

COMMISSION ON AGING
MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES
April 26, 2018

Members Present	Members Absent
Amoke Alakoye	Monica Schaeffer
Marsha Weber	Syed Yusuf
Jean Dinwiddie	Rashid Makhdoom
Barbara Brubeck	Sue Guenther
Alan Kaplan	
Philip Rider	Liaisons
Jerry Morenoff	Marcia Pruzan, Senior Fellow Age Montgomery
Revathi Vikram	Austin Heyman, Senior Fellow Office of Community Partnerships
Nguyen-Minh Chau	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
Karen Maricheau	Teanna Abrahams, Department of Recreation
Deborah Royster	Jim Campbell, Commission on Veterans Affairs
Noelle Heyman	Denise Isreal, Department of Transportation
Hillery Tsumba	Gail Gunod-Green, Housing Opportunities Commission
Mary Petrizzo	Charles Kauffman, Commission on Aging Alumni
Richard Jourdenais	
Isabelle Schoenfeld	Guests
Miriam Kelty	Cheryl Spann
Ryan Wilson	
Nanine Meiklejohn	Staff
Neal Brown	Odile Brunetto, Dept. of Health and Human Services
Tho Tran	Tremayne Jones, Dept. of Health and Human Services
Stephanie Edelstein	Pazit Aviv, Dept of Health and Human Services
Mort Faller	

Call to order—Chair, Isabelle Schoenfeld called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

Action—Approval of March minutes were approved unanimously.

Budget and Finance Advisor Report—Account balance is \$5,662.31.

Welcome New Commissioners

Isabelle greeted attendees and welcomed the new commissioners who each introduced themselves to the audience.

Budget Activities

- April Councilmembers' visits—Isabelle thanked those Commissioners who met with Councilmembers individually to advocate for COA priority budget items that were not included in the County Executive's budget proposal.
- Testimony, Letters—Isabelle attended the hearing on Bill 38-17, which proposes to modify MPDU requirements. Isabelle discussed the County Executive's Bill 13-18E, which would open up the Transportation Services Improvement Fund (TSIF) for general use. TSIF uses a surcharge on Uber/LYFT rides to increase the availability of accessible taxis by subsidizing modifications to taxis and other incentives to drivers and companies.
COA supported the legislation that created this program. The County Executive has moved the funds from the TSIF for other purposes in the FY18 budget and part of FY 19 budget to avoid a shortfall. Isabelle testified on behalf of COA's opposition to the bill on April 24. COA is collaborating with the Commission on People with Disabilities on this issue and expects that they will be invited to work on improving the bill and the regulations, with other stakeholders.

AAA Director, Odile Brunetto updates

Odile addressed the audience on the following items:

- Delegate Ben Kramer successfully sponsored a bill to create a statewide Senior Call-Check and Notification System. With the passage of his bill, Maryland is the only state in the nation to have established a statewide automated program to provide at least once a day, at a time scheduled by a senior resident, a call to check in on the well-being of the person. The initial enrollment is 3,000 people who are at least 65 years or older. This is a voluntary program that will begin May, at no cost to the older adult. The

daily call will provide an opportunity to find out if the older adult is able to answer the call. If not after 3 attempts a notification call will be placed to a person of record (friend, family, neighbor, or local law enforcement if they choose to participate) that the individual is in need of assistance. To enroll in the program, you will need to complete the application online. HHS/ADRU staff will provide help to those who cannot enroll online.

- The CFC nurse manager position that was frozen since November 2017 has been unfrozen and interviews are scheduled for May 1st.
- The County Executive FY19 proposed budget will be discussed on April 30th by the County Council. This will be televised, you can also attend in person between 9-12pm.

COA Ageism Study—Hillery provided an update on the COA Ageism Study. The language of ageism can often infer that older adults are incompetent, naïve, and dependent. This language diminishes the contributions of older adults to our community made over the course of a lifetime and fails to recognize the many contributions they have yet to make. At the same time, it is important to recognize and be able to discuss the changes that occur in later life that do cause some older adults to be vulnerable, physically, emotionally and socially. Three sessions will be held, the first session will take place on Friday, May 18th from 10:30 am to 12:00pm at the Kensington Library. The meeting will be an exploration of implicit bias and the intersectionality of identities. During the session the focus of discussion will:

- Draw attention to the fact that individuals have multiple identities and sets of experiences that together shape their personalities and how they interact with society
- Understand our own implicit biases related to age, race, and gender
- Think about the relationships between different “-isms” and micro-aggressions

Planning for May and June COA meetings

Part of today's meeting was to get feedback/input from the Commissioners on the May and June meetings.

- **New Administration Planning-May 24th COA meeting.** Given that there will

be many newly elected officials in December 2018, including County Executive, and some County Councilmembers, COA wants to make sure these new officials are informed about COA and the challenges the older adults residents of the County and their families face. Charles "Chuck" Short, County Executive Special Assistant will be the guest speaker for May 24th meeting. Chuck Short has served as special assistant to Mr. Leggett since December 2006 and served under every County Executive before Mr. Leggett.

- **Diverse Older Adults Issues/Challenges-June 28th COA meeting-** Revathi reported that the June meeting will be challenges facing older adults from diverse communities. The meeting planning team met with the Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) who will identify older adult representatives from diverse groups who can speak to issues of older adults from those groups in the County. These representatives will be engaged in a conversation about the issues based on predeveloped questions. Bruce Adams, Director OCP, will be the facilitator. Dennis Linders who is in County Stat will be contacted about the demographics for these communities.

Comments and questions from the Commissioners were noted to inform the planning of these COA meetings.

The May 24th meeting will also have a presentation from Odile Brunetto about the County Budget Process and COA's budget priority setting activities.

Committees' Reports

- **Aging in Place/Community and Planning Committee(AIP/C&P)**—Richard reported the following on the April 10th meeting:

The Committee began its collection of information regarding intergenerational and multigenerational living. Leah Bradley, Assistant director, JCA Heyman Interages Center, described the multitude of intentionally scheduled activities in Montgomery County in which seniors and school-age children meet and share experiences to the benefit of both. Regarding multigenerational living, Dr. Emi Kiyota, President, Ibasho Organization, described programs in Japan, the Philippines and Nepal where seniors are empowered to use their life experience to create and maintain living communities for all generations. Affordable Housing—Nanine, Monica and Isabelle attended a meeting with county planning staff and consultants on the first draft of the older adults housing study. The

COA team earlier provided written comments on the draft report. The study was intended to be a data/market survey rather than a policy document. Affordable rental housing challenges can be attributed to unaffordable rent increase, deterioration of existing units due to neglect, replacing existing housing with more expensive new housing and conversion of rental units to condos. Rent stabilization remains a controversial issue. The Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) appears to be a flexible source of housing funds but its involvement in preservation is not obvious.

Intergenerational and multigenerational communities –The age focus is 0-24 and 50+ because research has shown that older and the younger generations do connect well. Intergenerational is defined as when engagement is intentional with scheduled activities such as mentoring, tutoring, and workforce. Multigenerational is defined as the “who” - the multi-generational participants and intergenerational is defined as the “what”-the programming part that is intentional.

- **Health and Wellness (H&W)**– Alan addressed the audience about H&W April 4th meeting.

Guest speakers Peter Flandrau and Rita Deng both DHHS employees, attended the meeting to discuss Medicaid Services through DHHS. Community Personal Assistance Services, Community First Choice, and Home and Community-Based Options Waiver. Discussion was focused on Community First Choice Program since it was most relevant to H&W focus on affordable, high quality, assisted living.

- **Public Policy (PP)**– Ryan addressed the audience on the Public Policy meeting stating the following bills that were supported by COA and **have passed**.

1. SB 4 which will establish an oversight committee on quality of care in nursing homes.
2. SB 389 to set time frames for OHQC to investigate serious complaints.
3. HB 556 to allow the register of wills to waive probate fees for low income heirs when all that is involved is real property.
4. HB 1465 to protect homeowners from having house sold at tax sale if taxes owed are \$750.00 or less, and to provide other protections including notification of legal help and tax credit programs.

The following bills **did not pass**:

1. SB 427 to change the residency requirements for seniors to get local property tax credit from 40 years owning the home to 25 years in the county (not necessarily in same home).
2. SB 547 to allow state elections by mail (a letter of support was also sent to Rockville City proposal for city elections).
3. HB 956 to allow for attorneys' fees and treble damages in civil actions by elder abuse victims against perpetrator.
4. HB 995 to allow Montgomery County to enact a just cause eviction law.
5. HB 995 to allow Montgomery County to enact a just cause eviction law.

Liaisons Updates

Commission on Veterans Affairs—Jim Campbell stated that Department of Veterans Affairs were going to put the Vietnam war memorial in Wheaton but unfortunately that venue is not handicap accessible. Department of Veterans Affairs is looking for a memorial place in Rockville by the County Office Building. Discussions are still ongoing about the Community Based Clinic.

Department of Recreation— Phil Smakula thanked the COA for supporting refunding transportation to the senior centers on Fridays in their budget priorities. Phil stated that May is Older American month and there will be a number of open houses that will take place at the senior centers around the County. Phil invited the new commissioner to tour the North Potomac Community Center after the meeting.

Commission on Aging Alumni—Charles Kauffman addressed the audience on the COAA. COAA Chair Irwin Goldbloom and Chuck Kauffman have supported the TSIF and opposed the diversion of funds to the general budget. Suzy Leahigh reported on the situation in the senior living facilities. As the population in the nursing homes continue to increase, the need for staffing is commensurate. The excellent volunteer staff has risen to the challenge, but the question arose-will they continue to meet this challenge as the population burgeons? It was suggested that COAA could play a role

Department of Transportation-Denise Isreal spoke about the events that are taking place around the county. The 4th Annual Greenfest, Montgomery County's largest environmental festival will take place on Saturday, May 4th from 11 am to 4 pm at Jesup Blair Local Park located at 900 Jesup Blair Drive in Silver Spring. On May 14th MCDOT launches the Route 129, a limited stop bus service along the US 29 corridor to reduce

traffic congestion and to provide a faster transit option for commuters. Initially, this is a weekday rush hour service only. The fare is \$2.00.

Housing Opportunities Commission—Gail Gunod- Green spoke about the relocations and transitions at Holly Hall. Thirty-four households are being transferred to Victory Housing. Montgomery County Senior Nutrition Program will be relocated to Arcola Towers.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at noon.

Socializing and Brown Bag lunch - Welcoming of the new commissioners.