



Advocacy Committee April 3, 2023

Advocacy Committee/Council members convened virtually on Monday, April 3, 2023. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and conference call.

Members Present:

Commissioner Elliott Moeser, *Chair*
Sharon Jackson, *Vice-Chair*
Cindy Bentley
Sopheya Farrell
Commissioner John Griffith
Harold Oemig
Supervisor Sequanna Taylor
Commissioner Cindy Van Vreede

Staff Present:

Michelle Allison, *DHHS*
Cleopatra Castaneda, *DHHS*
Audrey Jamerson, *DHHS*
Alexandria Lange, *DHHS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*
Tamika Roberson, *DHHS*
Lisa Ruiz-Garcia, *HR*
Terell Thomas, *DHHS*

Members Excused:

Commissioner Ronald Byington
Maureen Fitzgerald
Michael Glabere
William Meunier
Gary Mikolajczyk
Paul Pedersen

Attendees from the Public

ASL Interpreter Jill KK
Interpreter Leslie
T.R. Edwards

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Elliot Moeser called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. Daniel Idzikowski, Director of DHHS Aging Unit took a roll. The Advocacy Committee has a quorum.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 6, 2023, AND MARCH 6, 2023, ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES.

MOTION: To accept the February 6, 2023, Advocacy Committee meeting minutes.

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

MOTION: To accept the March 6, 2023, Advocacy Committee meeting minutes.

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

III. ELECTION OF ADVOCACY COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIR (NOMINATIONS)

Chair Moeser asked who would like to be nominated for Vice-Chair for the Advocacy Committee. Griffith nominated Sharon Jackson for Vice-Chair for the Advocacy Committee. There were no other nominees.

MOTION: To accept the nomination of Sharon Jackson for Vice-Chair for the Advocacy Committee.

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

IV. UPDATE ON ACTION ITEMS

A. Advocacy & Policy Manager position: Director Idzikowski informed the committee that HR is conducting a reference check on a preferred candidate and is expected to make an offer this week.

B. COA Public Policy Priorities-Medicaid Expansion: Director Idzikowski is in the process of drafting a letter of support on behalf of the Advocacy Committee to support the Joint Finance Committee and our local legislative delegation.

C. Ageism in Wisconsin: Director Idzikowski provided a status update on the letter to send to Governor Evers, which is still in draft stage. He hopes to have further discussion with Chair Moeser as to the specific content of the letter. Chair Moeser will assist Director Idzikowski with the content of the letter.

V. LEGISLATIVE & POLICY UPDATES

A. Federal Aging Policy

- a. **Federal Budget and Issues:** A new action has been issued by the National Organization of Area Agencies on Aging. They are requesting that Milwaukee County seniors contact their United States Senators and ask them to sign off on the older American Act Appropriation Letter. The deadline for signing off on the letter is April 4th, 2023.

MOTION: Director Idzikowski is asking the Advocacy Committee for the Approval and Voter confidence in sending the letter to the Senators.

ACTION: Motion Prevailed by unanimous consent (Koch, Griffith Second)

B. State Legislative Issues

- a. **State Budget and Legislation:** Director Idzikowski stated that we have some discussion on the State budget process. At this point this item is of a large concern. Secondly election day is April 4th, 2023, we encourage everyone to vote. Thirdly, Director Idzikowski stated that there have been some pieces of legislation of interest to older adults, mostly dealing with increasing penalties for individuals who exploit older adults, particularly through financial exploitation.

C. Milwaukee County Legislative Issues

- a. **Milwaukee County Budget and Legislation** Supervisor Taylor stated that as of January 1st the budget has been passed for this year. She is still working with Director La Grant on getting new/used workout equipment to the Senior Centers. She also mentioned that furnaces and hot water heaters have been upgraded in some of the Senior Centers. Supervisor Taylor will send a list to Director Idzikowski with all the upgrades needing to be completed or is completed for the Senior Centers. They will also continue to visit Senior Centers throughout the county of Milwaukee, doing lunches with individuals, giving them the opportunity to ask questions, on what would they like to see as they continue to come to the Senior Centers, making sure that Seniors voices are heard in Milwaukee County. The County executive did something in reference to the disabilities, rights, and upgrades, with a proclamation as well to.

