



COMMISSION ON AGING
HEALTH AND WELLNESS COMMITTEE

MAY 6, 2025

9:30-11:00 a.m.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Linda Bergofsky

Marcia Pruzan

Kendell Mathews

Betsy Carrier

Eleanor Tanno

Tina Purser-Langley

Don McCullough

B.J. Carter (Community participant)

Laurie Pross

Marsha Weber

Laurie called the meeting to order at 9:30 and welcomed everyone. The minutes of the April meeting were approved without discussion. Our speaker this time was intended as a “teaser” for the Public Forum occurring later this month on the topic of Caregiving.

Patricia Dubroof, the Outreach Manager for Assisting Hands Home Care Agency, an artist, a caregiver herself, a death doula and an all-around Montgomery County treasure who supports women in the arts and in the therapeutic arts gave

a presentation on “Creativity and Healing”. In it, she described several of the innovative programs she has developed, some specifically addressing neurological disorders, an example of which is a program entitled “Shifting moods” which uses an electric guitar to soothe some of the symptoms of PTSD experienced by veterans at the Veterans Hospital. Another program attempts to “tap into” the meditative state. Ms. Dubroof emphasized the importance of inclusion when introducing new approaches-something she did by providing exposure to these creative approaches by meeting each shift of the Veterans Hospital staff where it is and, more importantly, when each shift is in house. All three shifts received training in yoga, painting and prose-writing as it pertained to caregiving. She further underscored the importance of communication by reminding us that asking, rather than assuming we know what a person wants or needs is always the better route for caregivers as well as for the recipient of care. Ms. Dubroof noted that Hopkins University is continuing some of Dr. Gene Cohen’s work in Creativity and Aging: work is being done in Parkinson’s using dance, drawing to show how the two sides of one’s brain relate and even how singing can be therapeutic around speech difficulties. Beyond these programs, Patricia created a group called “Women Leaders in Eldercare” which, as its name indicates, supports several energetic creative women in the Aging field. She herself is also an artist and has had exhibits here locally called “Who Cares?”, portraits of caregivers; she encouraged us all to focus on a picture as a means of tapping into powerful Beta energy.

After the presentation, there was a brief discussion pertaining to topics of interest to the group for the next few meetings as well as a few reminders regarding the upcoming Public Forum on May 21st.

The next meeting of the Health and Wellness Committee will take place virtually on Tuesday, June 3, 2025. This meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.