

**COMMISSION ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES
February 25, 2016**

Members Present	Members Absent
Miriam Kelty	Helen Abrahams
John Honig	Syed Yusuf
Noelle Heyman	Morton Faller
Karen Maricheau	Georgia Guenther
Rudy Oswald	Song Hutchins
Charles Kauffman	Doug Newton
Judith Levy	
Paul Del Ponte	
Jerry Morenoff	Alumni members
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Marcia Pruzan
Stephanie Edelstein	Beth Shapiro
Barbara Multz	
Revathi Vikram	Liaisons
Grace Whipple	Jim Resnick, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service
Noreen Chohan	Faisal Khan, Montgomery County Department of Transportation
Amoke Alakoye	Sara Gotbaum, Elder Women's Aging Alliance
David Denton	Alan Kaplan, Montgomery County Commission on Health
Tamara Duell (by phone)	Stephanie Moore, Montgomery County Housing Opportunities Commission
	Phil Smakula, Montgomery County Department of Recreation
	Guests
	Eileen Bennett, Long Term Care Ombudsman
	Dennis Linders, Office of the County Executive, CountyStat
	Lylie Fisher, Montgomery County Caregiver Support Coordinator
	Pazit Aviv, Montgomery County Village Coordinator
	Staff
	Jay Kenney, Department of Health and Human Services
	Odile Brunetto, Department of Health and Human Services
	Tremayne Jones, Department of Health and Human Services

Report from the Chair and Business Meeting

CoA Chair Noelle Heyman

Noelle opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Minutes: The minutes from the December 2015 meeting were approved. (The January meeting was canceled due to inclement weather conditions.)

Treasurer's Report: Revathi Vikram reported a balance of \$1,952.30 as of February 25, 2016.

Annual Meeting, Stakeholders Meeting: Tammy Duell, co-chair of the Health and Wellness Committee, and Noelle Hyman reported on plans for the 2016 COA annual meeting, scheduled for September 2016. The HW committee is taking the lead on planning this meeting.

The May CoA meeting will be a working meeting focused on the Age Friendly Community initiative which is in the implementation phase. There will be a discussion on how the COA may wish in due course to amend or update the senior agenda possibly during the next 6-12 months. It was suggested that invitations be extended to Uma Ahluwalia, Director, Department of Health and Human Services; Jay Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services; and Odile Brunetto, Director, Area Agency on Aging; and other members of the Senior Subcabinet. It was recommended that the meeting focus on transportation, housing, and communication, as these were the issues of concern identified by the December 2015 Summit on Aging. Issues identified in the Senior Agenda will also be included.

FY17 HHS Budget: County Executive Isiah Leggett will release his proposed budget on March 15th. HHS Director Uma Ahluwalia will host a hearing on the HHS budget provisions on March 22, 2016. Noelle testified on the CoA's budget priorities, and CoA members will meet with individual Council members on the budget in April.

Neil Potter Path of Achievement Award: Tomorrow, February 26, 2016, is the last day to submit a nomination.

Updates from DHHS

Dr. Jay Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services

Dr. Kenney discussed the County Executive's Summit on Aging, held on December 3, 2015. A draft copy of the report was released to the Strategic Planning Group and to the Senior Subcabinet for review. Once the report has been finalized it will be made available to the public. Dr. Kenney reported that the County Executive's budget will be released on or before March 15, 2016. FY17 budget reductions for DHHS are estimated to be about 2%. Items being reviewed by the Senior Budget Committee and Office of Management and Budget include transportation, housing, home-based services, and communications.

Dr. Kenney said that as part of the budget discussions and with reference to the high cost of housing and long waits for HUD subsidies, there was discussion of revisiting Operation Match, a housing program operational in the 1980's. Operation Match, which was managed by the Housing Opportunities Commission, provided older adults who could no longer afford the cost of living alone in their homes, the opportunity to bring in a border to help defray those costs.

DHHS Director Uma Ahluwalia will hold the DHHS budget forum on March 22nd at 6 p.m., at 401 Hungerford Drive, Rockville.

Dr. Odile Brunetto, Area Agency on Aging Director

Dr. Brunetto highlighted several budget items.

