



Montgomery County Commission on Aging Meeting Minutes

July 24, 2025

9:30 AM to 12:00 PM

Commissioners: Wayne Berman, Linda Bergofsky, Yvette Monroe, David Engel, Laurie Pross, Virginia Cain, Betsy Carrier, Vernell DeWitty, Joyce Dubow, Mona Grieser, Marie Sloan, Kate Stein, Janice Zalen, ChiQuita Battle, Ora Johnson, Albert Woodward, RC (Renee) Randall, Elizabeth Boyd, Candy Schimming, Lisa Sun, Robert Cosby, Sibon Ncube, Kathleen McGuinness, Katie Smith

Commissioner not present: Norman Goldstein, Willie (Don) McCullough, Kamilah Mantle, Kendell Matthews, Eleanor Tanno, Morris Klein, Dixie Butler, Liz Barnes, Nicole McDonald

County: Peter Illig, Dr. Patrice McGhee, Dr. Kimberly Johnson, Sara Swarr, Shawn Brennan, Betsy Luecking, Tremayne Jones

Invited Speakers: Steve Riley, Tonya Gilchrist, Carmen Kaarid

Guests: Rachel Goldberg, Alyse Cooper, Eric Wang, Yulia Gufranova

I. Welcome and Co-Chairs' Remarks The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:30 AM by Co-Chair Linda Bergofsky. She welcomed attendees, including Co-Chair Wayne Berman and Vice-Chair Yvette Monroe. Dr. Patrice McGee, Chief of Aging and Disability Services (A&D), and Dr. Johnson, Director of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), were acknowledged. Staff liaisons Sean Brennan and Peter Ilic were also present.

II. New Business: Panel Discussion on Collaborations The agenda was adjusted to begin with the panel discussion. The topic was collaborations with other county boards, commissions, and committees. The speakers were:

- **Steve Riley**, Chair, Commission on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)
- **Tanya Gilchrist**, Chair, Commission on People with Disabilities (CPD)
- **Carmen Kaarid**, Program Manager, Commission for Women (CFW)

The speakers discussed their commissions' priorities, advocacy efforts, and community outreach.

- **Steve Riley (IDD Commission):** Highlighted that the IDD Commission is the newest in the county, established in March 2023. Their priorities for the year include making Montgomery County a "sensory friendly community" and addressing the critical shortage of Direct Service Professionals (DSPs). The commission is creating a resource guide for DSP training and career development.
- **Tanya Gilchrist (CPD Commission):** Emphasized her focus on accessible living spaces and universal design, drawing from her background in social work and interior design. The CPD Commission's priorities include accessible and safe transportation (pedestrian safety, sidewalk installation, and bike lane issues), housing (accessible and affordable housing, and advocating for an accessibility requirement in Moderately Priced Dwelling Units), and advocating for increased wages for caregivers.
- **Carmen Kaarid (Commission for Women):** Explained that the CFW is both an advisory board and a department of the county government. They focus on advancing the rights of women and girls through advocacy at the county and state levels, community outreach, and free or low-cost programs. Their priorities are grouped into three-year increments around women's economic and financial security, leadership, education, and health. The commission is active on various social media platforms and publishes a weekly newsletter.

A Q&A session followed the presentations. Key topics included:

- Methods for outreach and communications, with CFW highlighting its dedicated staff and large newsletter subscriber base.
- A question on the definition of "ableism."
- The potential for collaboration on communications efforts among the commissions.
- Concerns about the critical shortage of direct service professionals and caregivers across all three commissions' constituencies.

III. Old Business

- **Approval of June Meeting Minutes:** Wayne Berman moved to approve the June minutes. The motion was seconded and approved with no opposition or abstentions.
- **Status of Follow-up to Caregiving Forum:** Wayne Berman and Kate Stein reported that a summary of the Caregiving Forum has been completed and sent to speakers for review. A smaller working group will meet to discuss next steps, particularly in preparation for National Caregiving Month in November. Laurie Pross and Anna Johnson provided updates on the November 17th-21st events, which will be a mix of in-person and virtual sessions focusing on mental health and spirituality in caregiving.
- **FY 27 Priority Setting:** Linda Bergofsky presented the framework for setting priorities. The process involves committees reviewing existing priorities and proposing new ones, which will be presented at the September meeting. A new voting methodology using a "100 virtual pennies" allocation was proposed and discussed. The voting will be split into two categories: budget priorities and non-budgetary policy priorities.

IV. A & D and AAA Updates Dr. Patrice McGee and Dr. Johnson provided updates from the recent U.S. Aging conference.

- **Older Americans Act:** Dr. McGee expressed concern about the potential consolidation of the Administration for Community Living into a new department, which could impact funding and advocacy efforts. She noted that the Older Americans Act is due for reauthorization and urged the commission to continue its advocacy efforts with federal legislators.
- **Respite Care:** Dr. McGee highlighted respite care as a major priority, noting a significant year-over-year increase in demand from over 350 to over 500 families.
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program:** Dr. Johnson reported that the application period for the manager position has closed, with over 50 applicants. The interviewing process is about to begin.
- **Nursing Home Surveys:** A contract has been secured with Resnick Chardro and Associates to conduct a resident experience of care survey, as required by Senate Bill 376.
- **Age-Friendly Community Needs Survey:** Sean Brennan announced that the vendor for the survey is Ascendant, and the kickoff meeting has taken place. The vendor will develop a plan over the next eight weeks before getting into the field. He invited interested commissioners to contact him to be involved in the process.

V. Committee Reports

- **Aging and Community:** Wayne Berman reported that the committee is in the process of finalizing its priorities for the September meeting.
- **Public Policy:** Kate Stein reported that the committee met to discuss priorities and has scheduled meetings with Delegates Wix, Shen, and Charcudian to build relationships and discuss legislative plans.
- **Health and Wellness:** Laurie Pross reported that the committee will meet in August to set its priorities.
- **Communications:** Marie Sloan reported that the committee will meet on August 18th to work on priorities. David Dubose noted the important collaboration with the Aging and Disability Resource Unit (ADRU) on the Ambassador Program.

VI. Liaison Reports Due to time constraints, only a brief update from the Asian American Health Initiative was provided. Phoebe Shih left her position, and Mohammed Hassan is the new acting outreach manager. He has been hosting workshops on emergency preparedness and dementia.

Post-meeting Department of Recreation update: Construction at Damascus Senior Center is progressing! Walls have been removed to define some of the spaces in the senior center and library. Senior Adventure Camp is ongoing. Next week, we will be at Schweinhaut (July 29-31) and then at Ross Boddy (August 13-15). Five centers will host the Mobile Health Unit with dental services and ADRU support through a partnership with Aging and Disabilities. Those locations are Schweinhaut, Holiday Park, Damascus, Long Branch, and White Oak. We are finalizing the partnership agreement and completing site walkthroughs so the first event can be held in August. HHS is working on the flyer. We received 8 NACo Awards for Recreation. The

Seniors team won two awards: 1) Cardboard Boat Regatta and 2) Fire Safety: One Cup of Cocoa at a Time.

VII. Adjournment A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00 PM.

Next Meeting: September 25, 2025