



**ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 1, 2024**

The Milwaukee County Aging Advocacy Committee convened in person at the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center on Friday, November 1, 2024. Members and attendees also joined the meeting virtually and by conference call.

Members Present:

Commissioner Brian Peters, *Chair*
Harold Oemig, *Vice-Chair*
Commissioner George Banda
Maureen Conrad
Sopheya Farrell
John Griffith
Paulette Maclin
William Meunier

Members Excused:

Trina Koch
Gary Mikolajczyk
Supervisor Sequanna Taylor Commissioner

Members Excused Continued...

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D.

Milwaukee County Staff

Claire Enders, *DHHS*
Bekki Schmitt, *DHHS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*

Attendees from the Public

Commissioner Mark Behar
Christie Carter, *LGBT*
Joseph Crivello, *TMG ICA*
Jill Doering, *ASL Interpreter*
Stephanie Zito, *ASL Interpreter*

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Brian Peters called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. Emily Petersen, AAA Advocacy and Policy Manager, took roll call. A quorum was present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 4, 2024, ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the October 4, 2024, Advocacy Committee meeting minutes
ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Banda Moved, Griffith Second)

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

- A. **Remarks by Christie Carter, Aging and Disabilities Program Coordinator, LGBT Community Center:** Christie Carter, the Aging and Disabilities Program Coordinator at the LGBT Center, shared information about the services offered by the Center. They provide various support groups, an advocacy group, a disability and generational group, social activities, a meal program, and a food

and clothing pantry. The Center collaborates with other organizations, specifically Milwaukee County's Area Agency on Aging and Mt. Carmen Lutheran Church. This Saturday at 11:50 a.m., the center will host an excellent café event. Following the meeting, Ms. Carter will give a tour of the facility.

B. ADRC Survey and Listening Sessions, Bekki Schmitt, Director, Milwaukee County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC): Bekki Schmitt, Director of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), provided a brief overview of the ADRC Governing Board and its purpose. Each year, the Governing Board holds listening sessions to gather feedback from the community about their experiences with the center's services and the resources available through Milwaukee County. Recently, the ADRC has created additional positions to address service gaps and expand outreach efforts. This year, they have conducted two listening sessions, with the final session scheduled for November 16, 2024. Ms. Schmitt has requested that the Advocacy Committee share the flyer information with the public during these sessions, as both online and paper surveys will be available to collect feedback. The deadline for submitting surveys is November 19, 2024. Please note that these listening sessions will be in-person only and will not include a hybrid option.

- ADRC Governing Board, work in the community their experiences, long term care programs (youth transition team, outreach bilingual staff) Getting feedback from the public, All in person listening sessions. ADRC Listening Session, Saturday, November 16, 2024, from 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., at Wil-O-Way Underwood, 10602 Underwood Pkwy, Wauwatosa, WI
- Survey (Online survey or paper survey) November 19, 2024, is the deadline.

IV. UPDATE ON ACTION ITEMS

A. Comment on the Governor's Task Force on Healthcare Workforce Recommendations: Chair Peters provided updates on the action items. Commissioner Behar requested amendments to the letter that the Advocacy Committee is sending to the Governor's Task Force regarding healthcare workforce recommendations for the LGBT community and provisional services. Emily Petersen, the Advocacy and Policy Manager for the AAA, incorporated the requested changes into the letter and submitted it to the Commission on Aging for approval. The Commission has approved sending the letter.

B. Comment on Growing MKE Initiative: Chair Peters announced that the Commission approved the commentary on this letter and staff has sent the letter for the Growing MKE Initiative.

C. Comment on Proposed Rule on ADA Compliance of Electric Vehicle

Charging Stations: Chair Peters informed the Advocacy Committee that the Commission approved the commentary on the draft letter regarding the Proposed Rule on ADA Compliance for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations. The letters will be sent out before the deadline of December 4, 2024.

V. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICE UPDATES

A. Federal Aging Policy

I. Federal Budget and Issues

- a. **FY2025 Budget Advocacy (Action Item):** Chair Peters encouraged everyone to vote in this Tuesday's upcoming presidential election. Ms. Petersen informed the Committee that there are two budget alerts/updates: one from US Aging regarding general funding for Aging programs, in which the resolution is good **until December 20, 2024**. the other was for funding specifically for Medicare Care Outreach programs, in which the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Medicare outreach programs relies heavily on grant funding so, the Advocacy Committee should consider acting on these items today.

MOTION: To have staff draft two different letters to address the two different efforts.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Griffith Moved, Banda Second)

Vice-Chair Oemig requested that the letter highlight the scams aimed at stealing clients to secure commissions. He also asked to specify that such advertisements are not permitted on television.

Commissioner Griffith agreed to include this amendment in the motion. The Advocacy Committee will send both letters to the Commission on Aging (COA) for approval.

II. Federal Regulations and Executive Orders

B. State Legislative Issues

I. State Budget & Legislation

- a. **2025-2027 Biennial Budget Priorities (Action):** The state budget process begins around January 6, 2025, when the Governor will introduce his budget at the end of January or the beginning of February. After the Governor presents his budget, the legislature will have the opportunity to revise it. This period allows the Advocacy Committee to select the state budget priorities they wish to advocate for in 2025. The Advocacy Committee has reviewed its list of potential priorities and has

chosen its budget recommendations 2025, which they will submit to the Commission on Aging for approval.

MOTION: To approve the 2025-2027 Biennial Budget Priorities

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Griffith Moved, Conrad Second)

II. Administrative Rules & Governor's Taskforces

C. Milwaukee County Legislative Issues

I. Milwaukee County Budget and Legislation

- a. **Budget Adoption, November 7, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.:** Today is the last day for the County's Finance Committee to discuss budget amendments. The AAA has proposed an amendment stating that if the daily rate does not increase and the allocated funds are not needed for the intended program, the County would allow those funds to be redirected to support housing or aging services.

II. Aging Items of Interest

VI. POTENTIAL ACTION ITEMS

- **Voting - November Elections:** Chair Peters encouraged everyone to get out and vote.
- **2025 Advocacy Committee Meeting Schedule:** The Advocacy discussed the Advocacy Committee's meeting schedule for next year. Ms. Petersen will send out a voting poll to determine the best meeting dates and times.
- **Washington Park Senior Center kitchen:** Washington Park Senior Center's Kitchen is finished but already damaged. Clients are not getting adequate meals, they are substandard, and most clients are throwing away the meals. Chair Peters will follow-up with the AAA staff on these comments.
- John Griffith announced that this year will be his last year on the Advocacy Committee as he has other commitments that need his attention.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To approve adjournment

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Banda Moved, Conrad Second)

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:27 a.m. The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Friday, January 10, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant