

**Commission on Aging
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 27, 2022
9:30 A.M**

COMMISSIONERS

Wayne Berman
Virginia Cain
Betsy Carrier
Jean Dinwiddie, Pharm.D
Joyce Dubow
David Engel
Nkiru J. Ezeani
Dr. Arunima Ghosh
Mona Y. Grieser
Morris Klein
Kendell Matthews
Nanine Meiklejohn
Sibo Ncube
Karon Phillips
Helen Pross (Laurie)
Edgar Rivas
Beverly Rollins
Barbara Selter
Kate Smith
Mary Sweeney
Hillery Tumba
Marsha Weber
T. Ryan Wilson
Arthur Williams

Absent

Neal Brown
Rev. Dr. Ruby Moon
Tho Tran
Janice Zalen

Alumni

Austin Heyman
Richard Jourdenais
Monica Schaeffer

Liaison

Present

Odile Brunetto, Ed.D. Aging and Disability
Monique Gardner, MPH, Program Specialist II
(Aging Coordinator) African American Health
Program

Staff

Dr. Patrice L. McGhee. DPA Area Agency on
Aging, Director HHS, Aging and Disability
Shawn Brennan, Department of Health & Human
Services Transportation & Mobility and COA
Marcia Pruzan, Senior Fellow
Roll Call/Attendee Introduction

Guest

Lylie Fisher, Age Friendly HCBS Workgroup

Barbara Selter-Chair

Barbara welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- Barbara shared sad news that Tremayne Jones's mother had passed. Barbara wrote to the family to express CoA condolences and to find the wishes of the family .
- Arthur Williams informed the CoA that Odessa Shannon's application was accepted, and she will be installed in "The Maryland Woman's Hall of Fame" in March 2022. The state honors women in our state who have made significant and lasting contributions to the arts, business, education, government, etc.

AAA Director updates – Dr. Patrice McGhee, Director Area Agencies on Aging

Information from Governor Hogan's FY 2023 budget that will impact older adults:

- 75 million to local health departments to continue the Covid response.
- 6.6 million to increase SNAP benefits to approximately 27,00 seniors
- 17.8 million to reduce wait list for home health care programs
- 10.3 million for Senior Care
- 5.3 million for senior assisted living subsidy
- 2.2 million congregate housing service programs 187 million to fund provider rate increases in the fields of behavioral health and developmental disabilities, Medicaid, and other services. Not sure about medical adult daycare providers. When more information becomes available, she will share.
- (These figures are total amount above the previous year's budget.)

County Executive proposed capital budget, which is a six-year plan: some sections that may impact seniors

- Support expansion and improvement of subsidized income-restricted housing units
- Prevent homelessness and provide stable housing for our lowest income residents
- 152 million to begin transitioning the Ride On fleet to all electric buses
- Expanding broadband in affordable housing so it is readily available and dependable for low- income residents. Funding provided to the state will allow expansion to approximately 8000 units.

COVID update Montgomery County

- Montgomery County will distribute rapid testing kits beginning on January 10th. The citizens of the county can pick-up the kits from nineteen designated county libraries.
- The CDC updated recommendations on best masks to wear, which offer good protection against COVID along with getting vaccinated and a booster.
- Starting on January 21st, Montgomery County will provide four free adult size KN95 masks at nineteen county libraries. The mask can be worn up to five times.
- The federal government has launched rapid testing kit distribution website where each household can request four free at home rapid testing COVID-19 kits.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant Application

Ms. McGhee thanked COA for our thoughtful input and feedback to the plan. She highlighted that these funds (3.5 million) are one-time. The proposal was submitted on January 10th. The AAA is now awaiting approval from MD Dept on Aging.

The Office of Public Information

The VAX 5 Grant funds (approx. 128 million) provided by the State will be used to market and promote vaccines. The AAA is working with the Office of Public Information on this.

Presentation of Recommendation from Age Friendly HCBS Workgroup – Lylie Fisher, Chair, Age Friendly HCBS Workgroup

In, 2021, Age Friendly Home and Community Based Services Workgroup hosted two roundtable meetings. The purpose of the roundtable #1 was to provide an assessment of the frontline workforce that delivers services to the older adults, veterans, and persons with disabilities. Roundtable #2 explored how the county businesses and provider community can work together to enhance the costs, quality and availability of in-home care. Barbara Selter was the moderator for both roundtables.

- The problem: current direct service workforce insufficient for the growing number older adults who need services. (Personal Care Assistant, Certified Nursing Assistant, Home Health Aides).
- The recommendation generated by the Round Tables: The County should convene a task force on this topic, develop an action plan and begin implementation of the plan. The County Executive has agreed.
 - Anticipated role of the Commission
 - CoA, chair, Barbara Selter, will be a task force member
 - CoA will be invited to:
 - Advise the Task Force on the HCBS environment and needs of older adults
 - Provide expertise and testimony
 - Advocate for taskforce recommendation to be adopted
 - Advocate for funding to implement the Task Force's action plan
- Age Friendly Montgomery Roundtable presentation was put in the chat.

Commission on Aging Business

- Approval of December minutes
Joyce made a motion to approve the minutes, Laurie second. Motion passed.
- Budget Report- David

Barbara, Richard, and David signed bank documents to transition David to the position of treasurer. Balance in account is \$ 4,795.11. EC recommended that the treasurer will only report out to CoA if there is a balance change. The CoA plans to remember Tremayne's mother.