County level:

Mr. Leggett has proposed a property tax increase of 8.6%. Many of the budget proposals that would impact seniors are contingent on this increase. They include:

- \$145,000, for senior center staff and operations at the new North Potomac Community Recreation Center (but no proposed additional funding for JCA buses to transport seniors to the center).
- \$24,000, for a Senior Fellow (11 hours/week) to implement the WHO Age Friendly Community Initiative.
- \$100,000, in subsidies for Adult Day Care (would serve an additional 18 people).
- \$30,000, in additional funding for home delivered meals.
- \$200,000, for Adult Evaluation and Review Services. (These reviews are conducted by contract RNs and MSWs, many of whom are retired or work part-time, paid at the state rate of \$25/hour. There was discussion later in the meeting about the difficulty of finding such contractors, and whether the pool of evaluators could be increased through the use of appropriately supervised nursing students or volunteers.)
- \$300,000, in additional subsidies for Victory Crossing Senior Housing in Silver Spring. Victory Crossing will have 105 units, 95 of which will be set aside for seniors whose income is 30-60% of the area median.
- \$18,000, to enhance public information about senior services, including some payment for space in *The Beacon*.
- \$1,000,000 in grants to 30 local non-profit organizations that serve seniors.
- \$40,000 to continue the caregiver support coordinator position (part-time).
- Reduce the age of eligibility for Call-a-Ride from 67 to 65.

The Executive's budget proposal does not include certain items supported by the CoA, including:

- \$100,000 in additional funding for respite care. (The county contracts with Respite Care of Montgomery County, which in turn provides services to family caregivers.)
- \$153,000 to increase the Adult Foster Care subsidy.
- \$40,000 in additional funding for the caregiver support coordinator position, to convert that position from part-time to full time.
- Funding for a full-time manager of the Age Friendly Initiative (rather than the part-time Senior Fellow in the proposed budget).

Federal level:

- MDOA State Grant for Falls Prevention was increased by \$30,000. (contracts with hospitals)
- Federal Grant for SHIP/Medicare Patrol was increased by \$12,000. (contract for SHIP)

State level:

- Seniors Tax Relief: Following last year's passage of a retirement income exclusion for military veterans over age 65, the Hogan administration will introduce new legislation to extend the same tax relief to all retirees in Maryland. The proposed legislation would also phase in an increase of the personal exemption for seniors to \$5,000 over four years.

- Reductions in the Maryland Department of Aging budget are expected.

Other announcements:

- Uma and Gabe will be interviewed by the *Beacon* for a feature on the 2015 Summit on Aging.
- The Senior Nutrition Program was recognized with a National Association of Counties (NACO) Award for the cold meals for low income seniors program (3 months in winter).
- Senior Tech Day will be held on May 11, 2016 at Holiday Park Senior Center. This event results from a recommendation from the 2015 Summit on Aging Civic Engagement Workgroup.
- The GAO is working on a report on federally funded housing programs, with a focus on three communities, one of which is Montgomery County.

Legislative Updates and USM Forum

Rudy Oswald, Co-Chair, CoA Public Policy Committee

Rudy reported that he, Doug Newton, and some other members of the Public Policy Committee attended the United Seniors of Maryland Legislative Forum on February 3, 2016, in Annapolis.

The PPC and other CoA Members have testified or soon will testify in support of the following bills: (1) HB 718, which allows the Attorney General to take civil action on behalf of exploited seniors, to help recover stolen funds; (2) SB 336 and HB 1277, which would require hospitals to train lay caregivers in taking appropriate steps in caring for discharged patients; (3) SB 472 and SB 580, which would require employers of 10 or more employees to provide basic medical leave; and (4) HB 819, which provides for a tax credit for independent living expenses.

The PPC also submitted letters in support of the following bills: (1) HB 495, to increase penalties for offenses against vulnerable or elderly adults; (2) HB 244, to provide for six months' notice prior to the closure of assisted living facilities; (3) SB 98, HB 262, and SB 805, to increase funding for Senior Centers; (4) HB 805, calling upon the state Department of Aging to develop a comprehensive state plan for dealing with senior issues; and (5) the PPC also sent a letter to the Maryland Public Service Commission, calling for improved regulations for disabled passengers using ride services such as Uber and Lyft. On the federal level, the PPC sent letters to the County's three Congressional Representatives urging them to advocate for reauthorization of the Older Americans Act by the House of Representatives. Letters were also sent to the two Maryland Senators calling for increased funding for Older Americans Act programs. Copies of these letters were available at the CoA meeting.

A summary of 2016 bills of relevance to the CoA that have had hearings or are scheduled for hearings is attached at the end of these minutes.

Long Term Care Quality Issues

Guest: Eileen Bennett, Long Term Care Ombudsman.

