



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
**Department on Aging
Advocacy Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2021**

Members Present

Shirley Sharp, Chair
Maureen Conrad
Sandra Dotson
Commissioner John Griffith
Commissioner Jason Haas
Commissioner Richmond Izard
Harold Oemig
Gary Mikolajczyk
Commissioner Elliot Moeser
Cindy Van Vreede

Members Excused

Barbara Bechtel
Maureen Fitzgerald
Bob Haase
David Hoffman
Alice Pugh
Gary Sprong
Judith Troestler

Milwaukee County Staff

Andrew Bethke
Daniel Idzikowski
Pam Mathews

Guests

Hope DeVougas
Christine Carter
Kathy Gale
Thomas Gossett
Matthew Hayes
Jacqueline Johnson
Debra Jupka
Anna Mercer
Commissioner Janice Wilberg
Cathy Woods

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL - 27 in attendance

A quorum of Advocacy Committee members convened virtually on Monday, January 11, 2021. Chairman Sharp welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Dan Idzikowski, Program and Policy Coordinator took roll call. Commissioner Moeser noted the passing of Committee member Casper Green and asked that his contributions be recognized. Chair Sharp and Commissioner Griffith concurred and noted his service on the Commission on Aging as well as on this committee. A moment of silence was held in honor of Casper Green.

II. APPROVAL OF THE December 7, 2020, ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

One correction on page 3, B2 "Medial" should be "Medical".

MOTION: Approve the December 7, 2020 Advocacy Committee meeting minutes as amended.

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

III. UPDATE ON ACTION ITEMS

Letter to federal delegation encouraging further COVID-19 relief sent. Letter sent to the Governor advocating for 3 state budget priorities. Welcome letter to newly elected state representatives not yet sent. Will draft under signature of members.

IV. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEM: RACIAL EQUITY AND ADVOCACY

Commissioner Griffith notes that the committee will proceed with each member taking turns providing a personal reflection on experience with racism. Griffith provided his reflection.

V. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY UPDATES:

The Advocacy Committee invited elected Federal and County representatives to today's meeting to provide updates. Idzikowski provided a few federal updates.

A. Federal Aging Policy Briefing

1. **COVID-19 Response Bills:** The Congress passed a new federal COVID-19 relief package: Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations, or CRRSA, Act. However, the two major items the Advocacy Committee advocated to include – relief for counties and increased in the Older Americans Act, with the exception of a small upward adjustment to nutrition support, were not included. Also included an increase in public transit aid, including transportation for older adults.

B. State Legislative Issues:

1. **Legislation pending:** The Assembly convened last week and passed a package of legislation regarding COVID-19 relief and sent to the Senate, AB1. The Senate stripped out some provisions of the Assembly legislation, including providing for civil liability protections, directing schools to reopen unless 2/3rds of school boards approve virtual instruction, and prevent local health departments from enforcing mask orders. Also includes a designation of a personal representative to be able to visit a nursing home resident and allow pharmacy students to administer COVID-19 vaccines. Idzikowski encouraged members to contact their state representatives and legislators to encourage them to reach an agreement for a unified plan.
2. **State Taskforces:** Broadband Access Taskforce, Retirement Taskforce have now convened. The Caregiver Task Force issued its report but will continue to meet. Two additional recommendations were posed for review regarding how the COVID-19 vaccinations will be distributed. Idzikowski provided a brief overview.

C. Milwaukee County Legislative Issues:

1. **Milwaukee County Board:** There were a few amendments made to the County Executive's budget. Senior Center programming received an increase and thus Serving Older Adults will not experience a cut next year. There was \$50,000 set aside for general use for the department. The integration plan with DHSS is effective as of January 1, 2021 and we are now the DHHS Division on Aging. Jon Janowski is the interim director of the Division on Aging. Still the AAA.

VI. COMMISSION on AGING PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

Commissioner Griffith recommended that we delay consideration until February and focus on Wisconsin State Budget Priorities.

VII. WISCONSIN STATE BUDGET PRIORITIES

Idzikowski reminded the Committee about the process for formulating the biennial Wisconsin state budget. The Committee has already recommended communicating priorities regarding the Milwaukee County Fair Deal initiative including sales tax, providing for ADRC funding increase and equalization, and accepting ACA Medicaid expansion. Mikolajczyk indicated that transportation and housing priorities should be included. Idzikowski points to WAAN issue briefs.

MOTION: Accept and incorporate point 1 of the WAAN issue brief regarding increased in the state transportation funding for 85.20, 85.21. & 85.22 programs.

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

MOTION: Incorporate WAAN state budget priorities into Milwaukee County priorities.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Izard Moved, Moeser Second).

VIII. ADVOCACY TRAINING TOOLS

No discussion.

IX. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 3:04 p.m.

The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be held virtually at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, February 1, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Daniel Idzikowski, Program and Policy Coordinator