*; Beacon Bits
 - Village websites
 - Wave
 - Listservs
 - Name tags/badges are important identifiers
 - Need to find the strategic communications plan and update it

Question #9

Are you aware of the purpose and history of "Seniors Today" and its relationship with COA? Do you have any recommendations for the COA about "Seniors Today?"

- Continue to advocate for regular time slot
- Consider translation into language other than English

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Myrna Cooperstein, COA Secretary