



COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Minutes
July 22, 2019

PRESIDING: Sharonlee Vogel, Chair

Members Attending

Jennifer Asher
Reginald Avery
Angela Boyter
Peter Brunner
Debbie Fleischmann
Susan Hailman
Julia Mattis
Bob McLaughlin
Michael McPherson
Eletta Morse
Sue Song
Michael Willis

Excused

Mark Stinson

Office on Aging and Independence

Jenna Crawley
Donna Tugwell

Guests

None

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

Approve Agenda

Reginald Avery motioned to approve the agenda and Michael McPherson seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Agenda accepted.*

Approve Minutes

After one change was noted for the minutes for May, the May minutes were approved. There was not quorum in June when commission members met, so notes were taken. No minutes for June.

Senior Tax Issues

Pete Brunner reported that when seniors receive their assessment notices, they can be intimidated and mystified. There was discussion regarding how to provide assistance to consumers around the increased tax assessments. It was noted the Office on Aging and Independence provides assistance on tax issues such as education and assistance applying for tax credit applications; however, it is the role of the Office of Finance to convey information on tax credits and changes. There was additional discussion around the property tax appeal process.

Promoting Aging in the Community and Healthy Aging

No spokesperson has been identified yet.

Transportation

Bob McLaughlin reported that three key issues are being worked on: 1) decreasing traffic congestion; 2) improving the infrastructure; 3) expanding public transportation services for the aging and student population. Bruce Gartner, the new Transportation Director, has secured funding for six new buses through the grant program. The buses will probably be delivered by the end of summer. The case has been made for on-demand transportation. Grant money may be used for this also. An app could be used to help people get on-demand transportation. Lyft and Uber could be tested to see how they work. It was suggested that other cities be contacted and asked what they have done. Sharonlee Vogel said Patti Hutton at Vantage House could be called to see how they use Lyft and Uber. It was proposed to possibly invite Patti Hutton to a future commission on aging meeting.

Communications/Outreach

Susan Hailman reported that IT is still working on the County website. The website should be checked to see if there are still things that are hard to find. If so, they should be noted. There is a survey that DTCS released that can be used to give feedback on the constituent portal. However, the survey may not still be open. Jenna agreed to contact DTCS regarding the status of the survey.

COA Summit

Sharonlee Vogel reported Hyattsville has agreed to be on the panel. About a year ago, a letter was received from Montgomery County saying they would like to form a Maryland Commission on Aging Organization. However, they did not get a good response. Sharonlee Vogel recently got a letter from the same person stating that it could be talked about at the COA Summit. Sharonlee has not responded yet. 13 of 23 counties are participating at the COA Summit. Speakers and topics need to be finalized in the next week or so. Sharonlee will create the invitation email and send to all Maryland County commission chairs which will include the agenda.

Master Aging Event in October

The Master Aging event, which is a revised and updated 50+EXPO, will be held on Saturday, October 19th, from 10am to 3pm. Master Aging will focus on information and is educational, seminar based. The revision was done to appeal across generations, to the younger 50+ population, in addition to the older 50+ population. There will be fewer booths at this event, less than half of the number at 50+EXPO. DCRS and OAI will be at a combined double booth. Instead of individual booths, many offices from the department will have their information at this booth. The Commission on Aging could have their information at the DCRS/OAI booth. A booth gives awareness of the Commission on Aging and what the commission does. At their booth last year at the 50+EXPO, the Commission on Aging gave out a lot of information about tax credits and appointing a healthcare agent. Jennifer Asher will follow up with Courtney Barkley about Commission participation in Master Aging. The event will be marketed through *The Beacon*, *Baltimore Sun Media Group*, *The Washington Post*, Constant Contact, the website, Facebook Geo ads, and the 50+ Centers.

Office on Aging and Independence Report

Jenna Crawley provided the Office on Aging and Independence report to include the following information: 50+ Center updates included discussion regarding the Bain renovation and the East Columbia capital project. OAI is working with Facilities on these projects. There was a community presentation on June 18th on the East Columbia 50+ Center renovation. Jenna brought copies of the PowerPoint slide presentation. It is also on the Facilities website. The project is still in the design and development stage. Thursday, July 19th, public meetings were held at the Bain 50+ Center, one at 10am that was well attended and one at 6pm that had a much small attendance. The meetings were held with the architect, the Facilities project team and DCRS staff. The Bain renovation start date is delayed due to a permit issue and will now be in October. The East Columbia project is planned to break ground in mid-2020. At Bain, the courtyard will be enclosed to incorporate a fitness center. Fitness centers are now a standard at the 50+ Centers. The renovation at Bain will be staged in 3 phases and the center will remain open during the renovation. Programs that have larger attendees will be moved temporarily to other sites. SHIP program will relocate to Patuxent Woods. SeniorsTogether will meet at Patuxent Woods. Some services will be moved to Ellicott City. OAI staff continue to work on identifying a meeting location for KASA during the renovations.

