

**Communications Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
November 18, 2024**

**Attendees**

**CoA**

Jean Dinwiddie, Co-chair  
Beverly Rollins, Co-chair  
Linda Bergofsky  
Virginia Cain  
David Engel  
Kathleen McGuinness  
Yvette Monroe  
Marie Sloan  
Katie Smith  
Marsha Weber

**Alumni**

Ruby Moone  
Marcia Pruzan  
Revathi Vikram

**Staff**

Jennifer Long, Montgomery County Aging and Disability Staff

**Guests**

Chris Doyle  
Marian Merewitz

**Roll Call**

Jean Dinwiddie took roll and asked for approval of the October 2024 minutes. The minutes were approved.

**Ambassador Program**

Jean provided a Program update. She said that the Committee has been asked not to advertise the Program until a new Aging and Disability (A & D) staffer is hired. However, by word of mouth, we have scheduled three presentations for the near future. Kathleen McGuinness stated that her

Village has also requested one by Zoom call. Jean noted that request should be ok; the Committee received an ok from Dr. Johnson to do at least one of the other presentations.

Linda Bergofsky asked about placing information on the CoA's website so individuals can request a presentation. Jean responded that we have requested a form to do that on the CoA's and the County's Senior websites. That request, however, is on hold until the new A & D staff person is hired.

Beverly Rollins suggested that the CoA factsheets and other documents that are now part of the Library Liaison Program also be part of the Ambassador Program. Marcia Pruzan said having enough resources and documents may be a problem. Linda suggested that we ask retirement communities to include resource information in the orientation folders given to new residents. Revathi Vikram said we should contact the County's Recreation Department and have them take responsibility for stocking the documents at the senior centers. Linda suggested a QR code for the documents also be posted for information. Virginia Cain said that when Ambassadors give presentations, they can ask at those sites whether they have those documents available to distribute. It would be a good starting point.

Marsha Weber asked Jennifer Long whether the County still has the Connectors program and whether those individuals could hand out the documents. Jennifer responded that the Connectors are still around, but those positions must be renewed every year. Marsha asked whether setting up a Connectors table at an ambassador presentation would be appropriate.

David Engel commented that he previously suggested that the CoA develop a display to be placed at senior centers, libraries, etc. that could easily stock all of this information. He then asked about the status of the Ambassador presentation slides. Beverly responded that we provided Dr. Johnson and former A & D staffer Peter Flandrau a copy for their comments, and we have not heard back from them yet.

Marie Sloan stated that she likes the idea of a CoA display, but the County will need to supply the materials. She requested a copy of the Ambassador slides that contain all of the notes and talking points. She asked whether the Ambassadors should go ahead and use the slides even though we are waiting for County staff to get back to the Committee. Jean responded that yes, the Ambassadors should go ahead and use them. Marie asked whether the Committee has enough of the factsheets to provide to the senior centers, recreation centers, etc. Jennifer responded that some of the documents can be easily reproduced but others cannot.

Rev noted that an event that will draw a lot of Asian individuals will be held at the Benjamin Gaither Center next month. She asked whether a table containing a lot of useful older adult information can be placed there by the County. Jennifer responded that it would be permissible but that she did not have any information about the event. Rev stated that it will take place on December 14 from 11a-2:30p. Jennifer stated that she will have someone reach out to the organization for more information. Rev said that she will send Jennifer a flyer about it.

Linda suggested that it would be helpful if Beverly and Jean make a list of things the Committee is waiting for the new staffer to do. Beverly and Jean said that they will do that.

## **Library Liaison Program**

Jean reminded everyone that in July the Committee voted to contact the Regional Library Managers to ask them to poll their libraries to see whether they need the CoA materials that the Liaisons have been stocking in the libraries. She reported that the Committee got some tremendous results from one of the Regional Managers and received a request for several copies of the documents. Marsha asked whether the Liaisons still need to visit their libraries. Jean responded that it would not hurt to continue to visit. Marsha commented that she will ask her librarian if she still wants her to visit.

Jean noted that it is not clear whether the Regional Librarian the Committee heard from is head of all of the libraries that he requested information for. She stated that the Committee will ask him whether he still wants the Liaison visits and who is in charge of the other libraries not listed on his form.

## **Postcard to Replace Brochure**

Jean said there is nothing new to report on working on this initiative.

## **Marian Merewitz's Proposal for Promoting Older Adult Information**

Jean introduced Marian Merewitz. Marian stated that she has been taking gerontology-type classes for years and several folks ask her about what services the County offers older adults. In light of that, Marian would like to make a 15-minute video about the resources that are available. Marian stated that she has a lot of experience in making informational videos, she has been making them for years. She would like to show the 15-minute video at doctors' offices (among other places) and also make it available for folks to earn Continuing Education Units. Marian said that she has also developed two pamphlets that she would like to place in libraries and doctors' offices. But her first priority is the 15-minute program.

Jean said that Marian could share the pamphlets with the Committee members for their comments. She asked how else the CoA can help Marian with her projects. Marian responded that perhaps the CoA members can help figure out where the information and videos can be placed. Jean commented that if Marian has developed 1-2 minute videos they can be aired on *50+in Montgomery County*. Beverly asked whether she needs the CoA to star in the video and to help develop the information for the videos. Marian said that she has a star in mind but she would like the CoA to help explain the services that are available and to make sure that all of the services are documented.

David asked whether Marian's organization is a non-profit. Marian said that she is doing this on her own; there is no organization involved. She has been producing videos for years. Beverly asked Marian what she would like from the CoA. Marian said that she is working on things and will get in touch with the Committee when she needs our input.

## **David Engel and Marie Sloan, 2025 Co-Chairs of the Communications Committee**

David and Marie stated that they have nothing to report yet. David is working on the factsheets that the CoA has recently developed and is trying to figure out a way that CoA members can make regular updates to them. He has updates for the Social Isolation factsheet and the Hearing Loss factsheet, but he has not had time to do them yet. He said that the CoA will continue to use the current ones until they are updated. Jean suggested that we not order any more of those factsheets until the revisions are made.

Marie said that she can re-review the Hearing Loss factsheet. Also, she asked how she can get rid of the obsolete factsheets that she has. David stated that he can pick them up but that they can still be used for Ambassador presentations.

Linda asked whether the Hearing Loss factsheet has a reference to what services are available to veterans. She can provide the information when necessary. Virginia stated that Linda should send the information to her.

Yvette Monroe asked whether we ever give the factsheets to religious organizations. Jean said we would be delighted to give her some to provide to these organizations.

## ***50+ in Montgomery County Update***

Jean provided an update of upcoming programs:

- November – Caregivers (Ruth Kershner)
- December – Staying Connected During the Holidays (Senior Planet on Technology and someone from the Recreation Dept)
- January—Avoiding Scams (Office of Consumer Protection)

She reminded everyone that the Planning Committee meets the first Friday of each month.

## **Final Thoughts**

Marsha said that someone recently gave a presentation at a Village near her regarding shams aimed at older adults. Jean asked Marsha to provide her with the name of the person who gave the presentation so she can contact them for a possible *50+ in Montgomery County* episode. Marcia said that someone will be doing a presentation where she lives in two weeks and she will report on how good the presentation is.

## **Adjourn**