VI. TESTIMONY FOR THE WI STATE BUDGET

Director Idzikowski stated that. At this time the Governor has released his budget, instead of using the executive budget as a starting point, he will use the current base budget as a starting point. Traditional the Commission on Aging has provided testimony at the Joint Committee on Finance Hearings. We have secured a member of the ADRC Board of Governors, Brandon O'Connell who will be presenting testimony on behalf of the increase or the core funding of the ADRC and probably the APS system. This year we would like the Advocacy Committee to decide on at least three topics that we would provide testimony in person at the hearing. Here are the topics that we need testimonies on. The expansion of state shared revenue, and the flexibility to allow Milwaukee County to increase its sales tax, next, the Specialized transportation for older adults and people with disabilities (we are requesting a 20% increase). Finally, the Medicaid expansion to encourage the state to accept Medicaid expansion as part of the budget. This year the four Hearings will be in person, held at the Waukesha Expo Center on Wednesday April 3rd, 2023, at 10 a.m. please try to arrive between 7a.m and 9 a.m.

VII. FOOD SECURITY ADVOCACY FOR OLDER ADULTS

Chair Wilberg gave to us a couple of immediate items of need, regarding food security for all their adults, due to the end of the snap emergency allotment. The first of the agenda is the, increase nutrition Program funding for all their adults, secondly the supplemental amount has dropped down, thirdly the stock box program. Director Idzikowski stated that the role is to see if there is a way that the Commission on Aging can play a convening, coordinating role for addressing food, nutrition, insecurity for older adults? T.R. (Hunger Task Force) mention that his biggest concern and action is to continue to push on a governor's food security initiative and seeing if we can increase the amount of funding that's specifically to target or segment it for seniors.

VIII. COUNTY BUDGET 2024 & AGING FUNDING

Chair Elliott Moeser spoke on this topic. He stated that back in March there was an action that the Advocacy Committee voted on a funding increase the county of 10%. Which was approved, because of that discussion, Chair Wilberg and the Commission felt that we need to be more specific. They have agreed to the 10% increase, but they would like to know where/ and why the increase. Chair Moeser stated that there has been a very candid and transparent discussion at the county level for level funding and that concept will play a role in our request. He also stated that there will probably be ARPA money available in the future. We might even be fortunate that the county will get supplemental funding, but he stated that we must be prepared to have the request specific. Chair Moeser stated that for the most part this will be operating money, not capital.

MOTION: Chair Moeser would like present to the Commission a recommendation for \$170,000 dollars which is a 10% increase in funding for senior services. (Caregiving \$50,000, Ombuds person, \$50,000, Senior Centers, \$30,000, Transportation, \$20,000 and Food Security, \$20,000).

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Jackson, Van Vreede Second).

IX. COMMISSION ON AGING POLICYMAKERS GATHERING & WISCONSIN AGING ADVOCACY NETWORK (WAAN) AGING ADVOCACY DAY

Chair Moeser, reminding everyone that the Commissioner on Aging Policymaker Gathering is on May 24th. The meeting is in person/ not sure of the time yet. However, it will take place at the Washington Park Senior Center. Director Idzikowski, spoke on the WAAN Advocacy Day, registration is open for the Aging Advocacy Day. We will be providing the bus transportation from Milwaukee

County to Madison for that event. On May 9th, 2023. You will need to pre-register. Director Idzikowski stated that he included that in the packets where you would go online to pre-register.

X. ANNOUNCEMENTS & ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

A. **WI Spring Election**- Tuesday, April 4th

B. **2023 US Aging Policy Briefing**: April 25, 2023, Washington, D.C.

XI. ADJOURN: MOTION: Chair Moeser adjourn the Meeting at 4:35 p.m.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Bill, Pederson.)

Respectfully submitted,

Ortrialla Paris
Clerk 1

Final