



## Advocacy Committee June 5, 2023

Advocacy Committee members convened virtually on Monday, June 5, 2023. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and conference call.

### **Members Present:**

Commissioner- Elliott Moeser, Chair  
Commissioner- John Griffith  
Commissioner- Cindy Van Vreede  
Vice Chair- Sharon Jackson  
Sopheya Farrell  
Trina Koch  
Harold Oemig

### **Staff Present:**

Michelle Allison-DHHS  
Clare O'Brien-DHHS  
Khamphanh Calvey-DHHS  
Cleopatra Castaneda-DHHS  
Daniel Idzikowski-DHHS  
Emily Petersen-DHHS  
Kayla Steinke-DHHS  
Carrie Koss Vallejo-DHHS  
Nina Yang-DHHS

### **Members Excused:**

T.R. Edwards  
Maureen Fitzgerald  
Michael Glabere  
William Meunier  
Gary Mikolajczyk  
Paul Pederson  
Supervisor Sequanna Taylor

### **Attendees from the Public**

Jalexander-Independence First  
Geraldyn Juettner-Cambridge Apts  
Jill -ASL Interpreter  
Scott-ASL Interpreter  
Paul Penebaker  
Commissioner, Maureen Conrad  
Ginger Rogers  
Daryll Whyte-Facilities Management  
Cathy Wood

## MINUTES

### I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Elliot Moeser called the Advocacy Committee meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Emily Petersen, Advocacy and Policy Manger of DHHS Aging Unit called the roll call. The Advocacy Committee has a quorum.

### II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MAY 4, 2023, ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES.

**MOTION:** To accept the May 4, 2023, Advocacy Committee meeting minutes.

**ACTION:** Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Griffith, Jackson Second)

### III. UPDATE ON ACTION ITEMS

- A. **Ageism in Wisconsin:** Chair Elliott Moeser and the Advocacy Committee passed a motion to send a correspondence letter on Ageism and Stereotyping for seniors in the State of Wisconsin. Emily Petersen gave an update stating that the letter to Governor Evers is in progress. Once the drafts are reviewed and completed Emily will send out to Commissioner Moeser and Chair Wilberg where both parties will have to approve the letter. Emily stated when that is complete the correspondence letter will be sent out to Governor Evers for him to pursue.
- B. **MCTS Save the Bus Campaign:** Emily Petersen stated that as discussed from the last Advocacy Committee meeting, the Commissioners and Alena drafted a letter for MCTS Save the Bus Campaign. Chair Wilberg has agreed and signed off. The letters have been sent out for review.
- C. **WAAN Aging Advocacy Day:** The WAAN gathering was a big success in Madison. Emily stated it was a great experience to have meet with those that represent the Advocacy Committee. (Commissioner Moeser and Commissioner John Griffith, etc.) Emily stated that she heard a lot of great feedback from legislators, and the participation in the event. Everyone found it valuable to learn about all the different issues: transportation, meal services, and more that are important to Older Adults in Milwaukee County.
- D. **COA Policymakers Gathering:** This gathering was an activity that was initiated by the Advocacy Committee and was promoted by John Griffith who was recognized for his role as president. Commissioner Griffith stated that it was a great turn out. Most of our Congressional representatives where there. He would like to reach out to see if more city elected officials can attend future Policymakers Gatherings. Emily has pictures of the event which she will share through email to anyone who would like to see them.

### IV. LEGISLATIVE & POLICY UPDATES

#### A. Federal Aging Policy

- A. **Federal Budget & Issues:** Emily stated that the Senate and House passed bills to raise the Debt Ceiling which, President Biden has signed. There was nothing related to Social Security, Medicare or Medicaid in that bill, however there are many bills needing to be discussed and sign in the near future. One aspect of the debt ceiling bills that was Student Loan forgiveness, which might be some interest to some people on the Advocacy Committee and for the Commission of Aging. Loan repayments will restart shortly.

