

**Commission on Aging
Public Policy Committee
January 11, 2018, 9:30-11:30 am
7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 600, Conference Room 6C
Minutes**

Commissioners Present: Stephanie Edelstein, Mort Faller, Jerry Morenoff, Jack Sprague, Nanine Meikeljohn, Ryan Wilson

Staff Present: Shawn Brennan

Meeting Commenced: 9:40 am

After a welcome and a brief reminder that the full Commission will meet on January 25, Shawn Brennan briefly discussed the proposed budget savings in the County's FY 2018 budget. The cuts affecting seniors include a reduction of \$38,000 for low-income dental care and a \$42,000 reduction for senior center transportation. This latter cut represents a 20 percent reduction to that budget item. One possibility is that transportation service would be eliminated on the least used day of the week – Fridays. One reason cited for the revenue shortfall is lower income tax revenues than projected.

The committee discussed the utility of attending and testifying at the County Executives Budget Forums for FY 2019. Stephanie discussed the Commission's strategy for the FY 2018, which included having representatives at all scheduled forums with a different question. The committee was concerned as to whether the forums would be the best venue to raise issues identified by the Commission, with many attendees and a limited amount of time. The committee also noted that the Commission has other chances to influence the budget process, with input at the County Executive and County Council level.

The committee decided that the Commission's seven priorities could be summarized with two broad issue categories – housing and protecting vulnerable seniors. Mort raised question of whether housing could be addressed within the county's operating budget – or whether it was really more of a capital budget issue because the best way for government to address additional housing needs is with making county land available for development. NOTE: Nanine confirmed after the meeting that the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) is in the county's operating budget. The Commission's priorities supported increasing it. The rental housing study also suggested a stronger emphasis on preservation for the use of the HIF funds as well as the use of county land for housing development.

The Committee discussed how to cover the County Council's legislative activity. Mort volunteered to monitor county legislative activity.

The Committee discussed how to cover the General Assembly's legislative activity during the 2018 session. Nanine and Ryan volunteered to try to meet with Delegates Barkeley and Gutterez especially – and also Delegate Wilkins – to discuss possible legislation regarding the low income housing tax credit (LIHTC). Ryan will discuss with Odile. Jack suggested we look for a sponsor who is on the Health and Government Operations (HGO) Committee. After looking at the HGO Committee membership, our Committee suggested touching base with Delegates Cullison and Morales as well because they serve on the HGO Committee. Stephanie volunteered to monitor the General Assembly website for state legislative activity.

The Committee noted that it would be nice to have expertise from the other two committees and decided to suggest to the Executive Committee that it consider having liaisons from other committees serving on the Policy Committee.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:27