



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
& HUMAN SERVICES
**AGING & DISABILITIES
SERVICES**

**ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 7, 2025**

The Milwaukee County Aging Advocacy Committee convened in person at the Clinton Rose Senior Center on Friday, March 7, 2025. Members and attendees also joined the meeting virtually and by conference call.

Members Present:

Commissioner Brian Peters, *Chair*
Commissioner George Banda, *Vice-Chair*
Maureen Conrad
Sopheya Farrell
Trina Koch
Paulette Maclin
Gary Mikolajczyk
William Meunier
Harold Oemig

Members Excused:

Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, *Commissioner*

Members Excused Continued...

Commissioner Janice Wilberg, Ph.D.

Milwaukee County Staff

Jennifer Lefeber, *DHHS*
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*

Attendees from the Public

Rene Smith
Jill Kenehan-Krey, *ASL Interpreter*
Stephanie Zito, *ASL Interpreter*

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Brian Peters called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. Emily Petersen, AAA Advocacy and Policy Manager, took roll call. A quorum was present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 7, 2025, ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the February 7, 2025, Advocacy Committee meeting minutes
ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Banda Moved, Koch Second)

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

A. The 2025 Senior Leadership Program Applications are Open! Applications will be accepted until April 4, 2025, and might be extended a few more days. Please contact Emily Petersen, AAA Advocacy and Policy Manager if you have any questions or if you know of someone who would like to sign-up. (See attached flyer).

- B. **2025 Disability Advocacy Day with the Survival Coalition** is on March 12, 2025. Registration opened on February 1, 2025. If you would like to attend, please contact Emily Petersen so she can assist you with registration as there is a cut-off in accepting registration for the event (See attached flyer).
- C. **2025 Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) Aging Advocacy Day** is May 13, 2025 (an all-day event). Registration opens on Monday, March 10, 2025, and closes on April 25, 2025. Ms. Petersen encouraged Advocacy Committee members to attend this event, also she reminded the committee that the Senior Leadership participants will be attending the May Advocacy Committee meeting, so make sure they are all there. All Senior Leadership participants will be attending this event. Transportation will be provided for all who plan to attend.

IV. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICE UPDATES

A. Federal Aging Policy

I. Federal Budget and Issues

- a. **Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Status Updates:** Last year, Congress passed a continuing resolution to fund the government until March 14, 2025. They now have one week to determine a budget for 2025. Congress has three options: they can create another bridge bill for a continuing resolution, pass a budget for fiscal year 2025 that would last until the end of September, or they could choose not to take any action, which would result in a government shutdown.
- b. **Medicaid Discussion:** At the February Commission on Aging (COA) meeting, the Commission on Aging approved adding support for Medicaid funding to the 2025 Advocacy Committee Policy Priorities. A letter was sent to Senator Baldwin and everyone in the Federal congressional delegation discussing the importance of funding Medicaid in 2026. Also, a few weeks ago the COA met with Senator Baldwin's office to discuss Medicaid.

II. Federal Regulations and Executive Orders

- a. **EO: Implementing the President's Department of Government Efficiency: Workforce optimization Initiative (Action Item):** Federal agencies are collaborating with DOGE efforts to implement targeted cuts to funding and programs and assess their impact on services. Additionally, Medicare is working with DOGE to identify efficiencies within its operations. Both the Chair of the COA and Chair Peters are committed to reaching out to legislators to discuss how these cuts will affect Social Security and their implications for the population of Milwaukee County and the State of Wisconsin.

MOTION: To have staff (Emily Petersen) draft a letter to legislators about their concerns with Social Security.

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

B. State Legislative Issues

I. State Budget & Legislation

- a. Governor Evers budget introduction on February 18, 2025:** Ms. Petersen will email the Advocacy Committee a copy of Governor Evers's budget released **on February 18, 2025**. She will also distribute via email a comparison document from WAAN outlining which of the AAA's aging programs and services were funded in the Governor's budget.

Joint Finance Committee Budget Hearings: The next step in the state budget process is the Joint Finance Committee budget hearings. They have yet to be announced but will be circulated when they are. It is important for members to attend at least one of the hearings to share aging budget priorities with legislators.

- b. Advocating for Evidence-Based Wellness Programs, Jennifer Lefeber, Milwaukee County Aging EBPP Coordinator):** Jennifer Lefeber, DHHS, ADS, Health and Wellness Programs Coordinator, delivered a PowerPoint presentation that outlined the various evidence-based programs offered by the Area Agency on Aging. These programs included disease self-management initiatives, chronic conditions, physical activity, and falls prevention. She also shared information about the current funding sources for the Evidence-Based Promotion Programs (EBPP), which are supported by the Older Americans Act, ARPA funding for Title IID, and mini-grants from the Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA). Finally, she addressed the challenges associated with financing and implementing these programs.

II. Administrative Rules & Governor's Taskforces

C. Milwaukee County Legislative Issues

I. Milwaukee County Budget and Legislation

II. Aging Items of Interest

V. 2025-2027 Aging Area Plan Goals Review

Due to time constraints, the Committee was not able to complete this item, and it was laid over to the April meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Oemig Moved, Koch Second)

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be at 1 p.m. on Friday, April 11, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant