

**COMMISSION ON AGING  
AMENDED MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES  
January 25, 2018**

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>
Revathi Vikram	Noelle Heyman
Stephanie Edelstein	Jack Sprague
Neal Brown	Barbara Brubeck
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Mort Faller
Amoke Alakoye	Rashid Makhdoom
Phyllis Rand	Nanine Meiklejohn
Karen Maricheau	Monica Schaefferf
Hillery Tumba	
Alan Kaplan	<b>COA Alumni</b>
Richard Jourdenais	Charles Kauffman
Sue Guenther	
Judith Peres	<b>Guests</b>
May Petrizzo	Caroline A. Lewis
Barbara Brubeck	Pauletta Handy
Jerry Morenoff	Seda Glennan
Ryan Wilson	
Syed Yusuf	<b>Liaisons</b>
	Marcia Pruzan, Senior Fellow Age Friendly Montgomery
	Austin Heyman, Senior Fellow Office of Community Partnerships
	James Campbell, Commission on Veterans Affairs
	Stephanie Moore, Housing Opportunities Commission
	Denise Isreal, Department of Transportation
	Maya Bayonet, North Potomac Senior Center
	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
	<b>Staff</b>
	Odile Brunetto, Department of Health and Human Services
	Tremayne Jones, Department of Health and Human Services
	Marcia Pruzan, Department of Health and Human Services
	Eileen Bennett, Department of Health and Human Services

Chair, Isabelle Schoenfeld called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

**Welcome and Introductions**–Isabelle opened the meeting by welcoming guests and COA members and by introducing herself as the new chair of the COA. Isabelle expressed her gratitude, appreciation and shared her positive experience of serving on the Commission for the past five years.

Isabelle invited the Commissioners to think about co-chairing committees that need support. Isabelle invited the Commissioners to become more involved in the Commission. Stakeholders need help with organizing the Stakeholders Meeting that will take place in March.

**Approval of Minutes**–The minutes from December 2017 meeting were approved unanimously.

**Budget and Finance Advisor Report**–Syed Yusuf reported the COA account has a balance of \$5,662.31.

**Committees Chairs Tasks and Responsibilities** Stephanie explained the task and functioning of the committee.

The Bylaws of the Commission on Aging (COA), adopted September 2017, authorize the COA Chair to establish Standing Committees (Committees). The COA Chair also appoints chairs of those committees. When at all possible, each Standing Committee will have two co-chairs.

Current Standing Committees are Aging in Place/Community and Planning (AIP/C&P); Health Planning, Services and Community Supports (HPSCS); Public Policy (PP); and Communications and Community Outreach (CCO). Standing Committees meet monthly or at the call of their chair. They do not usually meet in July and August.

Committee chairs are members of the COA Executive Committee and as such are expected to attend monthly meetings of the Executive Committee.

While individual Committees engage in different activities, following is a description of the core responsibilities/tasks of all Committee chairs/co-chairs.

**Committee Work**–Co-chairs may decide with each other how they divide or share tasks. Some tasks, e.g. taking minutes, identifying speakers, can be delegated to other members of the committee.

- Conduct monthly committee meetings.
- Identify Committee priorities for the coming year.
- Develop meeting agenda a week prior to meeting, send to AAA Director (or designee) and her Administrative Assistant for distribution.
- Identify potential speakers; coordinate invitations with AAA Director (or designee); send thank you note following meeting.
- Ensure that meeting minutes are taken.
- Review draft minutes, send to AAA Director (or designee) and her Administrative Assistant for distribution.
- Engage Commissioners in the work of the committee, including current issues, summer study. Some members may be interested in following and reporting on a particular issue.
- Collaborate with other committees. This might entail holding joint meetings on common issues or working with Public Policy on legislative and/or budget advocacy.
- Encourage knowledgeable stakeholders to attend Committee meetings.
- Solicit and review potential summer study proposals.

**Executive Committee and Full Commission**

- Participate in monthly meetings of the Executive Committee and of the full Commission.
- Report on committee activities.

- Participate in electronic or in person discussions of COA business as appropriate between meetings.

**FY19 County Executive Budget Forums-** County Executive Isiah Leggett is holding the first of five budget forums on January 8, to seek input from residents about Fiscal Year 2019 Operating Budget priorities. The forum will begin at 7 p.m. at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center.

"Public forums are for residents to tell me what is important to them as I prepare next year's operating budget for submission to the County Council on March 15," said Leggett. "Input from residents for the FY19 budget is crucial in helping me determine the county's budget priorities."

Additional forums are scheduled throughout January across the County:

- January 24, 7 p.m. – FY19 Operating Budget Forum at the Mid-County Community Center.
- January 29, 7 p.m. – FY19 Operating Budget Forum, at the Black Rock Center for the Arts.
- January 30, 7 p.m. – FY19 Operating Budget Forum, at the Silver Spring Civic Building.
- January 31, 7 p.m. – FY19 Operating Budget Forum, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center.

The County Executive will announce his recommended FY19 Operating Budget on March 15. The County Council approves the operating budget at the end of May.

**Stakeholders Meeting March 28, 2018-** Sue discussed the stakeholders meeting. She is asking for help from commissioners.

## **Presentations**

Judy and Alan–addressed the audience on Nursing Home Quality of Care. If they decide to choose the topic for a Summer Study they will explore it during the year within their committee.

Eileen Bennett, Program Manager, Long Term Care Ombudsman Program–addressed the audience on Office of Health Care Quality (OHQC), Nursing Home Quality of Care and Nursing Home Residents' Rights. Office of Health Care Quality (OHQC) is the agency within the Maryland Department of Health charged with monitoring the quality of care in Maryland's health care facilities and community-based programs.

OHQC's vision is that all those receiving care in Maryland can trust that their health care facility or program is licensed and has met the regulatory standards for the services that they offer.

In November 2002, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, began a national Nursing Home Quality Initiative (NHQI).

The nursing home quality measures come from resident assessment data that nursing homes routinely collect on the residents at specified intervals during their stay. They are also posted on OHQC website. These measures assess the resident's physical and clinical conditions and abilities, as well as preferences and life care wishes. These assessment data points have been converted to develop quality

measures that give consumers another source of information that shows how well nursing homes are caring for their residents' physical and clinical needs.

Nursing homes are regulated by the Federal Government to do the things that residents want. Residents of nursing homes have rights that are guaranteed by the federal Nursing Home Reform Law. The law requires nursing homes to “promote and protect the rights of each resident” and stresses individual dignity and self-determination. Many states also include residents’ rights in state law or regulation.

- Right to Dignified Existence
- Right to Self-Determination
- Right to be Fully Informed
- Right to Raise Grievances
- Right of Access
- Rights Regarding Financial Affairs
- Right to Privacy
- Rights During Discharge/Transfer

For more information about Residents’ Rights, or questions or concerns, contact your Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program promotes and protects the rights of residents in licensed long-term care facilities. Visit [www.theconsumervoice.org](http://www.theconsumervoice.org) for more information.

#### **Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Update**

Director, Dr. Odile Brunetto summarized the proposed budget reductions which are impacting senior services. FY18 revenue \$95 million lower than expected. Budget cuts \$60 million; \$27 million for County Government and HHS \$4.4 million in cuts.

#### **FY’18–Proposed Reductions in County Funds**

- Proposal to cut Dental Services by \$78,000
- Recreation Department will eliminate Friday bus transportation to senior centers; reducing the budget by \$42,000
- Aging and Disability Services will also reduce their budget by freezing a vacant position; a part time nutrition position, and under the Community First Choice program, one nurse manager FT position

The County Council will vote on these proposals end of January 2018.

#### **FY’19 -FY ’24 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

Dr. Brunetto reported this is an involved projected budget, i.e., the White Oak, White Flint and Wheaton development projects and so forth. Since there is interest, she suggests the COA should invite someone from the Housing Department to brief the COA.

## **COA committee Focus Approach**–Purpose of COA Committees’ Focus Approach:

- (1) To replace the summer studies with non-summer month’s focus so that Commissioners can have more time to explore a topic/issues(s).
- (2) To enable more Commissioners and Stakeholders to participate.

### Considerations:

- Committees’ Focus can be a follow-up to a previous summer study or other COA activity, or it could be a new investigation of a topic/issue.
- Provides a framework for Committees to identify a topic/issue of concentration/education/exploration and to develop and implement a Plan including: the objectives, potential presenters, potential information gathering, materials, other resources, schedule.
- Provides more opportunities for Commissioners and other stakeholders who attend the Committee meetings to participate in the development and implementation of the Plan.
- Provides more time to write up a report and its conclusions, and, if, desired, develop recommendations (this could possibly be done during the late spring/early summer).

## **COA committee reports**

**Aging in Place/Community and Planning(AIP/CP)** –Richard reported that Commissioners are welcomed to participate in and support political candidates. At political events they can identify as a commissioner but must indicate they speak as individuals. The committee discussed and accepted the proposed focus approach.

**Health Planning, Services, & Community Supports (HPSCS)**–Eileen Bennett, Long Term Care Ombudsman Program guest speaker explained the need for another full-time position in the Ombudsman Office. Health and Wellness Committee is interested in focusing on nursing home quality and is reviewing areas of impact. Mrs. Bennett reviewed the Office of Inspector General (OIG) report and addressed how Maryland ranked at the bottom in being responsive to complaint investigations. She indicated that the OIG report covers the period from 2011-2015 and that with Dr. Nye joining the State OSCQ, that for the period of 2015-2017. OHCQ has increased compliance with regard to the complaint surveys. In addition, she reviewed the Ombudsman program and its role in nursing home quality.

**Public Policy (PP)**–Ryan reported at January’s PPC meeting Shawn Brennan, Mobility and Transportation Manager, guest speaker addressed the audience on the proposed budget savings in the County’s FY18 budget. The cuts affecting seniors include a proposed reduction of \$38,000 for low-income dental care and \$42,000 reduction for senior care transportation. This latter cut represents 20 percent reduction that that budget item. One possibility is that transportation service would be eliminated on the least utilized day of the week-Fridays. One reason cited for the revenue shortfall is lower income tax revenues that projected.

The committee discussed the utility of attending and testifying at the County Executives Budget Forums for FY 2019. Commissioner Stephanie Edelstein discussed the Commission's strategy for the FY 2018, which included having representatives at all scheduled forums with a different question. The committee was concerned as to whether the forums would be the best venue to raise issues identified by the Commission, with many attendees and a limited amount of time. The committee also noted that the Commission has other chances to influence the budget process, with input at the County Executive and County Council level.

The committee decided that the Commission's seven priorities could be summarized with two broad issue categories – affordable housing and protecting vulnerable seniors. Commissioner Mort Faller raised question of whether housing could be addressed within the county's operating budget – or whether it was more of a capital budget issue because the best way for government to address additional housing needs is with making county land available for development. NOTE: Commissioner Nanine confirmed after the meeting that the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) is in the county's operating budget. The Commission's priorities supported increasing it. The rental housing study also suggested a stronger emphasis on preservation for the use of the HIF funds as well as the use of county land for housing development.

**New Business**–Isabelle presented certificates to Austin Heyman and Michael Bruen (not present) for their outstanding achievements with Seniors Today for 18 years.

**Department of Recreation**–Phil Smakula indicated that Gabe Alborno, Director of Recreation is on extended leave from the County due to his running for County Council of Montgomery County. Gabe has headed the county's Department of Recreation for the past 11 years. Robin Riley is appointed Acting Director for now.

**Department of Transportation**– Denise Isreal explained that the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) received \$544,430 in federal funding from the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for its Call-n-Ride taxi service, which provides taxi trips for low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. The two-year grant will allow MCDOT to reduce the monthly co-pay for the lowest income Call-n-Ride participants, which comprise 85.7 percent of program users.

Call-n-Ride is a County-subsidized transportation program that provided 125,595 trips in fiscal year 2017 to seniors and persons with disabilities. The lowest income program participants receive a \$120 per month subsidy that is loaded onto a swipe card. The card can then be used for taxi service with all taxi providers in the County. The TPB grant will allow MCDOT to reduce the lowest income program participants' co-payment each month from \$10.50 to \$5.25.

Montgomery County also provides other transportation services to seniors and individuals with disabilities, including:

- Ride free on MCDOT's Ride On bus system and Metrobus weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. With a Senior SmarTrip card or a Metro Disability ID card, fares at all other times are half price.
- Free, curb-to-curb transportation to senior centers and some community centers for those living within the center service areas.

- Connect-A-Ride, a free, information and referral service helping people find transportation options for medical services, errands, social activities and more. An escorted transportation pilot project provides service based on income.
- Administering the Medicaid transportation grant that in fiscal year 2017 provided 78,808 free transportation trips for Medicaid covered medical appointments.

The TPB selected just 17 local projects to receive a total of \$6 million dollars in federal funding under the Federal Transit Administration's Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities Program, removing barriers to transportation service and expanding transportation mobility options for these communities. An additional \$1.8 million dollars in matching funds is provided by the grantees, bringing the total funding for the projects to \$7.9 million dollars.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.