

**Montgomery County Commission on Aging
Executive Committee
Minutes from May 17, 2018 Meeting**

In attendance

Executive Committee: Isabelle Schoenfeld, Stephanie Edelstein, Syed Yusuf, Noelle Heyman, Neal Brown, Alan Kaplan, Dick Jourdenais and Ryan Wilson

Other Commissioners: Revathi Vikram, Nguyen Chau.

Staff: Odile Brunetto, Erin Smith

Isabelle opened the meeting at 9:30. As minutes from the April meeting were not yet available, approval will be deferred until June.

Budget and Finance Officer's Report (Syed)

The COA account balance is \$5562.31

AAA Director's Report (Odile)

The County Council will take a straw vote on the budget later today, and a final vote on May 24. Odile also mentioned that Austin Heyman is looking for substitute/guest hosts for Seniors Today.

New Commission Member

Amy Harbison has been appointed to fill the vacancy left by Jack Sprague's resignation.

Committee/Task Group Reports

Health Planning, Service and Community Supports (Alan and Neal)

Committee discussions are focused on (1) quality of care in assisted living and (2) options for people who need assisted living but whose income is not low enough to qualify for Medical Assistance and too low to be private pay. Speakers at the June meeting will be Joe Podson, former Executive Director of Homecrest House, currently working at Enterprise Management- (Residential One regional level), Carol Cohen Wolf, new ED of Homecrest House, and Donna Tucker. Future committee meetings will be two hours rather than 90 minutes, and the committee will meet in June and July. The committee includes two new Commissioners and several non-Commissioners as members. Everyone is enthusiastic.

Aging in Place/Community and Planning (Noelle and Dick)

Tim Goetzinger from DHCA was a guest at the last meeting. He described the Housing Initiative Fund and the County's system for funding affordable housing. The committee will consider next steps and recommendations at its June meeting.

In response to a question, Isabelle stated that while there is no set deadline for Committee reports on focus issues, it would be best if at least the drafts were ready by the end of summer, as the recommendations will help to inform the COA's issue and budget priorities.

Public Policy (Ryan)

The Governor has signed SB 4 (now Chapter 473) to create a legislative oversight committee on nursing home and assisted living quality of care, and SB 386 to require speedier investigations of serious complaints by OHCQ. Odile will send out a link to the new Chapter 473.

The committee is developing standard introductory language for letters and testimony. Mort is contacting CountyStat to obtain a set of standard demographic data that we can use in policy letters and other documents.

Mort and Odile are trying to get a list of other Commissions on Aging in the state, in an effort to organize collaborations on legislative and other issues of common interest.

Mort is drafting a letter in support of Bill 17-18E, which would streamline the process for applying for the Elderly Individuals and Retired Military Services Members Property Tax Credit.

Executive Committee Discussion of Policy Issues

Isabelle provided an update on the status of Bill 13-18, to allow the County Executive to use the TSIF fund for general purposes. TSIF and this bill have been discussed at previous meetings. The COA submitted testimony opposing the bill. The County Executive sought to withdraw the bill when the County Attorney advised that legislation was not needed to use the TSIF fund for general purposes, but the Council refused to allow the bill's withdrawal and will be holding work sessions to examine how best to protect the fund and improve the regulations going forward.

There was discussion about how best to respond to the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's proposal to add work requirements and increase tenant payments in public and subsidized housing. Ryan will contact Senator Chris Van Hollen's office and Congressman Jamie Raskin's office about the status and timing for this bill and how and when COA can best weigh in.

There was also some discussion about how to respond to requests to sign on to other organizations' letters and general agreement that we can use information in those letters to draft our own.

Committee Names

In response to Isabelle's question whether the names assigned to each of the committees are too cumbersome, Neal and Alan reported that Health Planning, Service and Community Supports have discussed this and would prefer to return to Health and Wellness, which is broad enough to encompass the issues that committee addresses. Noelle will poll members of AIP/C&P to see whether they would prefer to drop the Planning and be Aging in Place and Community.

The Public Policy Committee name was not changed, so there is no need for action.

Ageism Study Group Update (Erin)

Hillery Tsumba and Erin Smith are leading this group. Two meetings are currently planned: May 18 and May 31. The first meeting will focus on implicit bias and provide an opportunity to develop questions/topics for discussion by a panel at the second meeting. The group will also review selected County communications and draft recommendations for consideration by the COA for addressing any instances of ageism in those communications.

Diversity and Inclusion Meeting – June 28 (Rev and Erin)

Rev, Erin, and Odile met this week to plan the approach and to develop a draft agenda for the June meeting. The focus will be a conversation with representatives from diverse communities led by Office of Community Partnerships Director Bruce Adams. They recommended that the starting point for the discussion be the 2015 Summit focus groups' results, and progress made in the areas identified by diverse residents as important issues. After considering the demographics of the County and the fact that there is limited time, they also recommended that the participants be representatives from the following groups whose numbers are high but who are underserved: African-American, Korean, Salvadoran, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, a Middle East group TBD. Mona Negm (Muslim community) and Vivian Hsueh (Chinese community) will be invited as great resources on how to reach into to one's own community and connect members to services. Due to time constraints, representatives from other groups, e.g., those that have a higher population in the county but, also have more support, and, those that have OCP liaisons, are not represented on the panel, but will be invited to attend.

The June event team will develop some questions to guide the discussion. COA members are encouraged to send questions to Rev. Erin will send a doodle poll for the next planning meeting.

Preliminary Budget Priority Discussion – June 28

Odile will provide a presentation on the County Budget Process and COA Budget Priority Setting.

We need to have a preliminary discussion of FY20 County budget priorities in May or June, once we know what is in the FY19 budget. We can finalize in September in time for the HHS budget committee meeting in October. There was discussion about whether to add time for this discussion to the June meeting or have an additional meeting. (Note: following the meeting, Is and Stephanie agreed that while not ideal, an extended June 28 meeting is most practical.)

Two-Part COA Monthly Meeting – May 24

This meeting will address two different topics: (1) Odile will present on the County Budget Process and COA's budget priority setting process, and (2) Chuck Short, Special Senior Assistant to the County Executive will inform COA of activities and considerations related to newly elected officials and how to best interact/communicate with them about COA and inform them about challenges/issues of older adults in the county and their families.

Other business

There was some discussion of the May 11 Affordable Housing Conference.

Chau raised the issue of how best to inform older adults who might be more isolated by language or culture, of services that are available to them. Leslie Marks is working with Montgomery College on a project to help train housing managers about services and getting services to residents. Mona Negm and Vivian Hsueh have developed systems for outreach by volunteers in their communities. It was suggested that Chau discuss this issue with Tho Tran, as she works with older adults in the Vietnamese community.

Isabelle asked for EC agreement to send a letter of support to the Brookdale Foundation for a JCA grant to fund a respite pilot program (per e-mail request from Tina Purser-Langley this morning). We have supported their Early onset dementia program through the Recreation Department centers and this is another way they are looking to help offer respite to caregivers. The EC agreed with sending a letter of support.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 11:45 am.

Stephanie Edelstein, Vice-Chair.