Ms. Bennett described the LTCOP, which advocates for residents of licensed long term care settings in Maryland -- nursing homes, assisted living, and senior group homes. Assisted living facilities are larger than senior group homes, with more than 16 residents. Senior group homes usually house from 4 to 8 residents, but no more than 16. Senior group homes are licensed under the same regulations as assisted living communities; nursing home regulations are very different and more complex. Maryland assisted

living regulations are in the final stages of revision. One issue under review is the right of a resident to appeal an involuntary discharge, which tend to be based on financial rather than behavioral issues. The Montgomery County LTCOP receives its highest number of complaints for involuntary discharge, although quality of care remains a significant issue.

Ms. Bennett described efforts to improve the quality of care and the rights of residents of Maryland facilities. She observed that while accidents do happen, and are not always preventable, the concern is about patterns. Ms. Bennett stated that while resident care has become much more complex in the 20 years that she has been in the field, Maryland's minimum staffing standard has remained unchanged at 2.75 hours of nursing per nursing home resident per day. The national staffing goal is 4.1 hours of nursing care per resident per day. The District of Columbia requires facilities to meet this standard. To ensure quality care in Maryland, minimum staffing levels need to be increased using the ratio existing in other states. One group involved in these and other quality efforts is the Maryland Culture Change Coalition, which Ms. Bennett chairs. Another is Voices for Quality Care (LTC), Inc. is an all-volunteer organization of people who need long-term care services, their friends and families, resident and family councils, advocates, and concerned citizens working together to ensure quality care in all long-term care settings. Voices of Quality Care provides information, support, assistance and referrals; encourages the development and continuation of strong resident and family councils; and advocates for responsible public policy.

Strategic Review: Age Friendly Community, Senior Agenda, and Senior Subcabinet

Dennis Linders, Office of the County Executive CountyStat.

Mr. Linders provided some background on the WHO Age Friendly Community movement and the County Executive's acceptance of AARP's invitation to join the movement. He stated that by 2030, more than 25% of Montgomery County residents will be 60 years of age or older. He summarized the results of the Age Friendly Community Survey conducted in conjunction with the 2015 Summit on Aging. As of November 2015, 2,041 responses to the survey had been collected from residents 55 and older on a range of topics including community characteristics and quality of life.

The AARP Network of Age friendly communities was launched in April 2012. It serves as the institutional affiliate in the United States for the World Health Organization's Global Network of Livable Communities. Nationwide, more than 73 communities representing more than 35 million residents have received Age Friendly designation from AARP. See more at: <http://states.aarp.org/montgomery-co-is-marylands-first-aarp-age-friendly-community/>.

The certification process includes completion of a Community Checklist as well as a Strategic Plan. The WHO and AARP's Network of Age Friendly Communities have identified "Eight Domains of Livability" -- improvements that influence the health and quality of life of older adults. These include: outdoor spaces and buildings; transportation; housing; social participation; respect and social inclusion; civic participation and employment; communication and information; and community support and health services. These livability indicators are to be planned, implemented and evaluated in three phases over a five-year period, with continued cycles of re-evaluation and improvement thereafter. The County will work with AARP Maryland to identify the specific domains that it will use.

Montgomery County has already engaged in extensive relevant work, outlined in "Montgomery County: A Community for a Lifetime: Summary of Accomplishments FY2008-FY2015." The County also has some systems in place for implementing the initiative, including the Senior Subcabinet workgroups,

Senior Agenda, and recommendations from the 2015 Summit on Aging. These will need to be aligned. To learn more go to: <http://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/documents-2016/MontgomeryCountyMdAccomplishments.pdf>

Dennis will share his Power Point presentation electronically with the CoA.

CoA Goals and Priorities

Noelle led discussion on the goals and priorities on which the COA will focus this year. They are grounded in the Summit on Aging: Final Report and Recommendations, the Senior Agenda, and the Age Friendly Communities initiative. They are also guided by recommendations from Summer Studies. These elements must be aligned and some, *e.g.*, the Senior Agenda, may need to be evaluated in light of the Age Friendly initiative. The CoA will advise the County on the Age Friendly initiative, and will monitor its progress towards identified goals.

Noelle emphasized that the CoA is a working commission, that each commissioner is expected to be engaged and to contribute, and that work is conducted in committees.

Liaison Updates

Department of Transportation – Faisal Khan reported that MCDOT’s Traffic Engineering Division has retimed traffic signals in the Silver Spring Central Business District to provide more time for pedestrians to cross the street. The retiming will allow pedestrians 3.5 feet per second of crossing time.