The Loan Closet project is in the final walkthrough phase. The move in date has not yet been established due to waiting for furniture delivery. The move is forecasted to take place between mid-August to early September. Mary Becker had a meeting scheduled with the Lions Club to talk about partnering with them to have Lions Club volunteers get equipment to people who cannot get to The Loan Closet. There is a shed at the landfill where durable medical equipment can be dropped off, picked up weekly and cleaned for use. The new Loan Closet will have two hub scrubs and be about three times the size of the current one. An MOU is being entered into with MDTAP. MDTAP focuses on assisted technology and has a lending library north of Baltimore City. A representative from MDTAP will be at The Loan Closet a few times a month. OAI has purchased some low vision technology that can be loaned to consumers. MDTAP will be scheduling appointments and bringing equipment from their lending library that people can try out. Currently, the Loan Closet requires a doctor's referral for all equipment. This will be reviewed to see if it is not necessary for some equipment.

Jenna will follow up to see that the email addresses for the Commission on Aging on Constant Contact are all listed and correct.

Chair's Report

The list of recommend candidates for the Commission on Aging has been sent to Commission membets. Commission members should narrow down their selections to three candidates, sending them to Sharonlee with a brief statement of why they support them. When selecting a candidate look for: diversity, skills and knowledge on the issues that the Commission deals with, and a background that demonstrates volunteering and involvement should all be considered. Sharonlee needs to give the list to the County Executive next week. The process of approval is as follows: first the County Executive's office picks who they want and sends a request for a bill to the chairperson of the County Council stating that they want that candidate to be appointed to the Commission on Aging. The bill then gets filed and the following first Monday of the month they "read" it. At the next meeting, they interview the candidate. Then at the following legislative session the County Council votes.

New Business

Planning needs to start for the Legislative Breakfast scheduled for Tuesday, October 15th. Peter Brunner will get the tax credit information together. Please give him any information on this issue that you feel should be included.

Sharing from Commissioners

Angela Boyter shared that she had been given some information about Miller's Grant, which she has not had a chance to follow up on yet. Miller's Grant is going to tear out the courtyard area and build a chapel and more units. Angela will check into the open space requirements.

Eletta Morse shared that people are getting information on tax credits and not able to understand the pamphlets. A new assisted living in Clarksville is being built across from where Riverhill Garden Center was located. It will be a Continuing Care Retirement community built by Erickson.

Jennifer Asher shared that in Boston, there is a new program that is an intergenerational home sharing program in which people who have extra rooms in their homes that are not occupied, rent the rooms out to young people who need housing. They get a reduced rate by helping with household maintenance and chores. It was created by two recent MIT grads. They are working on a partnership with the city of Boston. This project was a goal of the Mayor and their Commission on Aging. They are in stage one of creating an Age Friendly Community. In 2017, they ran a pilot program on this; it worked out. The website is www.nesterly.io. They are now planning on expanding outside the Boston metro area.

Michael Willis shared that in the nursing home world, everyone is preparing for the new CMS payment method for Medicare customers. It is called PDPM -Patient Driven Payment Model. It sets your rate in the first five days and the rate decreases over time. In November, Phase 3 goes into effect and will make things a lot more resident centered.

Reginald Avery shared that besides younger veterans, a lot of older veterans also have PTSD. It is now being better diagnosed in older veterans. There is now a push to get to them help, as there is about one or more veterans a day committing suicide. Programs are being delivered by the VA, the military and private groups. On another topic, if you live in a village, let your voice be heard by contacting village board members or going to some of the village board meetings.

Michael McPherson shared that he saw an interesting article in the real estate section of the *Washington Post* on Aging in Place. It had good information and resources. If your goal is to stay in your home as you age, it is recommended that you should start planning to refit your home before you reach a certain age and get debilitated. The article was in the real estate magazine on Saturday July 6th under the section on senior housing. The article was written by Jennifer Parker.

Adjournment

Reginald Avery motioned to adjourn. Sue Song seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Recording Secretary: Donna Tugwell

Future Meetings: August 26, Statewide Summit September 17, September 23, Legislative Breakfast October 15, October 28, November 25, no December meeting.