

**Communications Committee Meeting
Minutes
April 17, 2023**

Attendees

CoA

Jean Dinwiddie, Co-Chair
Beverly Rollins, Co-Chair
Virginia Cain
David Engel
Kendell Matthews
Yvette Monroe
Barbara Selter
Katie Smith

Alumni

Austin Heyman
Chuck Kaufman

Staff

Jennifer Long, Montgomery County Aging and Disability Services

Roll Call

Committee members moved to approve the minutes of the March 2023 meeting.

Printed Material for Older Adults

Austin Heyman spoke to the group regarding the printed materials that the CoA provides to the public. Recently, he asked staffer Shawn Brennan about how the \$10,000 that is allotted in the County budget to the Public Information Office (PIO) has been used for older adult communication issues. He stated that there are many ways for communication issues to be addressed, both within the CoA and Age-Friendly Montgomery. He asked, “Who decides what to print? The PIO?” Austin believes that the population that the County serves requires that things be printed. He suggested that the Communications Committee devote a meeting to looking into what printed materials are provided to the County’s older adults, who decides what is printed, and who is controlling the \$10,000 in the budget. Virginia Cain said that the CoA should just try to spend that \$10,000; e.g., ask the County to prepare printed materials on nicer paper and develop translated versions of papers. Simply ask the County to do it and expect that it will be done. David Engel asked Jennifer Long whether she had to use money out of the \$10,000 fund to

print the older adult documents that recently went to the libraries and Jennifer responded that they already had them on hand.

During the meeting, David looked at the County's budget and stated that \$28,000 was included in last year's budget for ads in the *Beacon* and for older adult materials. He noted that it is again in this year's proposed budget. Barbara Selter commented that she would like to see the CoA's Health and Wellness Committee's "Transition" documents printed when those documents are ready to be distributed. She suggested that the CoA definitely ask that they be printed. She noted that H&W's goal is to have the documents available for the Senior Summit to be held in October.

Jean Dinwiddie asked Jennifer what the procedure is to get documents translated. Jennifer said that it is a many-step process. Professionals do it and they charge the County to do it. She stated that if the H&W's documents were translated for the Summit it would be helpful.

Beverly Rollins suggested that the CoA make its requests regarding the \$28,000 formally via memo and cc a lot of people including the County Executive and several County Councilmembers. That will make the CoA's request more visible.

Updates from the Last Committee Meeting

Jean and Beverly provided a status update of the draft library liaison job description and the note to Anita Vassallo. Beverly stated that she sent a note to Anita regarding the library liaison job description and asked whether older adult sections had been established in the libraries. Beverly had not heard back yet from Anita but said that she had just sent the note a few days ago. David commented that he recently sent a note to Councilmember Mink and discussed the CoA's suggestions for library liaisons and library older adult sections.

Discussion of Vetting Procedures for Ambassadors

Beverly stated that Committee members need to discuss how the vetting process should be completed for individuals who want to participate as Ambassadors in the Ambassador Program. Jean shared on screen a document that was used to vet for the host position of 50+ and suggested that it could possibly be used for the Ambassadors.

Beverly then asked, "How can we tactfully vet a CoA member or alumni?" David responded that the draft Ambassador job description requires reporting back to the Committee as well as other requirements and duties. He suggested that if members do not fulfill those requirements they could be terminated as Ambassadors. Virginia commented that it may not be obvious on how well they performed based on their own evaluation.

Chuck Kaufman stated that he does not think the Committee can tell Commissioners that they cannot be Ambassadors. But, he noted, the Committee could make assignments. Austin asked how many Ambassadors the Committee is looking for. He suggested that it could be limited to three or four individuals. If those individuals are chairs or former chairs of Committees they would probably work out well. Barbara commented that she would feel uncomfortable telling Commissioners they cannot be Ambassadors. She noted that the individuals who do want to do it would probably be pretty good.

Jean agreed with Chuck on the suggestion to make Ambassador assignments. Virginia suggested that Ambassadors go out in pairs. Also, she stated that feedback should be requested from the groups and the Ambassadors should see the feedback. Chuck said that we should focus on the target audiences and not so much on vetting. Beverly commented that there is the possibility that no one will volunteer to be an Ambassador.

Jean wrapped up, stating that the Committee will not have any evaluating group but it will be careful about where the Ambassadors are assigned. The Committee, however, needs to look at the post-meeting evaluations. Chuck said that we should ask the alumni members to be Ambassadors, and Barbara agreed. Chuck and Barbara will talk with each other about reaching out to them.

Discussion of Responsibilities of the Ambassador Program Task Force

David asked whether the Task Force could be the members of the Communications Committee. Jean responded it would be great if they were. She asked whether anyone would be willing to head the Task Force. Barbara and Virginia said that they would act as co-chairs of the Task Force.

Website Update

Beverly reported that information regarding the Community for a Lifetime Award was forwarded to Arunima Ghosh (the CoA's website liaison) and she sent it to staffer Tremayne Jones. Arunima also asked Tremayne to post the CoA's 2022 Annual Report and its 2022 Quarterly Reports. David said that the Communication Committee's agendas and minutes are posted and the newest ones are highlighted in yellow. He asked Beverly and Jean to ask Arunima to find out why and how the new documents got posted in yellow and to see whether other new CoA documents could be posted that way.

50+ in Montgomery County Update

Katie Smith and Jean reported the following episodes are scheduled for 50+:

April program—Technology/Public Forum
May program—MoCo Centenarians/No-Mow May
June—Older Adult Fashions
July—Solo Aging
August--rerun

Jean reminded members that the 50+ Planning Committee meets on the first Friday of every month.

Adjourn