



Public Policy Committee Minutes

July 10, 2025

9:30–11:30 am

Attendees: Kate Stein and Morris Klein (co-chairs); Linda Bergofsky, Dixie Thomas, Janice Deyling, Peter Illig, Betsy Carrier, Candy Schimming, Albert Woodward, Wayne Swann, Renee Chen, RC (Renee), and other new members

Guests: None

I. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order. Kate welcomed new members, including Janet and Renee. Introductions were made by all attendees, including members of the Commission and staff.

II. Discussion / Approval of Prior Minutes

The minutes from the June meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

III. Discussion of Potential Priorities for 2025–26

The committee engaged in a comprehensive discussion about potential policy priorities for FY 27. Members examined key themes from the recent caregiving forum and internal discussions. Major topics and proposals included:

- ****Data Needs and Assessment****:

- Proposal to conduct a county- wide data needs assessment to guide advocacy.

- Suggestion to form a cross- committee “Tiger Team” to identify and analyze existing datasets.
- Goal: align advocacy efforts with demonstrated needs.

- ****Transportation and Access****:
 - Highlighted gaps in transportation access, especially for older adults requiring door- to- door or escorted services.
 - Need for policy advocacy to improve mobility and secure county support.

- ****Food Insecurity****:
 - Identified high levels of food insecurity among older adults in certain communities.
 - Agreed to begin research on effective interventions and data to support budget requests.

- ****Direct Care Workforce and Caregiver Support****:
 - Raised challenges related to low wages, high turnover, and service reliability.
 - Potential initiatives include direct caregiver stipends, tax relief, and expanded support services.
 - A proposal under consideration: \$ 250, 250,000 for The Arc of Montgomery County to fund respite care.

- ****Long- Term Care Ombudsman Program****:
 - Ongoing concerns about leadership gaps, inadequate volunteer training, and inconsistent program delivery.
 - Consensus on the need for oversight and advocacy to improve staffing and stability.

- ****Medicare Savings Program Access****:
 - Reports of application barriers and communication issues.
 - Planned review of county administrative practices and user experiences.

- ****Federal Budget Impacts****:
 - Monitoring expected funding cuts to Medicaid, SNAP, and related

programs.

- Proposal to develop a rapid- response system with community partners.
- ****Housing and Senior Renters****:
 - Encouraged a policy focus on age- friendly housing design and rent support.
 - Consider co- locating services in new housing as a condition for public benefits.

****Action Items:****

- Kate to identify a partner to begin research on senior food insecurity.
- Albert to investigate issues with the Medicare Savings Program and draft a proposal.
- Betsy to prepare a proposal on volunteer recruitment and engagement.
- Janice and Dixie to draft a proposal regarding oversight of the Long- Term Care Ombudsman.
- Lori to complete a proposal for the \$250,000, 000 respite care funding request.
- Kate to distribute templates and reminders for the one- page priority proposals due September 4.

IV. New Business

No additional new business was carried out.

V. Close

The meeting adjourned at around 11:30 a.m. Members were encouraged to reach out for assistance with proposal development and to continue collaboration ahead of the next meeting.