



COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES August 22, 2025

A quorum of **Commission on Aging** (COA) members convened in person at Marcia P. Coggs Human Health and Services Center, 1230 W. Cherry St., with a virtual MS Teams and video conference option on Friday, August 22, 2025.

Commissioners Present:

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D., *Chair*
Terrence R. Moore, Sr., *Vice-Chair*
Gloria Miller, *Secretary*
Brian Peters, *Legislative Officer*
Supervisor Juan Miguel-Martinez
George Banda
Mark P. Behar, PA-C
Denise Callaway
Eugene Guskowski, M.Arch
Marni King
Paula Pennebaker
Jacqueline Smith
Crocker Stephenson

Commissioners Excused:

Amber Miller, *Exec Comm. at Large*
Cindy Van Vreede

Milwaukee County Staff:

Kyley Ashley, *CEX*
Claire Enders, *DHHS*

Milwaukee County Staff Continued...

Shakita Grant-McClain, *DHHS*
Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*
Jill Knight, *DHHS*
Carrie Koss Vallejo, *DHHS*
Alexa Law, *DHHS*
Lottie Maxwell, *DHHS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*
Migdalia Pacheco, *DHHS*
Ortrialla Paris, *DHHS*
Ginger Rogers, *DHHS*
Gaylyn Reske, *DHHS*
Kayla Steinke, *DHHS*
Deidra Williams, *DHHS*

Attendees from the Public

Karen Higgins, *MCC*
Kent Mayfield, *ADRC Gov. Bd.*
Neil Minogue, *WI-DHS*
Veraunica Ruffin, *ERAS*
Jill Kenehan-Krey, *ASL Interpreter*
Stephanie Zito, *ASL Interpreter*

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Janice Wilberg called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Secretary Gloria Miller conducted the roll call and confirmed that a quorum of Commissioners was present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE JULY 25, 2024, COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve July 25, 2025, Commission on Aging meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Behar Moved, G. Miller Second).

III. COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Kyle Ashley, Director of Community Outreach introduced himself as the new representative for the Milwaukee County Executive's Office, succeeding Tim Schabo.

Mr. Ashley reported that there is currently a state of emergency due to flooding and urged residents to follow official social media channels for updates and to report any damage by calling 211. He noted that \$183 million in ARPA funds was allocated across 73 projects that benefit 83,000 residents. Key achievements include the creation of over 400 affordable housing units and the expansion of mental health programming. He also noted a \$30 million Domes Reimagined plan and a \$9 million investment to combat the opioid epidemic, as well as ongoing public County budget listening sessions. For more detailed information, please refer to the "COA August Report."

IV. COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS BY CHAIRS

****Advocacy Committee:** Commissioner Brian Peters reported that the committee reviewed various pieces of legislation and identified four action items to address later in the agenda. He mentioned that over five commissioners attended the budget meetings, including himself, and co-sponsored a budget meeting at Independence First. He also noted that the committee is on track to meet the Area Aging Plan goals.

****Service Delivery Committee:** Commissioner George Banda shared that the committee met on August 19th and 21st, where they received reports from vendors of the AAA. He highlighted the impressive performance of Z Trip, which provides transportation services, and commended the Milwaukee Christian Center for its outstanding work despite facing challenges. He also mentioned an upcoming action item related to the committee's work.

****Advisory Council:** Commissioner Denise Callaway announced that Attorney Ellen Pimentel was elected the new Advisory Council Chair and Barbara White Sibley as the new Advisory Council's Vice-chair. She praised their qualifications and experience. Denise also suggested having an *ex officio* member from the Commission to support the Advisory Council during this transition period.

****Senior Center Committee:** Commissioner Eugene Guszowski reported on a two-day strategic planning retreat held at "Thrive on King". The committee identified four key focus areas: development, programming, messaging, and partnerships for senior centers. They also decided to explore the creation of a nonprofit agency to ensure financial support for senior centers.

****Wellness Committee:** Commissioner Jacqueline Smith mentioned that the committee met but had no significant updates to report at this time.

