

**Montgomery County Commission on Aging  
Minutes  
September 26, 2019**

**Location:** North Potomac Community Center, 19580 Travilah Road, Rockville Maryland

**Time:** 9:00a–12:00p

**Attendees**

<b>CoA Members</b>	<b>Presenters</b>
Jean Dinwiddie, Chair	Eli Glazier, Transportation Planner, Coordinator, MNCPPC Planning Department
Stephanie Edelstein, Vice Chair	Margaret Jurgensen, Election Director Board of Elections
Beverly Rollins, Secretary	
Revathi Vikram, Treasurer	<b>Guests</b>
Amoke Alakoye	David Engel
Neal Brown	Seda Gelevian
Barbara Brubeck	Karin Russ
Mort Faller	Isabelle Schoenfeld
Arunima Ghosh	
Amy Harbison	<b>Montgomery County HHS Staff Representatives</b>
Morris Klein	Odile Brunetto, Acting Chief, Aging and Disability Services
Karen Maricheau	Shawn Brennan, Department of Health and Human Services
Nanine Meiklejohn	Tremayne Jones Department of Health and Human Services
Karon Phillips	Marcia Pruzan, Senior Fellow, Age Friendly Montgomery
Eddie Rivas	Stacy Sigler, Department of Recreation
Monica Schaeffer	
Barbara Selter	
Mary Sweeney	
Revathi Vikram	
Marsha Weber	
Ryan Wilson	
Janice Zalen	
<b>Members Absent</b>	
Richard Jourdenais	
Ruby Moone	
Deborah Royster	
Odessa Shannon	
Tho Tran	
Hillery Tumba	
Arthur Williams	
Syed Yusuf	

## **Welcome**

Chair Jean Dinwiddie welcomed guest speakers Margaret Jurgensen, Director of the Montgomery County Board of Elections; Christine Rzeszut, Operations Manager for the Board of Elections; and Eli Glazier, Transportation Planner and Coordinator of the Pedestrian Master Plan for the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (Montgomery Planning).

## **Speakers**

### ***Margaret Jurgensen and Christine Rzeszut***

Margaret Jurgensen and Christine Rzeszut discussed accessibility issues that older adults may face at polling places. They stated that there are certain Federal legal requirements that polling places must meet and that State and County governments must follow to ensure accessibility, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. Preparations for elections begin 12-18 months before the election. The Board is preparing 236 election day sites, 255 precincts, and 35 early voting sites.

Director Jurgensen noted that more and more voters are voting before election day. Thirty-seven percent of those who voted in the last election voted before election day. The Board spends a lot of time selecting and monitoring sites and ensuring accessibility. The Board must complete an official survey for the State regarding election site accessibility.

Ms. Rzeszut finished the discussion by stating that election judges are trained to help individuals who require assistance, and voters may use the help of a private aide as long as the aide signs an affidavit indicating that he or she did not influence the voter. There are chairs and rest areas in the polling places, and restrooms are well marked. The Board is trying to offer more languages and become more inclusive.

### ***Eli Glazier***

Mr. Glazier discussed Montgomery County's upcoming Pedestrian Master Plan. He stated that the purpose of the Plan, which is in the early stages of development, is to encourage walking or rolling to be an individual's preferred mode of transportation. This is the first pedestrian plan the County has ever prepared. The plan is not just about building and rebuilding sidewalks; it will also be about snow removal, lighting, and other initiatives to facilitate pedestrians. The entire County will be included. The programming recommendations will include pedestrian safety and ADA compliance.

The community kickoff meetings to discuss the Plan will be held in October and November throughout the County, 7:30p-9:30p. Community input will be solicited.

Staff will be working with law enforcement to monitor drivers' actions and are looking at national and international best practices concerning the safety of bike lanes. Staff are also making signs in different languages, and providing better online resources including multi-lingual outreach. The scope of work for the Plan was approved in September, 2019; staff hope to get the Plan completed by November 2020. More information on the Plan and upcoming community meetings and other opportunities for input is at [www.montgomeryplanning.org](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org).

