

Communications Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2021

Attendees:

Jean Dinwiddie

Barbara Selter

Eddie Rivas

Jennifer Long

Kendell Matthews

Katie Smith

Chuck Kaufman

Betsy Carrier

Virginia Cain

David Engel

Sibo Ncube

Arunima Ghosh

Review of Minutes:

Jean Dinwiddie asked for a motion to accept that the minutes of the September meeting accurately reflected the content of the meeting. Eddie Rivas submitted the motion, Chuck Kaufman seconded the motion, and the motion was passed to accept the minutes.

50+ In Montgomery County Report:

The program theme for the November production will be to celebrate National Caregivers Month and Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. The guest speakers are: Lylie Fisher, Facilitator of the Caregiver Support Program, Area Agency on Aging, Health and Human Services for Montgomery County Government; Shelia Griffith, Program Manager for the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter; and Officer Laurie Reyes, who is the Unit Coordinator for the Montgomery County Police - Autism/ Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), Alzheimer's and Dementia Outreach Unit.

The *50+ in Montgomery County* Planning Group also discussed its December program which will be on how different people celebrate the holidays, with one segment on Channukah, one on Kwanzaa, and one on how Christmas is celebrated in different ethnic traditions.

Jean Dinwiddie reiterated that the *50+ in Montgomery County* Planning Group meets the first Friday of the month at 1:00 PM and invited members of the Communications Committee to attend.

Social Isolation Fact Sheet Press Release

The COA approved the Social Isolation Fact Sheet, and it was distributed and posted to the COA website. The PIO has been asked to issue a Press Release about the Social Isolation Fact Sheet.

Task Force on Racial Equity, Dementia Services, and Policing (REDSP) Report

The Task Force on Racial Equity, Dementia Services, and Policing (REDSP) Report was approved by the COA and sent out to the following people: Mark Elrich, County Executive; Gabe Albornoz, Vice President of County Council and Chairman of HHS Committee; Marcus Jones, Chief of Police; Scott Goldstein, Chief of Fire and Rescue; Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to Mr. Elrich; Tiffany Ward, Chief Equity Officer; Dr. Raymond Crowel, Director of Department of Health and Human Services; and Dr. Earl Stoddard, Director of the Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security (OEMHS).

Commissioner Handbook and Briefing Book:

The Commissioner Handbook was approved by the COA and published to the COA website.

A work group met to discuss updating the Briefing Book for Legislators. The group includes Beverly Rollins, Jean Dinwiddie, Marsha Weber, Barbara Selter, David Engel, and Morris Klein. Prior to the Communications Committee meeting, Beverly Rollins sent out a draft of the Briefing Handbook and asked for input. She is incorporating comments to prepare the Briefing Book to be distributed at the Legislative Breakfast. The Public Policy Committee determined that a link to the Briefing Handbook would be made available as part of the package being distributed to Legislative Breakfast participants.

Contact List Update:

Chuck Kaufman has been putting together a list of contacts (e.g., media, publications, individuals, and so forth) for the Communications Committee to use to distribute information to the older adult community. He provided an update on the status of this list.

Eddie Rivas asked if the list was available to the public, as the Locust Grove Nature Center wished to use the list to publicize events it was planning for older adults. Jean Dinwiddie agreed to check with Mary Anderson, the HHS liaison to the Public Information Office (PIO) to determine if this list could be used for this purpose. Jean and Eddie agreed to work together offline to see if this nature program for older adults could be presented as a joint effort between the National Capital Parks and Planning Commission and the Commission on Aging.

Senior Site Update:

Jean Dinwiddie was asked by Kathleen Stobie from the Volunteer Center who has control of the Senior Site. The committee decided that control of this site was within the purview of the COA, and that she and David Engel would check on the status of the Senior Site website and look at other county websites

with aging information. They were determining how accurate and up to date these sites were, as well as whether there was consistency across sites. Jean asked for volunteers to assist with this project, and Eddie Rivas, Betsy Carrier, and Arunima Ghosh volunteered to help Jean and David with this project. This group is also going to request that a technical representative from the PIO also attend these meetings to assist with this initiative. David Engel will lead this group.

