



Montgomery County Commission on Aging

Public Policy Committee Minutes

May 8, 2025

Present: Morris Klein and Kate Stein (co-chairs); Linda Bergofsky, Betsy Carrier, and Elizabeth Tanno (commissioners); Kuo-Hwa Wang and BJ Carter (community); Peter Illig (staff)

Morris called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes:

The April minutes were approved as submitted.

County Budget Updates:

The FY25 County budget for Aging and Disability Services is essentially flat. The Public Policy Committee decided that no further engagement was necessary at this time, and no additional letters will be written to the County Council. The budget is expected to come to a vote in mid-May.

Nursing Home Advocacy and Legislation:

Thanks to Senator Kramer's successful inclusion of language in the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA), Montgomery County now has enabling legislation to request delegation authority from the state for nursing home inspections. According to the passed House bill, the county is expected to receive its first official report on the status of nursing home inspections on July 1.

Given the county's current budget constraints, it is likely that no decision will be made about requesting delegation until after the inspection report is received.

Even with cost-sharing provisions, the county would need approximately \$500,000 to launch the program.

The committee discussed concerns that many county council members are unaware of the new legislation. It was agreed that Drs. McGhee and Johnson should be contacted to determine whether they have briefed the council and to offer a briefing if they have not.

New Business:

a. Discussion of Priorities

The Committee reaffirmed the importance of advocating for residents in nursing homes and discussed the need to rebuild the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCO) Program. Follow-up will be made with Drs. McGhee and Johnson regarding the hiring status for the LTCO program.

Other federal-level issues were also discussed, including the need to monitor and respond to proposed changes to LIHEAP, the Administration for Community Living (ACL), SSDI, Medicare, and Medicaid.

The Committee agreed that while there are many urgent issues, it is crucial to focus on key priorities. To strengthen our federal advocacy, the Committee proposed partnering with organizations such as AARP and the Kaiser Family Foundation. Linda will reach out to Hank Greenberg, Tammy's replacement at AARP, to see if he would be willing to speak at a future PPC meeting.

b. Advocacy Approach – Older Americans Act

The Committee discussed the upcoming reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, which expires at the end of September. Morris agreed to draft a letter of support to send to the federal delegation.

c. Advocacy Approach – Supporting Older Adults in Employment / Reemployment

The Committee discussed the effects of recent federal workforce reductions and mass layoffs on older federal workers in Montgomery County. Many workers aged 50 and older who are currently unemployed or facing layoffs are not ready to retire, and the County's economy is unlikely to absorb all of them. The

Committee agreed to contact County Councilmembers, State delegates, and employment specialists within County government to identify potential supports.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at around 11:15 a.m.