



**COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES
March 28, 2022**

PRESIDING: Reginald Avery, Chair

Members Attending

Jennifer Asher
Angie Boyter
Peter Brunner
Wei Guo
Susan Hailman
Victoria Hathaway
Stephanie Lyon
Eletta Morse
Mark Stinson
Michael Willis

Excused

Elizabeth Edsall Kromm
Julia Mattis
Sue Song

Office on Aging & Independence

Jenna Crawley
Donna Tugwell

Guest Speaker

Tracy Rezvani

Guest

Sandra Price

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm

Approve Agenda

Angie Boyter moved to approve the agenda. Michael Willis seconded the motion.
Motion was approved. *All in favor. Agenda approved.*

Approve Minutes from November 2021 and February 2022

Angie Boyter moved to approve the November minutes. Victoria Hathaway seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Minutes approved.*

Jennifer Asher moved to approve the February minutes. Mark Stinson seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Minutes approved.*

Guest Speaker – Tracy Rezvani, Administrator of Howard County Office of Consumer Protection

- Reginald Avery introduced Tracy Rezvani, Administrator of Howard County Office of Consumer Protection. Tracy was appointed by County Executive, Dr. Calvin Ball effective January 18th, 2022. She formally served as an Investigative Program Administrator for Consumer Protection for Montgomery County. She has 25 years' experience in consumer protection law. She currently volunteers as Director of D.C. Consumer Rights Coalition.
- Howard County Office of Consumer Protection does is the following: 1) handle disputes between merchants and consumers, and between landlords and tenants, 2) provide consumer specialists by phone or in-person, 3) enforce the County's consumer protection law, 4) education and outreach to the community, and 5) license and regulate certain businesses.
- By request, Howard County Office of Consumer Protection gives presentations on various topics.
- Howard County Office of Consumer Protection issues licenses to companies for those that perform solicitation.
- Tracy Rezvani gave statistics on cybercrime and fraud, and losses due to these. She explained many are cybercriminals who are international and never caught. Also, many scams are not being reported. Seniors are often targeted for scams. Millennials are now increasingly becoming targets of scam and fraud. Common scams were identified.
- Sandra Price from the Howard County Consumer Protection Advisory Board spoke. One of Howard County Consumer Protection Advisory Board's target areas and focus for this fiscal year is scams affecting older adults. The Board wants to work with the Howard County Commission on Aging. Their next meeting is April 12th and Commissioners are invited to come.
- Tracy Rezvani answered questions from the Commissioners and discussed concerns they had about scams and fraud.
- Office on Aging and Independence and Howard County Consumer Protection are working on a collaboration within the 50+ Centers to include education on scams and fraud. Presentations can be given at the 50+ Centers. Also, days can be setup where someone from Consumer Protection can be at the 50+ Centers and the Multi-Service Center one day a month to answer questions and take complaints. Commissioners said they would like to know what they can do to assist.

Office on Aging Update

- Staffing continues to be a challenge and remains at a twenty percent vacancy rate. There are two nutritionist specialists starting in April 2022, one at the Bain 50+ Center and one at the Ellicott City 50+ Center. The Congregate Meal program will be resumed probably in May 2022. The Grab and Go program will be stopped in the near future. The Restaurant Initiative will be continued.

- Three positions were posted last week: Ellicott City 50+ Center Director, Community Engagement and Outreach Manager, and Digital Inclusion Specialist. If the Commissioners know of anyone that would be of interest in any of these positions, please let Jenna Crawley know. The positions close on April 8th and are listed on Neo Gov.
- MAP specialists are now going to 50+ Centers. Each of the MAP Specialists are in a 50+ Center at least once a week for a full day. Currently they are providing assistance and information on the various Senior Tax Credits available.
- At the 50+ Centers, Caregivers Care Talks have been added led by the Caregiver Case Manager.
- Construction of the East Columbia 50+ Center has begun. The Commission on Disabilities' ADA access committee completed a review of the site with the architect and the project manager.
- Activities that are coming up are: 1) The April restaurant initiative is celebrating Earth Day on April 19th. The restaurant is Zen Garden. Pickup will be at the Ellicott City 50+ Center. Advanced registration is required. 2) There will be an Older Adult Mental Health Forum on April 26th held virtually from 11am-12:30pm thru the partnership of OAI and the Howard County Health Department, 3) Howard County will be hosting the first Asian Pacific Islanders Festival at Symphony Woods on May 1st from 11am-4pm. 4) WEAAD (World Elder Abuse Awareness Day) is held annually on June 15th OAI, AARP and Howard County Consumer Protection Agency will host a shred event and a resource fair at the Patuxent Woods location on June 11th from 10:00am to 2:00pm to provide public awareness and education about elder abuse.

Chair's Report

- There are a number of Commissioners coming off the COA in May. However, one member may be able to stay on since they did not have a chance to complete a full term. The positions have not been advertised yet by Kim Prui. It will be a few months before any new candidates will be selected. Commissioners that are coming off have the choice to remain in place until a replacement is chosen. Geetha Jayaram has resigned.
- The next meeting is on April 25th. Dr. Kromm will present at that meeting. That meeting is scheduled as a WebEx meeting. Meetings can continue to be WebEx and a future decision will be made for when in person meetings are resumed. Let Reginald Avery know your preference. Meetings can either be WebEx or in-person. Hybrid is not an option right now.
- Older American's month is in May. Asking for ideas from the Commissioners on how Older American's month can be celebrated. Things can be done at the 50+ Centers. There are rack cards for COA that have been done in the past and given out at events. "Age My May" is the theme for Older American's month from the Administration on Community Living which oversees all the AAA work of OAI. Commissioners gave their input on ideas and thoughts for Older American's Month. Reginald Avery suggested a committee could be formed to come up with some ideas for Older American's Month. Those ideas will be shared at the April meeting.
- There is a bill before the County Executive, Bill CR2022 for affordable housing development for people living with disabilities, older adults, and families. The Commissioners will be sent the law and some of the reference materials. The COA can send a message of support on this bill if they would like.

- The Patuxent Group Commons has reached a critical point and are hoping to talk about benefits to older adults. That information will be sent to Commissioners as well.

COA Budget Ideas

- The COA budget for FY2022 expires on 6/30/22. Commissioners were asked for ideas of how to spend the money.

Adjournment

Mark Stinson motioned to adjourn. Peter Brunner seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 8:43pm.

2022 Meetings: Fourth Monday of each month; April 25th, May 23rd, June 27th, July 25th, August – no meeting, September – TBD, October – TBD, November 28th, December – no meeting