Budget for Printed Materials

Jean Dinwiddie tried to determine what agency received the \$10,000 allocated for printed materials in the County's FY22 Budget but was unable to determine to where in the county government this money was designated. David Engel suggested that Jean contact Lindsay Lucas, a Budget Analyst in the Office of Management and Budget, to ask for her assistance in identifying the disposition of this funding for printed materials.

Distribution of Printed Materials in Libraries

The COA has a long history of distributing materials focused on older adults through the Public Libraries. Jean Dinwiddie wished to determine if the materials were currently in the libraries and being made available to the public in special sections devoted to older adult issues. Jean asked for volunteers to physically check on libraries to determine if these older adult sections still existed and whether COA materials were continuing to be distributed through these venues. The following people offered to check their local libraries: Virginia Cain will check libraries in the Bethesda and Potomac areas (e.g., Davis, Bethesda, Little Falls, Potomac), Katie Smith will check libraries in the Silver Spring area, Kendell Williams will check libraries in the Eastern part of the county (e.g., White Oak, Aspen Hill, and Praisler); and David Engel will check libraries in the Upper part of the county (e.g., Gaithersburg, Germantown, and Poolesville).

Chuck Kaufman suggested that the COA write a letter to the Chief of Montgomery County Public Libraries to request that materials be placed in the senior sections allocated in different libraries. The Communications Committee decided that it was important to perform research on the status of these materials in the libraries before sending a letter to the senior management of the libraries.

Next Communication Committee Meeting

Jean Dinwiddie reported that Steve Gurney, from Positive Aging, would speak at the next Communications Committee meeting. At the suggestion of the committee, Jean has asked him to speak about lessons learned through his podcasts. She also asked Committee members to send questions that they would like Steve to answer in his presentation.

Public Service Announcements

Jean Dinwiddie announced that the Public Service Announcements (PSAs) used between segments of the interviews on the 50+ in Montgomery County program for November would include several graphics with voice-overs to be produced by the Beacon Newspaper. She then asked the Committee to

brainstorm on ideas for PSAs for future *50+ in Montgomery County* programs. Some suggested ideas included:

- **Legislative Breakfast:** Eddie Rivas suggested that the PSAs be used to highlight the Legislative Breakfast coming up in December to encourage members of the public to attend this program. Chuck Kaufman expressed concern that the Legislative Breakfast was not necessarily geared to the public. Much lively discussion ensued, but no final disposition of this issue was reached.
- **Promote the COA:** Virginia Cain suggested that the PSAs be used to publicize and promote the work of the COA.
- **Social Isolation Fact Sheet:** David Engel suggested that the PSAs be used to promote the Social Isolation Fact Sheet.
- **Ride-On Fare Changes:** Jean Dinwiddie suggested that the PSAs be used to promote the new “free fare” change that has been instituted for older adults using the Ride-On system.
- **Coordinate with Minority Health Organizations:** David Engel suggested that the COA coordinate with the Communications Committee of the African American Health Program to use some of their PSAs such as those on breast cancer awareness and fall prevention. Barbara Selter suggested that COA contact other minority health groups to see if they had potential PSAs as well.

Press Release Topics

Jean Dinwiddie asked for suggestions of topics for press releases. Committee members suggested that the following activities could be promoted through press releases:

- **Legislative Breakfast:** If the COA decides to encourage the public to attend the Legislative Breakfast, press releases could be used to encourage participation by the general public
- **50+ in Montgomery County name change:** Press Releases could be used to make more people aware of the change from *SeniorsToday* to *50+ in Montgomery County*
- **Nature Center Program for older adults:** If the COA collaborates with Locust Nature Center to co-sponsor nature programs for older adults, press releases could be used to publicize these programs
- **Villages:** To celebrate National Villages Day on February 15, the COA will plan a special program of *50+ in Montgomery County* to include speakers such as Pazit Aviv and Village leaders to celebrate the anniversary of the Beacon Hill Village Movement and use press releases to promote the village movement.
- **Letters to Congress:** Use press releases to highlight letters written about issues of national importance being taken up by Congress

Motion to Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned after a motion and second to adjourn was passed by the Committee.