****Nutrition Council:** This report was deferred as Commissioner Cindy Van Vreede was not present, but a related item was scheduled for later in the agenda.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda consists of the following meeting minutes:

- a) Executive Committee meeting minutes (July 11, 2025)
- b) Advocacy Committee meeting minutes (June 6, 2025)
- c) Advisory Council meeting minutes (February 12, March 12, 2025, and June 11, 2025)

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda items listed above.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Behar Moved, Pennebaker Second).

VI. ACTION/INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a) **Action Item, Appointments to the Commission's Committee and Councils, Advisory Council and Service Delivery Committee.** The Commission on Aging reviewed pending nominations to the Advisory Council and to the Service Delivery Committee.

The Commission approved the appointment of Demetrius Mack to the Advisory Council. However, the nominations of Tracy Ellis and Hemavathy Lakshmanan to the Service Delivery Committee were withdrawn due to a bylaw requirement stating that members must reside in Milwaukee County, which neither nominee met. The Commission emphasized the importance of addressing this issue during future nominations to prevent similar situations from arising.

MOTION: To confirm the appointment of Demetrius Mack to the Aging Advisory Council.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (G. Miller Moved, Guskowski Second)

- b) **Action Item, Closure of Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) Senior Dining Sites.** The Commission discussed the Nutrition Council's recommendation to close four Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee senior dining sites. Director Idzikowski explained that the sites have low participation, do not meet the expectation for social supports, are nearby alternative sites and most affected individuals have their own transportation. The Commission approves the closure after discussing the importance of proper communication with participants and avoiding negative public perception.

MOTION: To approve the closure of four HACM senior meal sites.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Stephenson Moved, Behar Second)

- c) **Action Item, Increase Funding for the 2025 Multicultural Senior Center meal Site Supervision Contract with Milwaukee Christian Center by \$32,13.** The Commission approved a \$32,141 funding increase for Milwaukee Christian Center (recently renamed Milwaukee Community Crossroads) to maintain five-

day-a-week meal site supervision services, which were at risk due to lost philanthropic funding.

MOTION: To Increase Funding for the 2025 Multicultural Senior Center meal Site Supervision Contract with Milwaukee Christian Center by \$32,131.

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

- d) Action Item, Advocacy Support Federal Programs Serving Older Adults, Commissioner.** Commissioner and Legislative Officer Brian Peters introduced the Advocacy Committee's recommendation to advocate for federal programs that assist older adults in the 2026 Federal Budget. The Commission discussed the importance of preserving funding for all Older Americans Act programs within the Labor and Health and Human Services appropriations bill. Additionally, he highlighted the importance of protecting AmeriCorps and the Legal Services Corporation, both of which are currently facing threats at the federal level.

Motion to send a letter in support of the Federal Fiscal Year 2026 Older Americans Act spending levels in the Labor, Health, and Human Services appropriation bill;

Motion to support and add to the Commission on Aging policy platform, Fiscal Year 2026 federal funding for the Legal Services Corporation.

Motion to support and add to the Commission on Aging policy platform, Fiscal Year 2026 federal funding for AmeriCorps.

MOTION: To approve all three motions recommended by the Advocacy Committee.

ACTION: Motion prevailed (Peters Moved, Behar Second)

- e) Action Item, Supporting Commentary on Southeast Wisconsin Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan Proposal:**

MOTION: To submit comments from the COA to the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission regarding the Public Transit Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan.

ACTION: Motion prevailed (Peters Moved, Moore Second)

- f) Action Item, Authorize the Incorporation of a Non-profit Foundation to Support Senior Centers and Senior Services in Milwaukee County:** Commissioner Eugene Guskowski explained that the goal of this initiative is to create a sustainable financial model for senior centers, which could decrease their reliance on county funding. The discussion emphasized the complexity of these financial arrangements and the necessity of securing a variety of funding sources. It was decided to postpone this item until the next meeting to allow for more detailed information and ensure careful planning. Item was tabled until the next Commission on Aging meeting to gather more information.

- g) Discussion/Informational Item, Livable Communities, Paula Penebaker:**
Commissioner Paula Penebaker reported on the Livable Communities Steering Committee, emphasizing the productive discussions and valuable information shared. She highlighted a presentation by the Milwaukee County Parks Department regarding safety and access issues related to parks. Ms. Penebaker mentioned that more detailed updates would be provided in the future.

