

AGE-FRIENDLY RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION MINUTES



Date: 03/25/2020

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Facilitators: Tracy Atkins and Terri Hansen

In Attendance

Hermel Johnson

Lakisha Williams

Seema Agarwal-Harding

Emily Leclercq

Karen Basinger

Patty Dugan

MJ Engle

Tracy Atkins

Kathy Wehr

Marybeth Burns

Minutes Approved

First: Tracy Atkins

Second: Lakisha Williams

Corrections to the February Meeting: add Patty Dugan (page 2) as the person who took surveys to St. John's Church; correct Suellen Seigel's name. Add Lakisha Williams and Kathy Wehr to the attendance list for February

Announcements:

Hermel Johnson introduced herself – She says she is aging gracefully as a retiree. Prior to the COVID-19 event she was still working part-time. She noticed in her neighborhood people tend to keep to themselves, including seniors. She joined the workgroup because “I wanted to find ways to become inclusive in some of things we do, especially in the wintertime. We had a mild winter this year but in prior years we have had to have help shoveling us out.”

Patty Dugan did a fabulous job getting surveys to St. Johns Church for us. We received over 100 completed paper surveys back from the Spanish speaking congregation, which is being data entered into the system. Staff has been doing a fabulous job inputting that data electronically.

Suellen Seigel has volunteered to be the other co-chair but was unable to attend today's meeting; she and Tracy will work together to develop the leadership of this committee.

We have been having WebEx meetings with the other workgroups for the last week and half. This is just an audio meeting only. Hope to change that in the future with video.

Seema Agarwal-Harding suggested that since we are doing this remotely that the agenda be more structured so that everyone can follow along as to which topic is being discussed. Terri Hansen apologized for not getting out an agenda today, there was some miscommunication between myself and Tracy and were unable to get the agenda out intime.

Old Business:

Survey update:

We received over 3300 responses from the survey; the surveys completed on paper have been put into the system electronically and all have been analyzed. We have a draft from our analyst and plan to send out the report to all workgroup members this week. There is a lot information to go through.

Additional data from previous surveys and reports:

Now that the survey analysis is completed Dr. Smith will complete the analysis of a number of reports that have been completed over the last several years.

- Columbia Association plan for Older Adults
- Office on Aging and Independence/DCRS Master Plan for developing an age-friendly community
- Transportation Development Plan
- Housing Plan
- Walk Howard, Bike Howard

These relevant studies, reports and surveys that have been completed over the last several years will also help to inform us as to what the community's assets and needs are so that we can determine where gaps exist.

Our goal is that you will be receiving the week of April 13th a report summarizing findings and recommendations from each report. This additional information will enable workgroup members to look at what has already been thought through and look at it through an age-friendly lens. So we will not have to base our recommendations on just the survey that was done in 2020, but also on information that has been calculated over the last several years.

Patty Dugan asked if we had a count of the number of people who filled out the survey in languages other than English. Terri said this is in the report but read the first paragraph which stated there were 3,357 respondents including

- 2,941 people who responded to a convenience survey in English,
- 211 responding to the survey that was sent out randomly to 1000 households from the voter registration roles
- 205 responded to surveys in a foreign language
 - 89 in Korean
 - 57 mandarin Chinese
 - 59 – Spanish (Terri will check this number as it is lower than she thought was collected from St. John's Church)
- Terri Hansen mentioned that Seema Harding noted to us that the Hindi translation was done in an archaic Hindi language and most people were not able to use this version but rather completed the survey in English because the Hindi translation was cumbersome to follow.
- Seema Harding asked a follow up question regarding representation of different cultural groups and the challenge and getting people to respond in their own languages. She stated she believes the purpose behind this is more relevant then actually counting the numbers. Perhaps the purpose should be addressed again in the roll out of the focus groups and the outreach to the community at large.
- Terri Hansen mentioned that the focus groups and listening sessions are postponed until a time to be determined.