- **Chairman's Report- Barbara**
Reminder to commissioners to start submitting names to Wayne for Community for a Lifetime Award. The awards would be announced at the Public Forum. She is waiting for feedback from the state about AAA funding will update CoA on status. Barbara thanked Legislative Breakfast committee for putting together the event and the materials. The Executive Committee approved the Transportation Service Improvement Fund (TFIS) letter, and it was sent out to the Director of the Department of Transportation. Janice Zalen will prepare the fourth quarter quarterly report. She will also prepare the annual report. Committee chairs are asked to provide input to the annual report.
- **Public Forum Working Committee Report- Jean/Marsha**
They have had a couple of meetings to establish the framework for the event. Progress thus far: the date is May 5, 2022 and they have secured venue, the Activity Center at Bohrer Park in Gaithersburg. A committee meeting is planned for Friday, January 28.
- **Thrive for Life 2050 Response Working Committee Report- Wayne**
A small working group is reviewing the plans-- each person reviewed different sections of the plan. The group overall endorsed the concept of the of Thrive 2050 plan and felt it supported the CoA's efforts for social equity. One problem is technical jargon that would be difficult for an older adult who is not familiar with those terminologies. They have drafted a letter to Gabe Albornoz, President, Montgomery County Council.
- **Medical Adult Day Care Advocacy- Barbara**
After discussion, the EC felt they needed additional information prior to writing a letter that would advocate for medical adult daycare. Areas of concern use of additional funds? Will it be to raise the salaries of workers, Profit margin for agencies? Performance- based funding? Are centers licensed? Barbara will write a letter to Liz to clarify these concerns /issues.
- **Discussion of Legislative Tracking and Advocacy Letter Writing-Morris /Ryan**
Morris and Ryan have identified bills that affect older adults. They would like commissioners to review the bills and write letters of support. A letter template and links to the bills will be available. Forward the draft letters to Morris, Ryan and EC for review.
- **Reminder about Committee Assignments**
Committee Co-Chairs: Please identify members of your committee and send that information to Barbara and Tremayne.

Committee Reports

- **Health and Wellness- Marsha**
Updated the committee on progress of the Forum. The group discussed ideas related to older adults to work on next. We agreed members would submit a written explanation of the topic. At the next committee meeting the group will review the topics. Then a decision on will be made as to what to tackle next.
- **Aging in Community-Wayne/ Mary**
At the January meeting, Pazit did a presentation on older adults in the county. It was a PowerPoint presentation of data and statistics on different aspects of older adults' demographics and the services they use including food insecurity, housing, insurance coverage, transportation, SNAP, and health care programs. The data is a resource that should be in our files. On February 8th, the focus will be on food insecurity and the SNAP program. Joyce will be facilitating that the meeting. Wayne sent the PowerPoint to everybody on the Commission. Contact him if you did not receive the file
- **Public Policy- Morris, Ryan**
Barbara, on behalf of the Commission, submitted a letter in support of home and community-based services legislation. There was a hearing earlier this week in the Senate and although we did not meet the strict deadlines that the committee had we still got the bill in the official record. It is part of the official file so thanks to Barbara and Shawn for quick action on that. The number of bills is probably 30- 40 such as, health care issues, Medicaid, bills to reduce income taxes for people who are either retired or are over hundred years old. There is a bill supporting a mental health emergency hotline. As

opposed to 911, it will be 988, designed to help identify a mental health emergency. The Public Policy committee is looking for volunteers to write letters. They have a template, links to bills and sample letters from past issues are on the website. All letters must be reviewed by PP and approved by EC. Morris has not heard anything on the memorandum of understanding sent last month relating to Montgomery County possibly taking over nursing home surveying duties.

- Communication- Jean
The focuses are printed materials ,website and on the TV show 50 plus in Montgomery County. January show was about pets please save your toilet tissue rolls for the shelters. The February show we will commemorate Black History Month and complicated history in Montgomery County. We have two guests, one from the Underground Railroad experience and one from the Josiah Henson House. The objective is to explore the African American experience from enslavement to the quest for freedom. Our public service announcement will be on the exhibit in the Rockville Library on lynching in Montgomery County. In March, the entire program on the 20th Anniversary of the Villages and villages in the DMV. David Engle has done a great job with the website. Putting printed material in the libraries is difficult because of library system's involvement in Covid supplies distribution.
- Liaison Updates- Marcia Pruzan, Age Friendly
Last week she attended a good presentation. The power point was an excellent resource, and she will send the power point to Barbara. The focus was how the county came together with partners during the pandemic. The county established service consolidation HUBS throughout so that people could get food and diapers and other services. Age Friendly will work with George Washington University and four other area jurisdictions this year to have two regional Age Friendly events. This year first event will be virtual and the second event in-person in October.
- New Business
If your first term expires January 2022,you will need to write a letter requesting to serve a second term. Details are pending.
- Adjourn: Eddie motion to adjourn ,second by Virginia, motion passed. 11:59 am
- **Next Steps**
Barbara: Letter to Liz Barnes to clarify the concerns /issues/ questions about Medical Adult Day Care Advocacy.
Wayne: Letter to County Council President Gabe Albornoz topic Thrive 2050
Janice: Prepare 4th Quarter report and Annual report
Morris-Identified Legislative Bills spreadsheet
Commissioners: if your first term expires this month you will need to write a letter requesting a second term.
Committee Co-Chairs: identify members of your committee

NOTE: Invited Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

- February 24, 2022 - Police Reorganization (TBD)
- March 24, 2022 – Hospice/Palliative Care (TBD)
- April 28. 2022- Aging Life Care Management