



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
& HUMAN SERVICES

**AGING & DISABILITIES
SERVICES**

COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 21, 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, November 21, 2025.

Commissioner's Present:

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D., *Chair*
Terrence R. Moore, Sr., *Vice-Chair*
Brian Peters, *Legislative Officer*
George Banda
Gloria Miller, *Secretary*
Mark P. Behar, PA-C
Denise Callaway
Eugene Guskowski, M.Arch
Amber Miller, *Exec Comm. at Large*
Paula Penebaker
Jacqueline Smith
Crocker Stephenson
Cindy Van Vreede

Commissioners Excused:

Marni King
Supervisor Juan Miguel-Martinez

Milwaukee County Staff:

Kyley Ashley, *CEX*
Migdalia Pacheco, *DHHS*
Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*
Jill Knight, *DHHS*
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, *DHHS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*
Bekki Schmitt, *DHHS*

Attendees from the Public

Juanita Brock
Laura Langer, *WI-DHS*
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 a roll call. A quorum of Commissioners was present.

II. COMMENDATION TO HONOR COMMISSIONER AMBER MILLER

A formal commendation for Commissioner Amber Miller, recognizing her six years of dedicated service. A proclamation from the County Executive highlighted her leadership roles, advocacy for AARP-friendly communities, and her instrumental role in orienting new commissioners and representing the Commission at numerous events. Commissioner Miller expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve and reflected on the personal and professional significance of her tenure.

III. COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE, KYLE ASHLEY, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Director Ashley provided updates on several key initiatives. These included the Affordable Care Act Marketplace enrollment, the Lead Hazard Reduction Program funded by a \$7.75 million HUD grant, and opposition to federal efforts to rescind food share benefits. The County Executive's Director also reported on the approval of the 2026 Milwaukee County budget, and his recent recognition by Goodwill for leadership in economic mobility and second-chance employment initiatives; recruitment efforts for the Commission on Aging vacancies were emphasized.

IV. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 24, 2025, COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve October 24, 2025, Commission on Aging meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed, one abstention Behar (Van Vreede Moved, Penebaker Second).

V. COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS BY CHAIRS

The Advocacy Committee reported on a recent meeting with State Representative Taylor and discussed upcoming community listening sessions. The Service Delivery Committee had no updates. The Advisory Council raised concerns about transportation and meal services. The Nutrition Council reported on the success of the flavor station pilot at Washington Park Senior Center, discussed the feasibility of expanding the initiative, and provided updates on dining site closures and the food truck program.

The Senior Center Committee shared insights from a strategic planning session with Katie Sanders and discussed ongoing efforts to modernize senior centers. The Wellness Committee reported on its November 19 meeting, which included updates on heart health initiatives and planning for 2026 events.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda consists of the following meeting minutes:

- a) Executive Committee meeting minutes (October 19, 2025)
- b) Advocacy Committee meeting minutes (October 3, 2025)

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda items listed above.

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

VII. ACTION/INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a) **Action Item, Advocacy Resolutions, Commissioner and Legislative Officer, Brian Peters:** Two advocacy resolutions have passed; one opposing a state bill

limiting patient autonomy in hospitals, and another authorizing a letter to the Speaker's Task Force on Elderly Services outlining the Commission's priorities.

MOTION: To oppose SB-578/AB-598 related to patient representatives and communicate that position with state legislators from Milwaukee County.

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

MOTION: To send a letter to the Wisconsin Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services explaining our Area Agency on Aging policy position priorities.

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

- b) Discussion/Action Item, Confirm Intent to Award Contract for Programming and Meal Site Supervision in the Milwaukee County Senior Centers, Commissioner Gene Guskowski, Senior Center Committee Chair:** AAA Director Idzikowski explained that the RFP process for providing programming and meal site supervision in the Milwaukee County operated senior centers had concluded and Serving Older Adults of Southeast Wisconsin, Inc. was selected as the preferred vendor. The award would be for programming and meal site supervision at the county senior centers for the remainder of 2026, with options for two additional years. The 2026 annual contract amount was set at \$1,075,000.

MOTION: To approve the intent to contract with Serving Older Adults of Southeast Wisconsin, Inc. to provide senior centers and meal supervision at the five senior centers for 2026 with the option to extend two additional years.

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

- c) Action Item, Commission on Aging bylaw Changes – Items Related to Quorum, Commissioner and COA Chair, Janice Wilberg:** The Commission approved two bylaw amendments: one clarifying procedures when a quorum is not present, and another establishing rules for revoking committee appointments due to unexcused absences (see attachment).

MOTION: To approve the change to Article 6, Section 5, adding Item B, upon the approval of Corporation Counsel.

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

MOTION: To approve the change for Article 5 Section 1, Paragraph C., upon the approval of Corporation Counsel.

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

- d) Informational Item, Status of Milwaukee County Senior Centers, AAA Director, Daniel Idzikowski:** AAA Director Daniel Idzikowski presented a detailed report on the status of Milwaukee County senior centers. The report, prepared for the County Board, outlined significant capital and maintenance needs totaling over \$19 million over five years. It emphasized the growing budget deficit and the need for strategic decisions regarding facility ownership and programming. Commissioners expressed concern over funding limitations and stressed the importance of continued advocacy and creative partnerships to sustain services for older adults.
- e) Informational Item, Milwaukee County Livable Communities, Commissioner Paula Pennebaker:** During the meeting, a brief update on the Milwaukee County Livable Communities initiative was provided. It was noted that the final meeting of the year is scheduled for next month, marking the conclusion of the first year of work. The team is currently wrapping up this initial phase. Maria Melendez and the county staff were commended for their outstanding contributions and support throughout the year. At the most recent meeting, the team received a comprehensive overview of the data collected over the past year. Looking ahead, the next meeting will include discussions on potential new committee members and on how to transition this year's findings into actionable recommendations for the upcoming year.
- f) Action/Discussion, Commission on Aging Elections for 2026 Officers:** Nominations for 2026 Commission officers were held. The following Commissioners were nominated for Commission on Aging office:
- Chair: Denise Callaway
Vice Chair: Eugene Guskowski
Secretary: George Banda
Legislative Liaison: Brian Peters
At-Large Executive Committee Member Paul Pennebaker and Mark Behar
Elections will be held at the December meeting.

VIII. WISCONSIN STATE OFFICE ON AGING REPORT, LAURA LANGER

The State Office on Aging provided key updates during the meeting. An annual report is prepared for the Administration for Community Living (ACL), detailing program and service data under the Older Americans Act for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025. This report consolidates information from Pure Place and the three Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), with the final submission due by the end of January.

Milwaukee County AAA staff—Carrie Koss Vallejo, Gaylyn Reske, and Daniel Idzikowski—received special recognition for their efforts to ensure accurate, timely data that impacts funding.

The Commission plans to send a letter to the Speaker's Task Force on Elderly Services. While the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources has not yet presented, Carrie Mulkey and her team have attended sessions to gather input.

Appreciation was also expressed for the Commission's support of the volunteer driver transportation letter, as volunteer drivers are essential for home-delivered meals and medical escort services.

Finally, federal funding has been secured through January 31, 2026, and the Office on Aging is monitoring the legislative process for continued funding beyond February.

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

AAA Director Daniel Idzikowski gave a special acknowledgment to Commissioner Amber Miller for her six years of dedicated service. Her extraordinary contributions as a passionate advocate for older adults have significantly strengthened AARP's presence in Milwaukee. Her initiative in arranging a meeting with the new State Director of AARP was also appreciated, fostering optimism for future collaboration. Also, the director thanked Commissioner Wilberg, who will continue to serve for a few more meetings. The strong leadership of Commissioner Wilburg has driven unity and progress within the Commission, resolved past engagement concerns, and fostered active participation and improved decision-making. While there were hopes for a lighter workload this year, challenges persisted, including changes to transportation vendors. Despite this, the Aging Services team remained dedicated and effective, continually expanding their outreach with fewer resources. The success of the programs was attributed to both the vendor network and the diligent program coordinators. In conclusion, the team was recognized for their hard work and resilience, with pride expressed in the impactful Aging Services team.

X. COUNTY SUPERVISORS REPORT

The County Supervisors' report until the next COA meeting.

XI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

****Acknowledgment of Amber's Contributions****

Chair Wilberg recognized Commissioner Amber Miller for her essential contributions in organizing reports for the Service Delivery Committee and her collaboration with AARP and Milwaukee County in advocating for older adults.

****Cookie Exchange Proposal****

The Chair asked if the Commission would like to hold a cookie exchange at the December meeting. The proposal was accepted unanimously.

****Commission and Administration Collaboration****

The Chair noted the improved relationship between the Commission and the administration. Initially marked by tension, interactions have become collaborative, enhancing the Commission's influence.

****Recognition of Key Advocates****

The Chair commended Director Idzikowski for his commitment and dialogue openness. The director of the grant was recognized as a strong advocate for older adults, alongside County Executive David Crowley for his growing support for related initiatives.

****Closing Remarks****

The meeting ended with appreciation for the respectful partnership between the Commission and the administration. The Chair emphasized the importance of access and advocacy, highlighting the Commission's effective approach in the current environment.

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

There were no comments from the public or staff.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11: a.m.

MOTION: To adjourn

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

The next Commission on Aging meeting is Friday, January 23, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant