



ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES May 14, 2025

The Milwaukee County Aging Advisory Council convened in-person at the Wilson Park Senior Center. Members and attendees also joined virtually and by teleconference.

Members Present

Denise Callaway, *Chair*
Commissioner Mark P. Behar
Eugene Guskowski
James Kimble
Kent Mayfield
Gail Morgan
Suzanne Ryer
Nancy Simuel
Barbara Wyatt Sibley

Members Excused

Paula Pennebaker, *Vice Chair*
Patricia Dunn
John Griffith

Members Excused continued...

Anne Laatsch
Debra Lewis
George Schnieder

Staff Present

Claire Enders, *DHHS*
Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*
Jill Knight, *DHHS*
Migdalia Pacheco, *DHHS*
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*

Attendees from Public

Cass Robinson

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Advisory Council, Denise Callaway. called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. Vonda Nyang, DHHS/AAA Executive Assistant took the roll call. A quorum was not present. Chair Callaway skipped the action items until they gained a quorum.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 9, 2025, ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the April 9, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes

ACTION: Motion prevailed unanimously, (Guskowski Moved, Behar Second)

III. UPDATE COMMISSION ON AGING'S ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Chair Denise Callaway provided an update on the Commission on Aging's

engagement strategy, which includes developing a document that addresses the state of aging in Milwaukee County. The Advisory Council will use the information from the Area Aging Plan as a framework to create this document. Commissioner Crocker Stephenson has agreed to draft it for the Council.

This document will serve as a guide for upcoming public hearings aimed at gathering additional feedback from older adults. These hearings are scheduled for early fall and will likely be held at locations determined during previous community input sessions. New topics for discussion will include Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Commissioner Stephenson will share a copy of the draft document with the Advisory Council and the Commission.

IV. OLDER AMERICAN'S ACT ADVOCACY UPDATE

Emily Petersen, the Advocacy and Policy Manager for the AAA, discussed the proposed federal budget for the fiscal year 2026. She highlighted potential cuts to programs under the Older Americans Act, specifically eliminating Title III-D funding. Additionally, she pointed out reductions in the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, funding for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and changes to housing and urban development programs. Petersen also mentioned that they are eliminating the AmeriCorps program, which includes initiatives for seniors, and concerns about potential changes to the senior stockbox program. She emphasized the necessity of advocacy to protect these essential programs and their significant impact on the community.

V. RECRUITMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

AAA Advocacy and Policy Manager Emily Petersen provided an update on the recruitment efforts for new Advisory Council members. AAA Director Daniel Idzikowski and Ms. Petersen have interviewed several potential candidates who meet various membership categories, with many being advocates for older adults and family caregivers. However, they still need to fill some specific categories required by the Older Americans Act. The identified categories and candidates included healthcare providers, veterans, healthcare services, transportation services, and leadership roles; however, representatives for other categories are still being sought after. Ms. Petersen suggested that the Council review the remaining categories to brainstorm potential candidates.

The Advisory Council discussed the need to identify representatives from older adult service providers, including legal assistance, nutrition, wellness, and long-term care ombudsman services. They acknowledged that their staff had reached out to these service providers to explore the possibility of joining the Advisory Council. Emily confirmed that they had already contacted senior service organizations and had received several nominations.

The Council also reviewed the gender and ethnic breakdown of the nominees, noting that there are currently more women than men among the candidates. They agreed to provide an updated list that includes demographic data. Dan

reaffirmed Milwaukee County's commitment to equity and inclusion despite potential changes in language for federal applications. Most of the current Advisory Council members intend to stay on, with a few exceptions.

VI. UPDATE ON TRANSITION STATUS OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ms. Petersen discussed the onboarding process for new Advisory Council members. She explained that they plan to present the names of the latest members to the Executive Committee in June, with the first full Council meeting, which will include the new members, scheduled for August. In July, staff will conduct individual orientation sessions with the new members.

The group discussed the ideal size for the Council and agreed that it should consist of 15 to 20 members. They emphasized the importance of ethnic representation and team building. The August meeting will include introductions, the election of a chair and vice chair, and the establishment of a meeting schedule for the upcoming year. Commissioners are encouraged to attend the orientation sessions with the new members.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

AAA Director Dan Idzikowski discussed upcoming events and initiatives, including World Elder Abuse Day, Senior Health and Fitness Day, and the grand opening celebration of the Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center. Director Idzikowski also highlighted the county's commitment to achieving racial equity and becoming the healthiest county in Wisconsin.

Commissioner Behar inquired about the county's participation at Pride Fest, and Director Idzikowski confirmed their involvement. Additionally, there were concerns raised about parking at the new Marcia Coggs building, and Ms. Petersen assured members that efforts are underway to improve the parking situation.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn.

ACTION: Motion prevailed unanimously, (Behar Moved, Wyatt Sibley)
Second)

Meeting Adjourned at 4:12 P.M.

Sincerely,

Vonda Nyang
DHHS Executive Assistant