Department of Recreation – Phil Smakula spoke about the challenges that recreation center participants face when recreation and senior centers are closed due to inclement weather. He announced that a new bilingual employee, Jose Seguara, has joined senior services. Jose was previously with the recreation department’s youth development program. The county executives budget includes funds for the Department of Recreation senior services at the new North Potomac Center. Phil announced two upcoming events at Holiday Park Senior Center: (1) Technology Fair, May 11, 2016; and (2) World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEEAD) program, June 14, 2016.

Commission on Health/BHTF – Alan Kaplan reported that the COH is currently working on health literacy; there will be more updates once this project is completed.

Department of Fire and Rescue Services – Jim Resnick reported that his unit continues its multiple outreach programs in partnership with Villages and Meals-on-Wheels, checking smoke alarms and making people feel safe in their homes. The focus of this project is on vulnerable adults. Fire and Rescue also continues to hold educational meetings around the County on the importance of fire safety, as fires continue to plague the community. Fire and Rescue proposes to host a CoA meeting next year.

Strategic Planning Workgroup – Judy Levy reported that the Senior Subcabinet Strategic Planning Workgroup will meet Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 3pm at the Rockville Library. The meeting is to discuss the status of strategic planning, including where the workgroup is now, and steps moving forward.

Villages – Pazit Aviv gave a report on village activities. Number of active villages: 16; villages in development: 9; new geographical communities receiving presentations on villages: 18; faith communities receiving presentations on villages: 8; estimated number of people involved in a village (as a volunteer or member): 2,500; estimated number of people over 60 with access to an active village in

their community: 43,000; estimated number of people over 60 with access to a developing village in their community: 40,000; number of volunteer rides provided by five villages who participate in the Village Rides program* (April-December 2015): 1545 (total of 3785 miles). For information on villages and the 2015 Annual Report: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/Villages/2015%20report.pdf>

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Stephanie Edelstein, Secretary

Appendix

**SUMMARY OF 2016 BILLS APPLICABLE
TO COMMISSION ON AGING**

Bill #	Category / Title	Hearing Scheduled
	<i>Elder Abuse</i>	
HB 495	Offense Against Vulnerable or Elderly Adult	2/17
HB 718	Asset Recovery for Exploited Seniors Act	2/24
	<i>Guardianship</i>	
SB 70	Duties of Guardians	1/28
SB171	Guardianship of a Minor or Disabled Person-Records Check	2/3
SB 430	Guardianship of a Disable Person-Communication Rights	2/16
SB 853	Guardians of Property-Authority to Fund Certain Trusts	3/8
HB 43	Duties of Guardians	1/28
HB 512	Guardianship of a Disabled Person-Communication Rights	3/2
HB 960	Guardians of Property-Authority to Fund Certain Trusts	3/2
HB 981	Medical Assistance Program-Guardianship Fees-Income Deduction	3/1
HB 1489	Guardianship of a Minor or Disabled Person-Records Check	
	<i>Family and Medical Leave</i>	
SB 472	Healthy Working Families Act	3/3
SB 485	Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program	3/3
HB 580	Healthy Working Families Act	3/1
HB 740	Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program-Establishment	3/1
	<i>Estates</i>	
SB 847	Estate Tax-Exclusion Amount	
SB 913	Estates and Trusts- Elective Share of Surviving Spouse	3/8
HB 522	Estate Tax-Unified Credit	2/23
HB 1229	Estates and Trusts- Elective Share of Surviving Spouse	
HB 1336	Estates and Trusts-Notice Requirement-Method of Delivery	