VII. WISCONSIN STATE OFFICE ON AGING REPORT, NEAL MINOGUE

Neal Minogue, the Older Americans Act Program Supervisor at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, reported that a key Federal staff member who facilitated connections with tribal communities has been removed, leaving these tribes feeling abandoned by the Federal Government. He also mentioned that while state-administered senior employment programs are receiving funding, national organizations like Jobs for Progress and the National Indian Council on Aging have not received funding, which affects over 700 participant slots in Wisconsin.

VIII. AGING UNIT DIRECTOR REPORT, AGING SERVICES DIRECTOR DANIEL IDZIKOWSKI

Aging Services Director Idzikowski presented a detailed report that highlighted the extensive activities and accomplishments of the staff over the past month. He commended the staff for their dedication and the significant amount of work they have completed, including advancements in policy and implementation efforts.

Specifically, he mentioned the successful collaboration with the Department of Health Services and the Greater Wisconsin Area Agency on Aging Resources to advance legislation related to the Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program (AFCSP) and the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). Additionally, he recognized the support from Director Shakita LaGrant-McClain in promoting the well-being of older adults within the county's portfolio.

IX. COUNTY SUPERVISORS REPORT

Chair Wilberg postponed the County Supervisors' report until the next COA meeting.

X. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Chair Janice Wilberg expressed gratitude to the staff for improving the meeting's technology and acknowledged the commissioners who attended the budget hearings. She emphasized the importance of a sustained commitment of tax levy resources to senior centers and urged staff to keep the Commission informed about events and activities. Chair Wilberg highlighted the upcoming listening session at Kelly Senior Center to discuss the strategy for improving the senior center experience by moving to the Bucyrus campus. She stressed the need for transparency and engagement with the community throughout this process.

XI. COMMISSION ON AGING ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING UPCOMING EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SENIORS

- Chair Janice Wilberg stressed the importance of keeping commissioners informed about events and activities.
- She also mentioned again the upcoming listening session at the Kelly Senior Center and encouraged everyone to participate.
- Flyers regarding upcoming events were available at the back of the room.

XII. ACTION ITEM, TO CONVENE IN A CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO WIS. STAT. § 19.85(1)(e) TO CONSIDER THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY INITIATIVE TO ESTABLISH A NEW SENIOR CENTER AT THE BUCYRUS ERIE CAMPUS IN SOUTH MILWAUKEE TO BEST SERVE OLDER ADULTS IN SOUTHEASTERN MILWAUKEE COUNTY. (Closed Session)

MOTION: To convene into closed session for the purpose of discussing Item XII above.

ACTION: The motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Banda moved , Guskowski second).

The Commission held a closed session to discuss negotiations to establish a new senior center at the Bucyrus Erie campus.

XIII. ROLL CALL TO REESTABLISH QUORUM OF THE COMMISSION IN OPEN SESSION

Secretary Gloria Miller took roll Call to establish a quorum:

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D., *Chair*; Brian Peters, *Legislative Officer*; Gloria Miller, *Secretary*; Supervisor Juan Miguel-Martinez; George Banda; Mark P. Behar, PA-C; Denise Callaway; Eugene Guskowski, *M.Arch*; Marni King; Terrence R. Moore, Sr., *Vice-Chair*; Paula Pennebaker; Jacqueline Smith; Crocker Stephenson.

A quorum of Commissioners was present.

XIV. ACTION ITEM, ENDORSE THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY INITIATIVE TO ESTABLISH A NEW SENIOR CENTER AT THE BUCYRUS ERIE CAMPUS IN SOUTH MILWAUKEE TO BEST SERVE OLDER ADULTS IN SOUTHEASTERN MILWAUKEE COUNTY

MOTION: Support Milwaukee County's initiative to establish a new senior center at the Cyrus Erie campus in South Milwaukee and move senior center programming from Kelly senior center to the new facility.

ACTION: Motion prevailed (Guskowski Moved, Behar Second)

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

MOTION: To adjourn

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Callaway Moved, Peters second)

The next Commission on Aging meeting will be Friday, September 26, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant