

Commission of Aging

June 24, 2021

9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Virtual via Zoom

Members Present

Barbara Selter, Chair
Edgar Rivas, Vice Chair
Janice Zalen, Secretary
Jean Dinwiddie, Past Chair
Wayne Berman
Neal Brown
Joyce Dubow
Arunima Ghosh
Morris Klein
Nanine Meiklejohn
Karon Phillips
Beverly Rollins
Monica Schaeffer
Ann M. Serafenas
Katie Smith
Mary Sweeny
Hillery Tumba
Marsha Weber
Arthur Williams
Ryan Wilson

Members Absent

Richard Jourdenais, Budget Officer
Ruby Moone
Maritza Rivera
Tho Tran

Alumni Members

Chuck Kauffman
Isabelle Schoenfeld

Liaisons

David Engel, GROWS
Monique Gardner, African-Amer. Health.
Stephanie Moore, MC HOC
Marcia Pruzan, Age-Friendly MC
Betty Ring, Sr. Fellow for Sidney Katz

Speakers

Jessica Fusillo, Dept. of Permitting Services
Gail Lucas, Dept. of Permitting Services
Simin Rasolee, Dept of Permitting Services
Dean Packard, Universal Communities
Jeff Jacobson, Universal Communities

Guest

Patricia Esmister

Tremayne Jones, DHHS

Staff

Tina Purser Langley, H&W Comm.

Odile Brunetto, DHHS

Patrice McGhee Director, AAA

Welcome – Barbara Selter, Chair

Chair Barbara Selter welcomed everyone and took roll of attendees.

AAA Director Updates – Dr. Patricia McGhee, Director of AAA

1. The County Council approved the County budget. Under this budget, the Department of Transportation (DOT) will continue free Ride-On for all residents through September and for older adults indefinitely. Also, 51 broker (contract) positions will become full County staff positions. Ten of these are under AAA.
2. The MD Department of Aging (MDA) extended its survey deadline to June 30. Any EC member who has not yet completed the survey should go to <https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/StatePlanonAging2.aspx> by the June 30 deadline.
3. The AAA Plan one year rewrite was submitted to MDA last Friday and a copy was sent to the Commission Chair. Once approved, the document will be sent to the full Commission.
4. Senior Center re-openings: Holiday Park, Damascus and Gaithersburg Senior Centers opened on June 14 with meal services and transportation.
5. Vaccination Efforts: In-home vaccinations to persons who are homebound continue. County nurses are no longer needed for disease surveillance and have returned to their regular duties.
6. The AAA and MDA joined together to distribute tablets to socially isolated individuals. They partnered with both African-American and Latinx groups to distribute 35 tablets for up to 12 weeks at a time.

Guest Speakers: Design for Life: Accessible Home Design Initiatives in MoCo.: Jessica Fusillo, Community Outreach and Public Relations Manager, Department of Permitting Services (DPS); Gail Lucas, DPS; Simin Rasolee, DPS; Dean Packard and Jeff Jacobson, Managing Partners, Universal Communities LLC

- Gail Lucas exhibited the DPS web site, with a focus on the Design for Life Home Page and she noted that there is a great deal of information available on that home page. Ms. Lucas explained that she approves Certification of Credits for work that is done on one's home. She noted that a big problem is that individuals must decide early in the building process that they wish to do Design for Life (DFL) and this must show up in their building permit. They also must show proof of payment. Ms. Lucas explained that DPS does not get involved with one's tax bill. Finally, Ms. Lucas pointed out that this DFL is not only for older persons, but for individuals in all stages of life.
- Simin Rasolee explained that the goal of DFL is for people to live in their own homes longer and she listed 9 accessible features that are eligible for tax credits. To be eligible

for a \$10,000 property tax credit, one would need to meet 8 design elements and would need a building permit.

- Dean Packard explained that his company puts DFL in the context of a whole community. The homes that they build all meet Level 2 standards. They meet additional standards such as a certain distance from Metro, accessible parking spots, etc.
- Jeff Jacobson reported that the first community they developed, Parc Redland, is 100% DSF level 2 standards so buyers receive a \$2,000 tax credit for 5 years. In meeting these requirements, the houses look spacious and luxurious so all individuals, not just older adults, like these homes.

Commission on Aging Business

Approval of May Minutes

Minutes were approved.

Budget Report and Memorial Contributions

Barbara Selter reported that the checking balance prior to this week was \$4,895.11. As directed at the recent COA Executive Committee meeting, on June 21 Budget Officer Richard Jourdenais wrote the following two checks:

1. In memory of Miriam Kelty, \$50.00 to the Bannockburn Neighbors Assisting Neighbors group.
2. In memory of Omari Isreal, Denise Isreal's son, \$50.00 to the Larkin Street Youth Services organization.

The current checking balance is \$4,795.11.

Update on Vaccine Commercials

Select commissioners taped three-minute commercials in several languages to promote COVID vaccines. These commercials may be found on You-Tube.

Update on Commissioner Recruitment

The selection process is complete and seven appointees were approved by the County Executive and are now awaiting approval of the County Council. Joyce Dubow, Wayne Berman and Karon Phillips volunteered to be “buddies” for the three additional new commissioners. Barbara Selter will set up a meeting for the buddies.

Approval of Orientation Booklet

Barbara Selter thanked Beverly Rollins for the excellent booklet. A motion to approve the booklet passed unanimously.

