

Commission on Aging
Executive Committee
October 21, 2021
Virtual via Zoom

Attendees

CoA Members

Barbara Selter, Chair
Jean Dinwiddie, Past Chair and Co-Chair, Communications Committee
Edgar Rivas, Vice Chair
Janice Zalen, Secretary
Richard Jourdenais, Budget Officer
Wayne Berman, Co-Chair, Aging in Community Committee
Monica Schaeffer, Co-Chair, Aging in Community Committee
Neal Brown, Co-Chair, Health and Wellness Committee
Marsha Weber, Co-Chair, Health and Wellness Committee
Beverly Rollins, Co-Chair, Communications Committee
Ryan Wilson, Co-Chair, Public Policy Committee
Morris Klein, Co-Chair, Public Policy Committee

Staff

Patrice McGhee, HHS
Shawn Brennan, HHS

Welcome—Barbara Selter, Chair

Chair Barbara Selter opened the meeting with a roll call of meeting attendees and a welcome.

AAA Report—Dr. Patrice McGhee

- The FY 2021 National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS) data is due on November 15 although the NAPIS is being replaced by the Older Americans Act Performance System (OAAPS). The new system is expected to capture better demographic information as all programs in the Older Americans Act are reported in that system.
- There are three new personnel openings including Marcia Pruzen's position and a long term care ombudsman position. There was a brief discussion about Marcia Pruzen's position, in which it was suggested that this part-time position (11 hours per week) that reports to Odile ought to be a full-time facilitator position. Ms. Pruzen is retiring at the end of December, 2021.
- Montgomery County issued new telework policy for its employees.

Commission on Aging Business

Approval of September EC Meeting Minutes

Committee members approved the June meeting minutes.

Approval of Agenda for October CoA Meeting

The October draft agenda was approved with minor changes.

Budget Report

Budget Officer Richard Jourdenais reported that there is \$4,795.11 in the account. A discussion followed on the appropriateness of a CoA donation in memory of Patricia O'Neal, who was an extremely active educator. Given that Ms. O'Neal's work was not with older adults, but was quite useful to the County, the following motion passed unanimously:

Because Arthur Williams approached the CoA with the suggestion to honor Ms. O'Neal, Art Williams will be asked to write a letter of commendation from the Commission and to determine to whom the letter goes.

November/December Schedule Changes due to Holidays

The November CoA meeting will be held on November 18.

The November Executive Committee (EC) meeting will be held on Monday, November 15

The December CoA meeting will be held on December 16.

The December EC meeting will be held on Monday, December 13.

Update on The Community for a Lifetime Award

Wayne Berman reported that he, Edgar Rivas, Marsha Weber, Monica Schaeffer and Jean Dinwiddie met regularly every Monday morning for many months to create the list of criteria, letter and certificate. Wayne explained that there will be five judges to review submissions. This review panel will be made up of two Commissioners, one CoA Alumni, one person from academia and one individual appointed by the County. A motion to accept all The Community for a Lifetime Award materials was approved unanimously.

Update on Assisted Living Regulations

Janice Zalen reported that the MD Department of Health is conducting Zoom meetings on draft assisted living regulations that were issued several years ago. The first Zoom session was attended by Nikki Enzani on September 19 and she also plans to attend the next meeting on October 19. Additional meetings will be held on November 16 from 1 – 3 and December 16 from 1 - 3. Janice reviewed and prepared comments on the draft sections scheduled for discussion during the October 19 meeting and, with the approval of the Public Policy Committee, forwarded the comments to Nikki Enzani so that she could make comments on behalf of the CoA. Although the Commission understands that the draft regulations are unlikely to change, all agreed that it is important that the CoA be on record with its concerns. Beverly Rollins and Marsha Weber asked Janice to forward her comments to them.