- There was some discussion about how to get involvement of people not well represented in the survey when the focus groups and listening sessions can occur, post COVID-19. For instance since there was a disproportionately large number of women over men, the possibility of gearing a listening session towards fraternal organizations was offered.
- Tracy Atkins suggested sending out invitations to the individuals within our collective, perhaps through email lists that currently exist. Seema supported this stating many in the workgroup are part of communities they can reach out to
- Hermel Johnson suggested the NextDoor virtual community network. Terri explained the survey was mentioned in several neighbored NextDoor networks.
- Lakisha Williams mentioned that the restrictions we are under now can help us to learn about how to think differently about getting information out.
- Patty Dugan asked if there was going to be a change in the timeline for the Age-Friendly project given the COVID-19 restrictions on work and travel. She asked if we could go back and do listening sessions in person after the restrictions have been lifted but do virtual meetings now. Terri Hansen answer was yes, we do not know how far ahead that is but she will be speaking with County Administration about the need to change the timeframe for the project. However we don't want to just stop now. We don't want to lose momentum. Let's work with what we have, with information that we either already have or are going to get through research. Now is the time to gather data so that when we can get out and about again we can make our field trips and have listening sessions, etc.

New Business:

- There was discussion about developing a mechanism to better communicate as a group
 - Tracy Atkins said that we have not established that yet. I have just received everybody's email addresses and I will send an email to everyone. Everyone agreed to share email.

Last month during the white board session, we listed some interesting talking points and initiatives that we would like to concentrate on to put together the Vision statement for the workgroup. It may not be possible to address all of the issues we want to, so we will need to funnel it down. It was discussed that for inclusion we must address:

- Automation
 - Social Media
 - Reestablishing family
 - Bring younger and older adults together (maybe a pilot project for that)
 - Culture
 - Focus on similarities between and among us
 - Respect (as defined in each culture)
 - Look at some of the policies of Howard County's workplaces
 - Find life/work balance so that our generations can interact together
- Tracy Atkins led a discussion following up on the issues raised during last month's meeting
 - Seema Harding commented that since we are facing COVID-19 right now the need for information is so acute, especially in the older population, could there be a repository that people could access easily and would be well publicized. Like a one-stop shop where people could get information on what services and facilities and resources exist for 50+ community members. It could be translated into various languages. Emily Leclercq explained that this is what MAP does and gave details. Emily mentioned there is an annual

resource guide printed for older adults but it is currently only printed in English. She is not sure what languages the online copy may offer.

- Lakisha Williams stated she thought about which a pilot program that incorporated the village concept that Columbia was founded on. Perhaps one that involves the church. She feels there needs to be a different way to connect with the community; thinking about “we” rather than “us” or “them”.
- Terri Hansen asked if anyone have an opportunity to go through the AARP website and look at the action plans and what ideas might be helpful for Howard County’s plan.
- Emily noticed several plans had two to three goals based on the vision statement of the group. They seemed to focus on increasing culture diverse population needs and activities. Several had decreased social isolation and engaging intergenerational growth. These were the three main ones for our area.
- Seema Harding mentioned that some focused or targeted different groups purposely (by culture, age or gender).
- Kathy Wehr said she thinks multigenerational efforts are in our best interest. They could combat a lot of the feeling in the community about age-friendly, that it is just for older adults. If we can incorporate the multigenerational feel and the village feel, I think our efforts would be better received and understood. Patty Dugan concurred.
- Seema mentioned the health benefits have been greatly documented for older generation people interacting with younger children. We should look at those possibilities and see if they are needed in our community.
- Marybeth Burns offered to ask her senior living contacts if they already have established reading programs between older adults and children. She will share what she learns at the next meeting or send out the information prior to the meeting.

- Terri Hansen reminded everyone that we had asked everyone to work on at least one goal for inclusion in bringing younger and older people together and to write down individually what they believe the workgroup should focus on. Please continue to work on this if you have not completed it.

Homework Assignments:

Important to look at the [AARP.org/livable communities](https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities) a little deeper
Read the survey results

Next Meeting:

April 22, 2020 – 9:00 am (will be a WebEx invitation will be sent before the meeting).