



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
Department on Aging

**Commission on Aging
Meeting Minutes
June 26, 2020**

Commissioners

Richmond Izard, *Chair*
Sharon Abston-Coleman, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*
John Griffith, *Secretary*
Reverend George Pumphrey, Ph.D.
Jason Haas, *Milwaukee County Supervisor*
Ronald Byington
Amber Miller
Gloria Miller
Gloria Pitchford-Nicholas, Ph.D.
Bettie A. Rodgers, J.D.
Shirley Sharp

Milwaukee County Staff

Shakita LaGrant, *Interim Executive Director*
Schinika Fitch, *County Executive's Office*
Isaac Rowlett
Jon Janowski, *Director of Administration*
Vonda Nyang
Andrew Bethke
Dan Idzikowski
Jill Knight

Guests

Laura Langer, *State of WI, DHS*

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

A quorum of Commission on Aging (COA) members convened virtually on Friday, June 26, 2020. Chair Richmond Izard welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order and took roll call at 9:30 a.m. Due to technical difficulties the COA meeting started later than scheduled.

II. REFLECTION: COMMISSIONER JOHN GRIFFITH: TABLED UNTIL THE AUGUST COA MEETING DUE TIME CONSTRAINTS

III. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 22, 2020, COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

Commission approved the May meeting minutes with one noted correction on page 4, first paragraph, the fourth sentence. The word "hearing-impaired" should be changed to deaf or hard of hearing.

MOTION: To approve the May 22, 2020, Commission on Aging meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Griffith Moved, A. Miller Second)

IV. CONSENT AGENDA COMMITTEE OR COUNCIL REPORTS

- A. Executive Committee meeting minutes for May 4, 2020, Advocacy Committee meeting minutes for May 4, 2020, and the Select Committee on Senior Center Planning Group meeting minutes for May 21, 2020 and May 28, 2020 were distributed for review prior to the meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.

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

V. COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE REPORT: SCHINIKA FITCH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- The County Executive Office is working diligently to fill the Commission's vacancies. Schinika Fitch asked Commissioners if they have recommendations for a Native American or Latino candidate, please forward their names and contact information so that she may follow-up with them.
- Ms. Fitch informed the Commission that the County Executive's Office hired two new staff: Tim Schabo, Senior Executive Assistant, and Kyle Caudill, Constituent Services Coordinator.
- The Commission asked for a status update on the hiring of an Executive Director for the Department on Aging. Does the Aging budget include a salary for the Executive Director's position? These questions were tabled later in the meeting under the Executive Director's report. Chairman Izard reminded the department of the statutory requirement to have a full-time Aging unit director, pursuant to Wis. Stat. 46.82(5).

VI. PRESENTATION ON MILWAUKEE COUNTY'S STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Commission tabled the Milwaukee County's Strategic Plan presentation due to the late start of the meeting. Nevertheless, Chair granted Commissioners the opportunity to voice any questions or concerns pertaining to MCDA's strategic plan. The Commission posed questions relating to "No Wrong Door," which DHHS adopted as a framework for infusing the County strategic plan and vision. Administration has not filled Commissioner Roger's February 2020 request for a copy of the "No Wrong Door whitepaper," which is should be met pursuant to Chapter 53.09(9), Milwaukee General Code of Ordinances. The Commission expressed great concern and frustration about the Aging/DHHS pilot and not being privy or instrumental to significant Aging planning and reorganization.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: SHAKITA LAGRANT, INTERM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND JON JANOWSKI, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

- A. **General Report:** Jon Janowski advised that it is the County Executive who decides whether to hire an Executive Director for the Department on Aging. MCDA has a budget presentation scheduled with the County Executive next week to go over the department's budget request materials. Hopefully, there will be a discussion about the Executive Director's position at that point. Mr. Janowski stressed that the Department must meet this year's budget target, and to do that, the Department will have to make budget cuts possibly with their social programming contract with Senior Centers and to eliminate vacant administrative support and other vacant positions. Although the Department is facing a budget target reduction, the Department plans to broaden its services by adding virtual programming and expanding transportation and meal programs for seniors during the pandemic. They are also creating new job positions to increase service support, which are an Elder Benefits Specialist and two Human Service Worker positions.

Director Grant provided an overview of the Informational Report, which discussed the "No Wrong Door" vision of customer service for Milwaukee County residents that both the Department on Health and Human Services and the Department on Aging both share in their joint pilot. The County Board received this report for review (See attached Informational Report for more information.) The Pilot program started June 16, 2020 and will run until the end of December 2020. The departments hold weekly meetings to discuss the pilot's progress in addition to requesting feedback from the boards. Sometime in September or October, a report on the pilot will be provided.

- B. Discussion of Aging Organizational Structure: Combined DHHS Adult Protective Services (APS) and Elder Abuse (EA) Programs:** Commissioners expressed concerns about MCDA/DHHS's breach of communications with the Commission in light of the "No Wrong Door" pilot program starting before the Commission and other governing bodies were duly informed and engaged. Chairman Izard highlighted and the Commission's authority to review all plans that impact the elderly population of Milwaukee County. Such duty, authority and responsibility evolve from Wis. Stat. 46.82(1)(a) and 46.82(4)(d), Milwaukee County General Code of Ordinances 53.09 and the Older Americans Act. Izard advised the department that the spirit of the Older American Act necessitates communication, input and oversight by governing bodies (COA, Advisory Council and ADRC Governing Board) early and throughout the planning phases, as well as throughout the program lifecycles. The Chair emphasized the federal mandate to have senior input throughout the lifecycle, particularly during planning. He cited such mandated inclusion being a fundamental difference between regulation steering Aging versus DHHS administration.