Holiday Party/Speaker for December

After a brief discussion, the following motion passed: The December Commission meeting will be virtual and no more than 90 minutes, including time for holiday wishes. In addition, Wayne Berman and Barbara Selter will try to locate an outdoor venue for a voluntary, informal social gathering of Commissioners.

Date for Public Forum – March or May?

A discussion ensued in which it was noted that the Public Forum was traditionally held in March, but May is Older Americans month and allows for a longer planning time. It was agreed that May is the EC's preference for the Public Forum. However, Jean Dinwiddie was uncertain that the Gaithersburg facility where it is usually held would be available in May. Ms. Dinwiddie will check with the facility about availability of May dates.

East County Recreation Center Closing

The Senior Program that was located in East County Recreation Center was relocated to Good Hope and there is transportation to Good Hope. The CoA is on record with concerns about relocating senior programs to meet other County needs. Joyce Dubrow may write a follow-up letter and the Public Policy Committee will monitor the issue.

Use of ARPA Funds for Premium Payments to Home Care Workers During Covid Pandemic

Leading Age has proposed that ARPA funds be used for retroactive \$2 per hour bonuses to health care workers and would like Montgomery County to endorse this proposal. The EC had a number of questions and concerns. For example, it appears to be targeted only to agency workers for Medicaid beneficiaries, which seems unbalanced and leaves out the "gap" population, a population of serious concern to the CoA. Also, what happens when the money runs out? Marsha Weber will contact Robin of Leading Age for more information.

Discussion on HCBS Priorities

This was a lengthy discussion in which many points were made, including the following:

- The CoA is focused on "home care", but is "community care" a part of "home care?"
- The CoA will continue to advocate for more HCBS slots at the federal level.
- We need to ensure that there are programs for the "gap" population.
- One of our focuses should be on sharing home care resources in geographic areas and another should be compensating family caretakers.
- A goal is keeping people in their homes for as long as possible so do we focus on care in one's residence? Are we talking about in-home-care in the context of HCBS?.
- We must have a written document on our budget priorities by November 8, but this can be a broad overlook with the understanding that more specifics will be provided

later. We have to clarify our language eventually. Janice and Ryan will talk off-line and Ryan will provide a document for the EC's review by the end of the weekend. This will be a "high level statement of priority" and the CoA will continue its work on more specifics in time for its meetings with the Council members.

New Business

- Monica Schaeffer asked if the CoA is supporting Will Jawanda's rent protection bill and if so, do we want to add our name to the Renters Alliance letter? Ryan Wilson will call Matt of the Renters Alliance to learn which council members are not supporting the bill and why. Eddie Rivas will send the Renters Alliance letter to the EC for their review by COB Friday. Any EC members who object, must notify Barbara Selter by Sunday night. Nanine Meiklejohn will be included in this decision as she is very active in this area.
- The November 15 Communications meeting will have a special guest speaker.
- Mary Sweeny is the new Co-chair of the Aging in Community Committee.

Adjourn

Action Items

- Barbara Selter or Wayne Berman will ask Art Williams to write a letter of commendation in honor of Patricia O' Neal and determine to whom it goes.
- Janice Zalen will send Beverly Rollins and Marsha Weber her comments on the draft assisted living regulations.
- Wayne Berman and Barbara Selter will look into outdoor venues for an informal, voluntary social gathering of the Commissioners.
- Jean Dinwiddie will check with the Gaithersburg facility as to its availability in May.
- Public Policy Committee will monitor issues surrounding the relocation of the East County Recreation Center Senior Programs and Joyce Dubrow may write a letter.
- Marsha Weber will contact Robin of Leading Age for more information on its proposal to fund certain workers retroactively.
- Janice Zalen and Ryan will talk off-line and then Ryan will provide a budget document for the EC's review by the end of the weekend.
- Ryan Wilson will call Matt of the Renters Alliance to learn which council members are not supporting the bill and why.
- Eddie Rivas will send the Renters Alliance letter to all EC members who will review and notify Barbara of objections by Sunday night.