	Taxes	
SB 5	Subtraction Modification-Retirement Income	2/10
SB 293	Subtraction Modification-Military Retirement Income	2/10
SB 299	Income Tax Subtraction-Retirement Income (Fairness in Taxation)	2/10
SB 322	Homeowners' Property Tax Credit Awareness Campaign	2/17
SB 387	Income Tax Exemption Amount-Elderly	2/24
SB 660	Subtraction Modification-Military Retirement Income	3/11
SB 759	Sustainable Communities Tax Credit	3/14
SB 896	Tax credit for LTC Insurance	3/9
HB 33	Fairness in Taxation for Retirees Act	1/21 cancelled
HB 114	Homeowners Property Tax Credit	2/10
HB 158	Fairness in Taxation for Retirees	2/2
HB 170	Homestead Property Tax Assessment Cap Reduction	2/10
HB 311	Subtraction Modification-Retirement Income	2/9
HB 371	Independent Living Tax Credit Act	2/16
HB 455	Income Tax Exemption Amount –Elderly Individuals	2/25
HB 483	Homeowners Tax Credit Computation and Eligibility	2/24
HB 586	Retire in Maryland Act of 2016	2/23
HB 939	Sustainable Communities Tax Credit-Alteration and Extension	3/4
HB 1148	Subtraction Modification-Retirement Income	3/1
HB 1300	Income Tax-Credit for LTC Insurance	
	Election Law	
SB 11	Universal Voter Registration Act	2/18
SB 19	Automatic Voter Registration	2/18
HB 83	Early Voting Centers	2/10
HB 204	Early Voting Centers	2/10
HB1008	Early Voting Centers	3/3
	Senior Centers	
SB 98	Senior Citizen Activities Operating Fund	Bill reassigned in House
SB 604	Distribution of Funding for Senior Citizen Activities Centers	2/24
SB 805	Senior Centers Operating Fund	3/10
HB 262	Senior Centers Operating Fund	2/9
	Medical Programs	
SB 108	Nurse Support Program Assistance Fund	
SB 242	Medical Assistance Program-Telemedicine	2/3
SB 336	Hospitals- Designation of Lay Caregivers	2/11
SB 418	End-of-Life Options Act	2/25
SB 661	Patient's Bill of Rights	3/10
SB 691	Provision of Life-Preserving Health Care Services	
SB717	Registration of Radiation Machines	3/1
SB 873	End-of-Life Decision-Making Informational Booklet	2/25
SB 895	Medical Assistance Program-Nursing Skills-Checklist	3/2
SB 928	Task Force to Study the Nurse Shortage in Maryland	2/19
HB 265	Health Care Facility-Abuse Registry (Unfavorable report by Gov. & Ops)	
HB 404	End-of-Life Option Act	2/19
HB 416	End-of-Life Decision-Making Informational Booklet	
HB 568	Health Care - Exemption from Participation in Aid in Dying	
HB 587	Patient's Bill of Rights	2/18
HB 714	Adoption and Use of Electronic Health Records	3/1
HB 730	Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council- Membership & Extension of	2/23

	Termination Date	
HB 744	Senior Call-Check Service Program	2/25
HB 886	Medical Assistance Program-Telemedicine	3/3
HB 1235	Medical Assistance Program-Nursing Skills-Checklist	
HB 1243	Medical Assistance Program-Specialty Care-Prohibition on Authorization	
HB 1272	Health-Collaborations to Promote Provider Alignment	
HB 1277	Hospitals-Designation of Lay Caregivers	
HB 1385	Public Health-Electronic Advance Directives-Witness Requirements, Information Sheets, Repository Services	
HB 1492	Task Force to Study the Nurse Shortage in Maryland	
	Budget	
SB 190	2017 Budget Bill	
HB150	2017 Budget Bill	
Senate	Department of Aging Appropriation	2/18
House	Department of Aging Appropriation	2/24
	Assisted Living and Housing	
SB 241	Senior Apartment Conversion	2/9
SB 939	Medical Assistance Program- Nursing Homes-Advance Payments	3/9
HB 244	Closure or Change of Location for Assisted Living Programs (to be withdrawn)	2/16
HB 248	Community Based Residential Programs or Day Care Centers	2/17
HB 284	Limitation on Occupancy by Person Convicted of Crime of Violence	2/9
HB 588	Continuing Care Agreements-Actuarial Studies	2/9
HB 905	Creation of a State Debt-Montgomery Hospice Casey House	
HB 1181	Medical Assistance Program- Nursing Homes-Advance Payments	
	Insurance	
SB 335	Health Insurance – Assignment of Benefits and Reimbursement of Nonpreferred Providers	2/10
SB 1505	Health Insurance – Assignment of Benefits and Reimbursement of Nonpreferred Providers	
	Family Law	
HB421	Grandparent Visitation	2/11
HB 472	Retention of Estate Files	3/2
HB 485	Admission of Copy of Executed Will	3/2
HB 541	MD Trust Act-Partial Revocation by Divorce or Annulment	3/2
	Comprehensive	
HB 685	Comprehensive Plan for the Aging Population	3/1
HB 978	Task Force to Study Housing, Health and Economic Stability of Seniors	
	Retirement Programs	
SB 1007	Small Business Retirement Savings Program and Trust	
HB 1378	Small Business Retirement Savings Program and Trust	3/15