



## **Attendance**

### **Members Present**

Commissioner Elliott Moeser, Chair  
William "Bill" Meunier, Vice Chair  
Commissioner John Griffith  
Supervisor Sequanna Taylor  
Commissioner Cindy Van Vreede  
Commissioner Janice Wilberg  
Sopheya Farrell  
Maureen Fitzgerald  
Sharon Jackson  
Trina Koch  
Harold Oemig

### **Members Excused**

Commissioner Ron Byington  
Michael Glabere  
Sally Lindner  
Gary Mikolajczyk  
William Meunier  
A. Paul Pedersen  
Sherrie Tussler

### **Milwaukee County Staff**

Michelle Allison, ADS  
Andy Bethke, ADS  
Latina Campbell, ADS  
Alena DeGrado, ADS  
Daniel Idzikowski, ADS  
Donna James, ADS  
Dominique Klett, ADS

Hazel Miller, ADS  
Vonda Nyang, ADS  
Tracy Olson, ADS  
Gaylyn Reske, ADS  
Kayla Steinke, ADS  
Kerri Tyler, ADS  
Carrie Koss Vallejo, ADS

### **Guests**

Yolanda E  
M Hoppe  
Audrey Jamerson  
Justin Krug  
Cierra Norris  
Migdalia Pacheco  
Rose Paulus  
Fatima Quintero  
Donna Reiter-Braun, Interpreter  
Timika Roberson  
H Ross  
Awidla Torres  
Terrell Thomas  
Martina Valdavia  
Kimberly Woods-King  
Leigh ?, Interpreter

## **I. Call to Order**

Chair Elliott Moeser called the Advocacy Committee meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. Idzikowski, Aging Services Director, called the roll. A quorum was present. Notes that the election of the Vice Chair of the Committee will take place at the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **II. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION:** Approve the October 3 and December 5, 2022 Advocacy Committee meeting minutes.

**ACTION:** Approved unanimously (Griffith, Jackson).

## **III. Racial Equity & Advocacy (Reflection)**

Chair Moeser indicated that the Committee will pass on this item.

**IV. Update on Action Items**

**a. Federal Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

The President signed the [FY 2023 omnibus appropriations bill](#) on Thursday, Dec. 29, 2022 and includes some increased funding for Aging programs.

Commissioner Griffith indicates that he is appreciative of these increases, but senior nutrition funding in particular is insufficient to meet the ongoing needs.

**b. Update on Advocacy and Policy Manager**

The interview process concluded and an offer was made, but declined by the selected candidate. The AAA will be reposting the position this month. Chair Moeser will be asked to participate again on the review panel.

**c. Privatization of FamilyCare (Long Term Care)**

Idzikowski summarized Wisconsin's Family Care Long term care program and refreshed the committee's recollection that two for profit insurance companies had proposed acquiring the nonprofit Managed Care Organizations – MyChoice and Inclusa. There are concerns about quality of care, the managing of risk rather than care, and the disposition of public assets. Wisconsin DHS conducted two public hearings on the matter to hear the publics' and advocates' concerns. DHS has to make a decision as to whether to certify the insurance companies to operate as long term care MCO's. DHS will continue to consider public comment on the matter and since this will have a large impact on thousands of older adults who receive Home and Community Based long term care services, the Committee is encouraged to express its concerns to DHS. If certified the matter would then pass to the Office of Commissioner of Insurance for review.

**V. 2023-24 Commission on Aging Public Policy Priorities**

The Committee continues its review of the draft of 2023-24 public policy priorities with a review of the state and local priorities. The overall priority is to ensure that older adults and Milwaukee County can live healthy lives, fully gauge, engage in their community and achieve health equity.

**Wisconsin state priorities:**

- Adopt Medicaid expansion under the ACA to provide health coverage for all Wisconsinites at or below 138% of the federal poverty level.
- Advance the Fair Deal Initiative to increase state revenue sharing and allow a referendum to increase the sales tax in Milwaukee County.
- Increase funding by \$53 million for Aging and Disability Resource Centers and affiliated programs to address current capacity and rebalanced formula allocation to correct historical inequities for Milwaukee County.