Chairman Izard provided an overview to the Commission on MCDA's organizational structure (page 7 of the Milwaukee County Aging Plan), and pointed to how the federal, state and county governments mandate compliance under the advisement of governmental bodies, one being the Advisory Council. The Older American Act states that the Department should be working according to the voice of its seniors, of which the MCDA Advisory Council serves and operates. Izard also discussed five preliminary questions (see attachment) about the County Ordinance Governance, which he forwarded to the Director prior to the meeting. The Chair also displayed Milwaukee County General Code of Ordinances, Chapter 53.03, and 53.09 from the website so that all stakeholders could become familiar with the wording of the ordinances.

Interim Director Shakita LaGrant informed the Commission that there is a Countywide initiative in viewing the synergies of how departments can work cohesively together in connecting constituents to the care, services, and resources to meet their needs. The "No Wrong Door" initiative and collaboration among DHHS and Aging was not motivated by the County budget, but rather by the Countywide collaboration with county divisions, providers, and partners. The DHHS Director wants to ensure that this pilot will work and meet the needs of the seniors and hopes they will have a better customer experience. Milwaukee County's vision is to become the healthiest county in Wisconsin through racial equity. Ms. LaGrant apologized for the miscommunication with the Commission and suggested MCDA will add a section in the COA agendas for the pilot program

updates for the Commission. The Department will create a report either monthly or bi-monthly once the data is collected.

Also, briefly discussed at the meeting was MCDA's Advocacy Committee's 2020 Public Policies and Priorities and the Area plan objectives tracked every quarter by the department. This fall, the Department will work on the Strategic Plan for the 2021-2024 three-year plan.

VIII. COUNTY SUPERVISOR REPORT: JASON HAAS, COUNTY SUPERVISOR

- Supervisor Haas is the new Chair of Milwaukee County's Board Finance Committee. The Finance Committee holds weekly budget meetings with County Exec and staff to discuss this year's and next year's budget concerns.
- The County Board approved MCDA's contract with the ERAS Senior Network to run the Neighborhood Outreach program. The contract duration is from July 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020. This program uses volunteer drivers to drive seniors to their medical appointments, grocery stores, and food pantries. Also, they provide wellness calls and grocery deliveries to seniors who are homebound.
- Supervisor Haas asked the Commission to contact him with any research analysis, program, and or monitoring concerns they may have with MCDA's budget, MCDA, and DHHS pilot program and the department's strategic plan. He is willing to assist the Commission with providing legislative direction with addressing their concerns that they would like the County Board and Administration to hear and act on when needed.
- Mr. Haas announced that the Humboldt Park Beer Garden is reopening.

IX. STATE UPDATES AND REPORT: LAURA LANGER

- DHHS staff continues to telework from home as there currently aren't any plans to shift workers back into the office. The department is moving forward into phase II of the Badger Bounce Back plan.
- The Bureau is striving to ensure health equity is throughout its programming, so they have taken measures to ensure they receive input from all minorities to understand better the problems citizens face so that the community can receive the services they need.
- The state Office on Aging continues to hold bi-weekly forums for the ADRC and Aging units throughout the state. The next speaker for the conference is Otis Woods, Director of the Division of Quality Assurance. The State is also looking into offering its health promotional programs, the Caregiver program, and their training resources as online courses.
- The congregate meal programs might open soon but with restrictions. The pick-up meals and home-delivered meals programs will continue to operate and receive financial support.
- Governmental funds provided through the Older American's Act and the CARES Act used to support older adult programming was distributed to Milwaukee County.

Because of the COVID-19 Crisis, there is flexibility with how these funds are spent based on the Wisconsin Major Disaster Declaration.

X. DISCUSSION: SELECT COMMITTEE – SENIOR CENTER PLANNING COMMITTEE UPDATE: COMMISSIONER SHARON ABSTON-COLEMAN, AND ADVISOR COUNCIL CHAIR, COMMISSIONER BETTY RODGERS: The Select Committee has convened four times and has created a composition of the proposed workgroup to oversee and monitor the senior centers. The Select Committee has finalized a letter to send to potential Senior Center Planning Committee members. The letters will be mailed out by June 30th with an expected response date from potentials by August 15th. The Select Committee has targeted October 1st to be the Senior Center Planning Committee's first meeting date. Commissioners were encouraged to read all the minutes from these meetings.

XI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT AND PRESENTATION: RICHMOND IZARD, CHAIR General report, Commission policy discussion, and Attendance policy. Were tabled to the next COA meeting.

MOTION: To table the Chair report to the next COA meeting and suspend item eleven indefinitely.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Pumphrey Moved, Abston-Coleman Second.)

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

Department and public comment regarding upcoming events, activities, and opportunities for older adults:

- The 20th Anniversary of the American Disabilities Act is scheduled to be held in August. Look for upcoming information soon.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

The next Commission on Aging meeting is at 9 a.m. on Friday, August 28, 2020, as a Google Meets virtual meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant