

COMMISSION ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES
November 29, 2018

Members Present	Members Absent
Noelle Heyman	Amoke Alakoye
Hillery Tsumba	Karen Maricheau
Tho Tran	Beverly Rollins
Alan Kaplan	Jerry Morenoff
Revathi Vikram	
Phyllis Rand	
Deborah Royster	Alumni Members
Marsha Weber	Charles Kauffman
Jean Dinwiddie	
Richard Jourdenais	
Morton Faller	Guests
Stephanie Edelstein	County Executive, Isiah Leggett
Miriam Keltz	County Council President, Hans Riemer
Ruby Moone	Delegate Bonnie Cullison
Neal Brown	County Council Vice President, Nancy Navarro
Barbara Brubeck	
Monica Schaeffer	
Nanine Meiklejohn	Liaisons
Ryan Wilson	Austin Heyman, Office of Community Partnerships
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Marcia Pruzan, Age Friendly Montgomery County
Mary Petrizzo	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
Syed Yusuf	James Campbell, Commission on Veterans Affairs
Amy Harbison	Staff
	Odile Brunetto, Acting Chief, Aging and Disability Services and Director, Area Agency on Aging
	Tremayne Jones, Department of Health and Human Services
	Pazit Aviv, Department of Health and Human Services
	Shawn Brennan, Department of Health and Human Services

Commission on Aging (COA) Chair, Isabelle Schoenfeld, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Delegate Bonnie Cullison addressed the audience on the upcoming legislative session and issues on which she will be working and that the COA may wish follow. These include: creation of a health care reinsurance program to reduce premiums for individuals who purchase health care on the Maryland Health Exchange; and creation of a state commission to set prescription drug prices. She also noted that a law passed in 2018 will allow some payout under a lapsed long-term care policy, under certain circumstances.

Budget and Finance Advisor Report

Treasurer Syed Yusuf reported that the COA account balance is \$ 5,512.31.

Approval of November Meeting Minutes

Action—October 25, 2018 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

The **December COA meeting and holiday luncheon** will take place on Wednesday, December 19th from 11:00am-1:30pm at Ingleside at King Farm, 701 King Farm Blvd, Rockville. Complimentary valet parking will be available. The COA Executive Committee will meet from 10:00-11:00 at the same location.

COA Briefing Book Roll-out. The briefing book is currently at the print shop. Isabelle will develop a personal transmittal note to accompany briefing book, which will be hand delivered to the County Executive and Councilmembers.

2019 Public Forum Planning- The Public Forum will take place at the Silver Spring Civic Building on March 19, 2019. The topic will be diversity. The planning committee is forming, and volunteers are encouraged.

Austin Heyman gave a brief profile of incoming County Executive Marc Elrich. Mr. Elrich has represented Montgomery County as an at-large County Councilmember since 2006; he chaired the Public Safety Committee and served on the Education Committee. Mr. Elrich also represented the County Council at the Transportation Planning Board of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Mr. Elrich has announced the following ten priorities for his term:

- Closing the Opportunity Gap
- Economic Development and Quality of Life
- Making Government Work Better for You
- A Clean Environment
- Economic & Social Justice
- Efficient Transportation
- Excellent Schools
- Safe Neighborhoods
- Support for Seniors
- Truly Smart Growth

Austin and Elaine Binder are serving on Mr. Elrich's transition team, where they will focus on the needs of older adults. More detail is at <https://www.marcelrich.org/priorities>.

2019 COA Officer Nominations and Election. The Nominations Committee (Noelle Heyman, Mort Faller, Hillery Tumba) presented the nominees for 2019 offices. Upon a motion and second, the following slate was unanimously approved:

- Chair-Jean Dinwiddie
- Vice Chair-Stephanie Edelstein
- Secretary-Beverly Rollins
- Budget and Finance Advisor- Revathi Vikram

Isabelle welcomed new Commissioner Reverend Dr. Ruby Moone. Dr. Moone is a retired high school counselor of 40 years, a retired Chaplain with the University of Maryland of 24 years, and has been the Pastor of Sweet Hour of Prayer Ministry for 20 years.

AAA Director's Report— Dr. Odile Brunetto gave the following report:

- November 30th is HHS Director, Uma Ahluwalia's last day at Health & Human Services.
- The County has conducted two out of a planned series of four resident focus groups on the concept of home sharing, facilitated by Elinor Ginzler. The first session had 16 participants, the second had 9 participants. Participants agreed that it would be best to have a structured program operated by a non-profit organization, and that to ensure security, there should be background checks and effective matching. A report on the focus groups and options for such a program will be prepared. OMB is very interested.
- Due to a high number of referrals, Adult Protective Services (APS) is having to reassign Social Workers from other units to conduct APS investigations. This is an example of the impact that inadequate APS staffing levels can have on other county services. Odile noted that 34% of APPS referrals involve financial exploitation.
- HHS is preparing a transition report for the new Elrich team. The three top HHS priorities are need for additional APS resources; implementation of Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly plans; and need for additional funding to supplement Medicaid covered reimbursements eg respite care.
- The new state Medicaid Waiver adult dental care pilot will begin January 1, 2019. Dentists are being recruited. The goal is to reduce emergency room visits resulting from dental health issues.
- The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program has received permission to fill two staff positions. COA advocated for funding for these positions.

Committee and Special Task Group Updates

Public Policy (PPC)-Ryan reported that PPC is planning the legislative breakfast scheduled for December 13th at Holiday Park Senior Center. The breakfast may have to be cancelled due to a number of conflicts for legislators, especially those who were recently elected. Delegation members will be notified and will be sent the materials they would have received at the breakfast. The PPC continues to monitor the Transportation Services Improvement Fund (TSIF) and is looking towards the next General Assembly session which begins in January. Issues for focus include the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. Mort is still trying to get support for a Maryland Association of Commissions on Aging from other commissions in the state.

Aging in the Community (AIC)- Richard described AIC's priorities for 2019: Social Isolation: response to crises enforcement of housing codes in affordable housing; food insecurity; extremely low income housing and senior homelessness; and MCPS support for seniors in community schools. Dennis Linders gave a presentation on older adult food insecurity at the AIC November meeting. He reported that reasons for food insecurity include low enrollment in SNAP, isolation, low technology literacy, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), cultural pride, and the type of food offerings. Dennis referenced a 2017 Montgomery County Food Insecurity report and five-year strategic plan, at:

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/exec/Resources/Files/pdf/MoCo_Food-Security-Plan_2017.pdf

There are a fair number of seniors who are on fixed income have to make a choice between food and medication those who are isolated are not aware of all the programs that are available. AIC has invited MANNA, the Food Council and the Nutrition program to attend December's meeting.

Health & Wellness (H&W) Neal reported that the committee is continuing the focus on assisted living and housing affordability. Dennis Linders, guest speaker at the November meeting, discussed housing needs and income issues, and statistics. Some residents who need supportive services do not qualify for Medicaid and cannot afford assisted living. The group discussed the Maryland Group Home Subsidy Program from Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA). At the next December meeting, a social worker from Leisure World will discuss service needs of that community's residents. H&W will be drafting its focus paper in January. The paper is expected to address assisted living affordability as well as the need for more resources such as wrap around services to help people who need additional assistance to remain in their communities.

Special guests at this meeting included COuntY Executive Isiah Leggett, Council President Hans Riemer, and Council Vice-President Nancy Navarro.

County Executive Isiah Leggett

Isabelle thanked Mr. Leggett for all of his work on behalf of older adults and wished him much success in the future. She referenced the award that COA presented to him at the 2018 Public Forum. Mr. Leggett thanked members of the COA for their great work in making Montgomery County a community for a lifetime.

Mr. Leggett presented Office of Community Partnerships Senior Fellow Austin Heyman with an award in honor of his five decades of service to the residents of Montgomery County. He noted that from his first role as PTA leader to founding Interages to promoting initiatives to support seniors and for the last twelve

years as a Senior Fellow promoting community engagement by seniors, Austin has been a community icon helping to make sure residents of all ages are treated with dignity and respect.

County Council President Hans Riemer

Isabelle introduced Hans Riemer, who was first elected to the County Council in 2010 and serves as an at-large member. He serves as the Council's Lead for Digital Government, on the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee, and the Government Operations & Fiscal Policy (GO) Committee.

Mr. Riemer discussed his commitment to continue making the county an inclusive community for new immigrants and to expanding early childhood education. He said that he will continue to advocate for funding public education and public transportation, early childhood programs, libraries, recreation, human services, and housing and economic development. Mr. Riemer also noted that we need to make room for the next generation by adding more housing, and more housing options including accessory dwellings.

Mr. Riemer stated that every resident counts, no matter who you are, what you look like or where you are from. This is not just a matter of values, it is the key to our success. Montgomery County is changing. Montgomery County is not the same community that it was 30 or even 15 years ago. Some might see it differently, but he believes that Montgomery County is changing for the better, as more and more families are able to find success in the corner of the world that we have made.

He also noted that he supports the Senior Fellows program, and Villages.

Council Vice-President Nancy Navarro

Isabelle introduced Nancy Navarro who was elected to represent District 4 on the Montgomery County Council 2009. Ms. Navarro is the first Latina member of the Council. She served as Council President in 2013 and Council Vice President the year before. Since December 2010, she has chaired the Government Operations and Fiscal Policy (GO) Committee and served on the Health and Human Services Committee until 2013 when she began serving on the Education Committee. Her office has led the Latino Civic Project, an effort to engage underrepresented residents in the civic process. In October 2011, President Barack Obama appointed Ms. Navarro to the President's Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, where she serves on the Early Childhood Education Committee.

Ms. Navarro discussed her pledge to continue a theme she began as Council President in 2013: embracing the diversity of Montgomery, a majority-minority county that is Maryland's economic engine and most populous jurisdiction. She wants to narrow the achievement gap in the county's school system, focus on early-childhood education, increase business friendliness in the county, and continue revitalization efforts, especially in the long-neglected East County.

Meeting adjourned at 12pm