Update on Austin Heyman Award for Inspiring a “Community for a Lifetime” in MC

Wayne Berman reported that he and his work group need all the Commissioners to participate fully with this program by making nominations and by providing ideas on criteria. Mr. Berman will send out the draft document for the Commissioners to work from in proposing their ideas. He would like everyone's input prior to the September meeting.

Process for Budget Priority Meeting in July

Barbara Selter reported that the CoA will start the budget process earlier for next year's budget year. For this year, the potential list of budget priorities was sent to the committee chairs for their input. The July budget meeting gives all commissioners the opportunity to change priorities and to advocate for priorities. After the budget meeting, all commissioners will vote for their top four and based on that voting, a final list will be presented at the September meeting. Ms. Selter is seeking speakers for the September meeting that would teach the CoA how best to promote CoA priorities. There was a robust discussion on whether or not to place dollar amounts on priorities and a decision was tabled until the budget meeting in July.

Community Action Board Advocacy Training

The Community Advocacy Institute agreed to hold advocacy training for Commission members on letter writing and meeting with County Council members, but the Institute can only hold trainings in August. As this is not convenient for commissioners, Ms. Selter will ask if a Spring training is possible. If it is not, the training will be held in August. This training can be recorded for the new Commissioners. The Commission voted that the training should be during the day on a weekday.

Update on Task Forces/Planning Groups

Social Isolation (SILOS) Task Force: David Engel reported that SILOS held a debriefing on the Public Forum. A fact sheet was completed that will be sent to all Forum attendees, along with a three-page resource document. The debriefing on June 8 was the Task Force's final meeting. All Commissioners are asked to review the Fact Sheet and send edits to Mr. Engel within a week.

Strategic Planning Group: Edgar Rivas reported that the Strategic Planning Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 15 and it is imperative that all commissioners attend. Mr. Rivas pointed out that the Commission, in its role as advisors to the County, needs to plan for the current year, but also for the future. The Strategic Planning Group will send out information to get commissioners thinking about this.

Committee Reports

Communications Committee (CC)

Co-chair Jean Dinwiddie reported that the CC had an excellent meeting with Mary Anderson, MC Public Information Office. The CC plans to meet throughout the summer. They received 32 suggestions for a

new name for Seniors Today. The winning name is “50+ in Montgomery County,” with the tag line “A Community for a Lifetime.” A motion for approval of this new name was approved with four opposed.

Co-chair Beverly Rollins reported that the CC is gathering information on organizations and people who should receive its communications. She asked that all Commissioners send her suggestions.

Health and Wellness Committee (HWC)

Co-chair Marsha Weber reported that the HWC continues to examine home care services at a reduced cost. A sub-group was established to refine how to proceed and this group will meet during the summer. The next meeting of the whole HWC will be on September 7.

Aging in Community (AIC)

Wayne Berman reported that the Committee focused on technology to support persons 50+ and learned about MC programs to get more tablets to older adults.

Public Policy Committee (PPC)

Co-Chair Ryan Wilson reported that the PPC discussed re-openings and ride-on busses. The PPC also discussed home-and-community-based services (HCBS) and plans to look into potential partners regarding HCBS.

Liaison Reports

- Marcia Pruzan: MC won several awards from the National Association of Counties (NACO). Monica Schaefer added that an Employer Summit was held yesterday.
- Monique Gardner: African-American Health is working with MC and the State on the distribution of tablets. In addition, the Aging Subcommittee has several programs regarding technology.
- Betty Ring: Sidney Katz’ office is working on a senior forum series for the Fall.

Invited Speakers for Upcoming Meetings

- July 15, 2021 – Strategic Planning Session
- July 22, 2021 – Budget Priority Session
- September 23, 2021 – Increasing Collaboration on COA Budget Priorities with speakers: Linda McMillan, Jennifer Bryant (OMB), and Gabe Albernoz
- October 28, 2021 – Medical Day Care – Elizabeth Barnes, Maryland Association of Adult Day Services and one other

New Business

The Commission must determine if it wants to continue virtual meetings, move back to in-person meetings, or have a hybrid system. Everyone should start to think about preferences. In the meantime, the September meeting will be virtual and Ms. Selter will

look into the feasibility of a hybrid system.

Meeting Adjourned

Action Items

(These action items are based on a review of the minutes)

1. All Commissioners are asked to complete the MDoH survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JQDTV2> by June 30.
2. Barbara Selter will set up a meeting for the volunteer “buddies.”
3. Wayne Berman will send out a draft document on the Austin Heyman Award to all commissioners.
4. All commissioners are asked to respond to the above-mentioned document with their ideas on criteria, as well as with nominations. Responses should be sent prior to the September Commission meeting.
5. Barbara Selter will ask The Community Advocacy Institute if they could hold a training in Spring instead of August.
6. All Commissioners are asked to review the SILOS Fact Sheet and send edits to David Engel within one week.
7. Edgar Rivas will send information re strategic planning prior to the strategic planning meeting.
8. All Commissioners are asked to attend the Strategic Planning Meeting on July 15.
9. All Commissioners are asked to attend the Budget Meeting on July 22.
10. All commissioners are asked to send suggestions of organizations or people who should receive CoA communications to Beverly Rollins.
11. All commissioners should think about preferences relating to in-person, virtual or hybrid meetings for the future.
12. Barbara Selter will look into the feasibility of hybrid meetings.