#### B. State Legislative Issues:

- A. Emily will be sending out a follow up email with the information about the State Budget as well as a template so that the Advocacy Committee can communicate on these issues. Thursday the Joint

Finance Committee is going to take up the State Transportation and the State Department of Justice budgets. Both of those budgets have issues that could affect the older adults. In the transportation budget they're contemplating increases to specialized transportation and assistance for mass transit for counties and tribes. This is one of the budget areas that they will be taking up and discussing on Thursday so if you are interested in contacting your State Legislature, this would be a great time to do so this week. They're also taking up the Department of Justice Budget, which funds the elder abuse hotline and the elder justice program. The Governor's budget proposed the creation of a program to promote the protection of elders and support the Statewide elder abuse hotline. The Joint Finance Committee will be discussing these programs on Thursday as well.

The second item that Emily discussed was the Wisconsin Rail Plan that is available for review. The Wisconsin Rail Plan is a plan that the State has put together for new rail networks. The rail networks will not just be in Milwaukee County, but would connect to other parts of the States, like Minnesota or even downtown Illinois. They are trying to create some better economic opportunity, create access to jobs, and create access to business. Emily stated that if there is interest in making a comment on the plan, they are taking comments on the Statewide Rail Plan until the tenth of this month, which is only 5 more days. Emily said there's some opportunity for the Advocacy Committee to get together and make a statement on the plan itself. This comment would be going to the State Department of Transportation.

Emily spoke about the Shared Revenue and Sales Tax Legislation that is still in progress. There has been big negotiation happening this week between State Leaders, the Assembly, and the Governor's office. They are working out the final pieces and will be up for vote soon.

**MOTION:** John Griffith motion that Emily do the composition of the letter to support the Statewide Rail Plan

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

**B. Milwaukee County Legislative Issues:**

**A. Milwaukee County Budget & Legislation:** Commissioner Griffith is asking 10% increase in the Aging Service Budget. The break down as follows:

- \$50,000-Caregiving
- \$50,000-Ombudsman
- \$50,000-Senior Centers
- \$30,000-Transit Services
- \$20,000-Food Services

B. **Aging items of interest:** Commissioner Moeser, and the Advocacy Committee, gave recognition to Commissioner Griffith for his services to all Senior Citizens in Milwaukee County.

V. **FEDERAL DEBT LIMIT RESOLUTION PROPOSAL:** Emily mentioned that representatives of the US Senate, passed action that avoided default and that legislation has been signed by President Biden. Emily is requesting that the Commission on Aging and Advocacy Committee would contact our federal legislators thanking them for avoiding the debt limit default. We would also contact those who didn't support that legislation and, from a positive perspective, indicate how important supporting future legislation to protect senior citizens is, especially when it comes to protecting pensions, Social Security, Medicaid, and other activities that serve senior citizens.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Elliot Moeser calling a motion that the Advocacy Committee would contact our Federal Legislators concerning the Federal debt limit and how we appreciate all our representatives and senators watching after senior citizens.

**ACTION:** Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Moeser Moved, VanVreed Second)

VI. **FAMILY CARE MCO ACQUISITION:** Director Daniel Idzikowski, brought back this topic of Family Care MCO Acquisitions. Director Idzikowski stated that this is a valuable interest for the older adults. Long term care for our seniors is a never-ending cycle. The State Legislature and stakeholders have negotiated on this for over ten years in the state of Wisconsin. The acquisitions have not yet been approved and there's still an opportunity to comment with the Office of the Commissioners of Insurance on this.

**Motion:** Commissioner Elliot Moeser motion that the Advocacy Committee become involved in sending out a letter to legislators on the MCO Issues.

**ACTION:** Motion Prevailed by unanimous consent (Moved, Moeser, Griffith Second)

VII. **ANNOUNCEMENTS & ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES.**

Commissioner Elliot Moeser asked if Emily would send out an email letting everyone know that there will not be an Advocacy Meeting in July. We will resume the Advocacy Committee Meetings on August 7, 2023, at 3:00p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT: Motion to Adjourn** (Moved Moeser, Van Vreede Second).  
Meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

Ortrilla Paris  
Clerical 1

Final