## **AAA Director Updates**

Odile Brunetto, Acting Chief, Aging and Disability Services, provided the following updates:

- Melanie Polk, former director of Montgomery County's Senior Nutrition Program, has retired. Her job will be posted soon.
- Montgomery County has received additional *Older Americans Act* funding for the senior nutrition program due to a reallocation of that funding based on population data.
- The Maryland Department of Aging recently gave Montgomery County a \$1,500 grant to provide to individuals, upon request, pill boxes and benches that aid transfer into bathtubs.
- Senior Fellow Marcia Pruzan and AAA Director, Odile Brunetto, met with the State Commission on Aging and discussed getting the State of Maryland designated as Age Friendly. Both Howard and Baltimore Counties are working on joining the Age-Friendly initiative.
- Currently 375 individuals are waiting for the nurse-conducted Adult Evaluation and Review Service (AERS). Reasons for the backlog include insufficient funding, a shortage of nurses and staff vacations. Staff are in the process of interviewing for new nurses to replace the two who have retired.
- Montgomery County's Department of Recreation would like CoA members to participate in meetings with older adults at recreation centers, to discuss their needs and service preferences.
- The County is moving to a two-year budget cycle. Ms. Brunetto will provide more information as it becomes available.

## **Commission on Aging Business**

### **Approval of July CoA Minutes**

The minutes were approved.

### **Budget Report**

The CoA currently has a budget balance of \$5,109.31.

### **Planned Meetings with Transportation and Housing Directors**

- A tentative meeting with Montgomery County's new Director of Housing and Community Affairs is scheduled for October 3.
- A meeting with Montgomery County's Department of Transportation director has been scheduled for October 8.
- Montgomery County's Department of Human Resources has a new director. Chair Dinwiddie will work to schedule a meeting with her.

### **Testimony on CoA FY21 Priorities, October 10 to HHS Committee of County Council**

Chair Dinwiddie will present oral testimony to the County Council HHS Committee hearing on CoA FY21 budget priorities. These hearings are an opportunity for all the Boards, Committees, and Commissions associated with HHS to provide input on their priorities going into the budget cycle.

## **Vote on Location for 2020 CoA Meetings**

CoA members voted to continue holding the CoA monthly meetings at the North Potomac Community Recreation Center and not move to the new Wheaton Community Recreation Center.

## **Sign-up Sheet for Committee Membership**

A sheet was circulated to all CoA members to sign up for membership on a CoA committee. All members are encouraged to serve on at least one committee.

## **Formation of Communication Task Force**

The Communications and Community Outreach Committee will now be designated as a task force and will work only on special projects and meet as needed.

## **Nominating Committee**

The Committee is recruiting potential officers for 2020, and hopes to provide names of nominees to the Executive Committee at its October 19 meeting. Offices to be filled include Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Budget and Finance Officer (Treasurer).

## **Liaison Updates**

***Commission on Veterans' Affairs.*** The Veterans' Administration is looking to build another facility in Maryland and continues its search for a location in Montgomery County. The Red Gate golf course in Rockville is for sale and is a good option.

***Recreation Department.*** The week of September 23 was Fall Prevention week and the first week of October is Active Aging Week. The Department is preparing for the Maryland Senior Olympics, which will soon celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

***Transportation Department.*** There have been a few program changes: \$15,000 will be provided upfront to individuals/companies who make vehicles accessible and the County will pay them \$.10 a mile, \$15 additional for daytime trips, and \$20 additional for night trips. There is a \$10 guarantee for Call-n-Ride trips and the County will provide \$1,000 for insurance.

***Age-Friendly Montgomery.*** Age-Friendly Montgomery is gearing up for re-application. The initiative's 10 committees are working to update their priorities, which are due next week.

***Housing Opportunities Commission.*** The Primary Care Coalition is studying the dental needs of older adults and the Housing Opportunities Commission has received funding of \$100,000 to address more challenging dental needs.

HOC recently received an additional 99 Federal housing vouchers, which can be used by eligible individuals to rent in the County. HOC is wrapping up its first round of issuing those vouchers.

## **Committee Reports**

### ***Aging in Community***

The four topics that the Committee will be focusing on in the future include transportation (the Flex Pilot Program); affordable housing (both affordable models for intergenerational living and affordable rental housing); food insecurity; and employment (building a multigenerational workforce).

### ***Health & Wellness***

The Committee has completed its “Senior Gap” paper and members will discuss it at the November Legislative Breakfast.

### ***Public Policy***

The Legislative Breakfast for members of the Montgomery County delegation to the General Assembly is scheduled for November 14, 2019 from 8a-10a at Holiday Park. All CoA members are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting, where they will discuss some of the CoA’s priorities and hear from members of Montgomery County’s State delegation about their priorities for the 2020 legislative session. CoA members will make short presentations on three topics: assisted living affordability issues as described in the Senior “Gap” paper; the need for additional funding for Adult Protective Services and AERS; and efforts to designate Maryland as an Age-Friendly State.

**Meeting Adjourned at 12:00p**