- Support initiatives that increase transportation access for older adults, including specialized transportation, public transit, and regional transit coordination. (Idzikowski discusses transit funding deficit in Milwaukee).
- Provide resources to fully fund and support Adult Protective Services.
- Increased funding to support home and community-based caregivers, as well as family caregivers to address the caregiver workforce shortage.
- Allow passage of the Care Act, which would ensure that healthcare facilities allow caregivers to accompany and receive full instruction on how to care for their loved ones after discharge.
- Include passage of the caregiver tax credit, which would give a tax credit of up to depending on the proposal, \$500 to \$1000 for caregiver costs.
- Double qualifying income to \$40K for the WHEDA property tax deferral loan program for seniors, establish a matching loan fund for assistive technology and home repairs, additional funding through WHEDA to support the construction of new affordable housing for older adults, index the Homestead tax credit to inflation, and require the State to submit a Plan amendment to allow Medicaid to pay for supportive housing costs.
- Advance racial and health equity by funding preventative health programs, particularly programs that address chronic health and behavioral health conditions disproportionately affecting older adults of color.
- Support a fair and equitable formula for the distribution of Older Americans Act Funds that takes into consideration racial inequities.
- Oppose the acquisition of Medicaid funded home and community based nonprofit Managed Care Organizations by for profit insurance companies.
- Uphold voting rights and affirmatively further ease of access to the polls for older adults and persons with disabilities.

Griffith notes that an election is coming up in the Wisconsin Senate for the northeastern sector of County, a seat currently held by Alberta Darling. He encourages members to make these items a ask during the campaign.

**MOTION:** That the Advocacy Committee study whether we should eliminate the state income tax on Social Security in Wisconsin.

**ACTION:** Passes unanimously (Moeser, Griffith seconds).

**MOTION:** Advocate that a portion of the current Wisconsin Budget surplus be spent on programs that advance the quality of life for older adults in Wisconsin.

**ACTION:** Passes unanimously (Moeser, Jackson seconds).

### Local Policy Priorities

- Preserve County tax levy and Basic County Assessment funding for County aging programs at its current level, mostly used to provide programming and maintenance in our Milwaukee County senior centers.
- Support improvements and enhancements to the Milwaukee County Senior Centers in accordance with the recommendations of the Commission on Aging's Select Committee on Senior Centers.
- Increase funding and support for behavioral health treatment and community intervention services for older adults in Milwaukee County.
- Establish an Interagency Transportation Coordination Council, continued subsidization of specialized transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities and support MCTS and access.

Griffith asks that Idzikowski also explore how the County might increase access to its park and trail system for older adults.

**MOTION:** To accept the 2023 Commission on Aging Public Policy Priorities as presented and present to the full Commission on Aging for approval.

**ACTION:** Passes unanimously (Griffith, Van Vreede seconds).

### VI. Legislative & Policy Updates

- Federal Aging Policy Briefing
- Wisconsin State Budget & Wisconsin Task Forces
- Milwaukee County Legislative Issues

Supervisor Sequanna Taylor notes she is happy to advocate for older adults within the County Board and appreciates being able to participate in these meetings.

Member Maureen Fitzgerald from Feeding America educates the committee on the reduction in Food Share payments due to the end of emergency allotments in February of 2023. Seniors who have been budgeting for this higher amount will now have to reduce their budget to account for this. If participants present evidence of medical expenses they may be able to reduce their income on which Food Share is calculated and thus receive more than a minimum allotment.

### VII. Commission on Aging Policy Gathering

Moeser indicates that a gathering for the Commission on Aging with local policymakers is tentatively set for May 24<sup>th</sup> at 4pm hopefully at a senior center. He asks for Committee members to help plan and join the in-person event.

**VIII. Schedule & Timing of Advocacy Committee Meetings**

Moeser notes that he would like to conduct a poll of the members to determine the best time of the meetings to accommodate working members.

Idzikowski asks if any committee members would object to moving the meeting to the late afternoon to try to accommodate working members. No participants objected to this proposal.

**IX. Announcements & Advocacy Opportunities**

Moeser asks about upcoming elections and whether there is referendum on a state Constitutional amendment coming up. Idzikowski replies that the Spring Primary will be held on Tuesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> with the state Supreme Court vacancy and the 8<sup>th</sup> Senate District primary, but that no referendum on a constitutional amendment will be considered on that ballot. Idzikowski will research this item and will report back at the next meeting.

**X. Future agenda items & meeting dates**

Next meeting will be **Monday, January 9, 2022** at 1:30 p.m. by videoconference.

**XI. Adjourn**

**MOTION:** To Adjourn (Oemig, VanVreede).

**ACTION:** Passes unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Daniel Idzikowski, Aging Services Director