
COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Minutes
November 23, 2020

PRESIDING: Sharonlee Vogel, Chair

Members Attending

Jennifer Asher
Reginald Avery
Angie Boyter
Peter Brunner
Wei Guo
Susan Hailman
Michael McPherson
Eletta Morse
Sue Song
Mark Stinson
Michael Willis

Absent/Excused

Julia Mattis

Office on Aging and Independence

Jenna Crawley
Donna Tugwell

Guests

Jacqueline Scott, Director DCRS

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

Approve Agenda

Motioned to approve the agenda. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Agenda accepted.*

Approve Minutes

Reginald Avery motioned to approve the minutes and Eletta Morse seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Minutes accepted.*

Future of COA

- Discussion was held with Commission members and OAI addressing the three following questions:
 - 1) Where do we go from here?
 - 2) How can/should the COA work with the Age-Friendly Howard initiative?
 - 3) What specifically would we like from the OAI? The DCRS? How can we best work with the Office?
How can we strengthen the partnership?

- Themes from this discussion included a desire for increased communication from the OAI to the Commission in advance of activities and programs. Also, increased collaboration and partnership between the OAI and Commission and to align the priorities of both. For the Commission to be more involved in the delivery of programs in the future, to utilize Commissioners as ambassadors/connectors to the community, as well as a resource for information and guidance. Issues of interest include: Age Friendly and committing to work on the AF workgroups; improving geriatric care and the experience at HCGH for older adults, to include behavioral health interventions/geri-psyh; transportation; affordable housing; senior orphans; serving increasing diverse population; timely access to the budget; and working with Charles Smith around research of the County older adult population as an asset and significant tax base.
- There is a plan to hold a facilitated meeting in Jan 2021, ideally with an organizational development consultant, to bring out ideas on our objectives, goals, what areas the Commission should work on, and partnerships the Commission can develop.

Office on Aging and Independence Report (submitted to Commissioners in writing following the meeting)

- **COVID – 19**

As of Sunday, November 22nd, Howard County reached an average rate of 26.7 cases per 100,000 residents, an increase from 19.1 cases per 100k just last week. A press release by Dr. Ball on 11/23/2020 stated, “At this point there is widespread community transmission of COVID-19, and every individual action we take is vital to controlling and limiting the further spread of this virus. The alarms are sounding, and if you haven’t already, rethink any plans to host or attend a large gathering with family and friends. Especially with the upcoming holidays, it is critical for all our residents to understand the importance of mitigation measures like wearing a mask, keeping their distance, and washing their hands frequently.”

Yesterday, Howard County reported a 5.12% positivity rate and a case rate of 26.7 per 100,000 residents. Last week, Howard County administered 11,945 tests. Many residents are planning to get tested prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, which has increased wait times and results turnaround. It’s imperative residents remember that a COVID-19 test is only indicative of a point in time and should not be considered an all clear unless you have been properly quarantining.

- **Grab & Go Meal Distribution**

G&G meal distribution continues to operate on Thursdays. OAI serves on average 245 meal kits weekly that are either a standard meal kit purchased through Meals on Wheels that includes seven meals or a Korean meal kit that includes 5 meals. We are serving about 85 standard meal kits weekly and 160 Korean meal kits weekly.

This past week we served a special Thanksgiving meal for our Grateful Lunch where we served 214 reheatable Thanksgiving dinners that were purchased through Puttin’ on the Ritz, the caterer who usually caters our annual Thanksgiving banquet.

Since March, we have served over 33,000 meals through our Grab & Go meal distribution program.

- **NAPIS Reporting**

The National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS) report is due annually to the Maryland Department on Aging (MDoA). The purpose of the report is to report to the state how Older American Act grant funding is utilized by the Area Agency on Aging to provide services to older adults 60+ and caregivers. The report details the number of individuals served and number of service units administered. The report details utilization of programs such as nutrition, evidence-based programs, Title IIIB supportive services, caregiver program, Ombudsman and Guardianship programs. The OAI is in the process of completing the report and will submit to MDoA by 11/30/2020.

- **Upcoming Events**

Please see attached e-blast for the December Virtual 50+ Center and the activities and programs that will be provided. We are now offering over 200 remote activities a month.

The OAI has partnered with the Horizon Foundation to provide the Get It Done Week to be held from 12/7-12/11. Get It Done Week is a series of informational webinars and one-on-one sessions with financial, legal and health care experts who can help community members develop future plans across a wide range of topics. More information is included in the e-blast.

The OAI partnered with the Beacon newspaper to provide a virtual 50+ Expo. I encourage you to visit the website at www.beacon50expo.com. The virtual 50+ Expo will be available online until 1/31/2021. There are several programs, lectures, and resources available on demand.

Chair's Report

- Sharonlee Vogel thanked the Commissioners for their kind words and said she would do it all over again. She will be in touch and continue to be active in the community. She wished the Commissioners the very best.

New Business

- No new business

Sharing from Commissioners

- Commissioners thanked Sharonlee for her years of service as a Commission member and Chair, wishing her well on future endeavors.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

Recording Secretary: Donna Tugwell

Future Meetings: No December meeting, January 25, February 22, March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28, July 26, usually no August meeting, September 27, October 25, November 22, no December meeting