

**Commission on Aging
Public Policy Committee
May 10, 2018, 9:30-11:30 am
7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 600, Conference Room 6C
Minutes**

Commissioners Present: Stephanie Edelstein, Nguyen Minh Chau, Mort Faller, Isabelle Schoenfeld, Nanine Meiklejohn, Noelle Heyman, Ryan Wilson

Staff Present: Odile Brunetto

Others Present: Mary Ann Buckley (Exec. Dir. GROWS – Grass Roots Organization for the Well-being of Seniors)

Meeting Commenced: 9:39 am

County Activity – County Expedited Bill 17-18, Property Tax Credit – Elderly Individuals and Related Military Services Members – Application. There is a Council hearing scheduled on June 12, at 1:30 p.m. Mort will draft a letter of support.

The committee discussed the County Council’s budget activities on the reconciliation list, which includes items funding the public guardianship program, the long-term care ombudsman program, and transportation to senior centers. Some members of the County Council want a study to determine what transportation options to senior centers older adults would prefer.

State Activity – Two of bills on which the Commission had written letters of support, SB 4 and SB 386, had not yet been signed by the governor. SB 4 establishes an oversight committee on quality of care in nursing homes, and SB 386 establishes time frames within which OHCQ must investigate serious complaints. Ryan agreed to follow up with Senator Kramer or others in the county legislative delegation. Note – the Governor signed both bills after the committee meeting – SB 4 is now Chapter 473, and SB 386 is now Chapter 454 of 2018.

The committee discussed creating standard language explaining the role of the Commission. Stephanie volunteered to create a draft paragraph for the group. During the discussion, the topic of terminology came up. Isabelle noted that she preferred using the term “older adults” vs. “seniors” because research has indicated that older adults preferred the former term. The committee agreed.

The committee discussed reaching out to other county Commissions on Aging and coordinating activities where appropriate. Mort volunteered to draft a letter to the State Department of Aging to ask for contact information for other county commissions on aging. Odile has been unsuccessful in getting the information with numerous attempts.

Other Business – The federal Making Affordable Housing Work Act, an administration legislative draft that would:

- increase personal rent liability,
- result in rent increases,
- eliminate deductions from income calculations, including deductions for medical expenses and for being a senior, and
- redefine the term “elderly household” to include 62-65 year-olds in the higher rent requirements and the bill’s work requirements for housing.

Ryan agreed to follow up on the proposal, communicate informally with Maryland's congressional delegation, and draft a letter when appropriate. To date, a bill has not yet been introduced in Congress.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:48