



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
Department on Aging

Commission on Aging Meeting Minutes September 25, 2020

Commissioners

Richmond Izard, *Chair*
Sharon Abston-Coleman, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*
John Griffith, *Secretary*
Rev. George Pumphrey, Ph.D., *Legislative Officer*
Jason Haas, *Milwaukee County Supervisor*
Ronald Byington
Amber Miller
Elliot Moeser, Ph.D.
Gloria Pitchford-Nicholas, Ph.D.
Bettie Rodgers, J.D.

Commissioners Excused

Gloria Miller
Shirley Sharp

Milwaukee County Staff

Andrew Bethke
Samta Bhatnagar
Margaret Daun, *Corporation Counsel*
David Farwell, *Corporation Counsel*
Schinika Fitch, *County Executive's Office*
Kathy Gale

Milwaukee County Staff Continued...

Dan Idzikowski
Jon Janowski, *MCDA Interim Executive Director*
Rachel Kaehny-Frank
Shakita LaGrant, *DHHS Director*
Jill Lintonen
Marietta Luster
Pam Mathews
MaryJo Meyers, *County Executive's Office*
David Muhammad, *DHHS Deputy Director*
Vonda Nyang
Mary Proctor Brown
Isaac Rowlett, *County Executive's Office*
Carrie Vallejo

Guests

Barbara Bechtel
Pat Bruce, *ADRC Governing Board*
Pat Dunn
Lynn Gall, *State of WI*
Debra Jupka, *ADRC Governing Board*
Laura Langer, *State of WI, DHS*
Neal Minogue, *State of WI, DHS*
Barbara Wyatt Sibley

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

A quorum of Commission on Aging (COA) members convened virtually on Friday, September 25, 2020. Chairman Richmond Izard welcomed everyone, called the meeting to order at 9 a.m. and took roll call.

II. REFLECTION: COMMISSIONER BETTIE RODGERS

Commissioner Rodgers reflected on late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who recently passed away. Ms. Ginsburg was a champion advocate for women and men. Commissioner Rodgers wanted to reflect on a few of the many legal fights and arguments that Ms. Ginsburg won during her service as a Supreme Court Justice.

III. APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 28, 2020, COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES
Minutes approved upon corrections to County Supervisor's Haas's report.

MOTION: To approve the August 28, 2020, Commission on Aging meeting minutes as-is, with the County Supervisor correcting his report at his discretion.

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

IV. CONSENT AGENDA COMMITTEE OR COUNCIL REPORTS

A. Advocacy Committee meeting minutes for August 3, 2020, Executive Committee meeting minutes for June 1, 2020, and August 17, 2020, Nutrition Council meeting minutes for January 28, 2020, Wellness Committee meeting minutes for October 17, 2019, and July 15, 2020, and the Select Committee on Senior Center Planning Group meeting minutes for July 9, 2020, were distributed for review before the meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Consent Agenda.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Abston-Coleman Moved, Pumphrey Second.)

V. COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN PRESENTATION: SCHINIKA FITCH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS, AND ISAAC ROWLETT, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING:

Ms. Fitch reported that the County Board approved Commissioner Ronald Byington's reappointment for a second term to the Commission. Ms. Fitch and Mr. Rowlett provided a modified PowerPoint presentation on Milwaukee County's Strategic plan to address the Commission's questions and concerns. Mr. Rowlett offered to give a special session to allow for presentation questions and answers due to today's meeting time constraints. A Commissioner asked about senior access to Bradford Beach, and there were several questions asked about the merger of DHHS and MCDA, and if the department has measurement tools to show if the merger of services will be successful.

VI. STATE UPDATES AND REPORT: NEAL MINOGUE

- The Bureau of Aging and Disability State Office on Aging is in the process of developing instructions for Counties, tribal, and Area Agencies on Aging Plan. This year the State Aging Plan due date is June 30, 2022. This new due date will allow more input from communities.
- The State has an employment posting for a Health Equity Consultant.
- **Senior Community Employment Program:** Workers continue to work from home using emergency temporary sick leave due to COVID-19. A few of the workers have returned to some of the worksites that have minimal exposure.

VII. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT AND PRESENTATION: RICHMOND IZARD, CHAIR

A. Meeting with the County Executive and Chief of Staff: The Chair met with the County Executive and his Chief of staff to discuss Commissions issues. All parties have agreed

to move forward in the capacity of improved and open communications and collaborations.

- B. Advocacy, i.e., County Executive's Open House, Org Chart," Attended the County Executive's open house budget discussions. The Chair discussed the Commission's concerns with MCDA not having an Executive Director and purported published miscommunications in the equity document under Objective #2. Budget development. There was an inaccurate statement that was alarming to the Commission that mentioned the Department gathered information and input from all stakeholders regarding Budget Development. However, the Department didn't include the Commission in any budget development discussions. Also, the 2021 budget was developed by incorporating MCDA merging with DHHS in which the Commission wasn't aware of that budget discussion or decision.
- C. Fulfilled request for "DHHS No Wrong Door white paper": The Commission did receive the long-awaited "DHHS No Wrong Door white paper." The Chair forwarded the letter to the Advisory Council, who made the original request in February 2020.

VIII. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

A. COA Governing Authority:

1. Active Plan to demote MCDA from separate department to a division under DHHS as publicly disclosed on September 18, 2020 at ADRC Governing Board Meeting: (The agenda topic was bridged into the strategic plan presentation and discussion earlier on the agenda.)

2. Governance and Authority

- A. **Legislative Officer's Report, George Pumphrey:** Due to administration's decision to subjugate the Milwaukee County Department on Aging into DHHS and today's meeting agenda running behind the established timeline, Commissioner Pumphrey recommended suppressing his report at this time. Commissioner Pumphrey emphasized that the Commission wants to reassure DHHS that they are committed to having a closer relationship and enhanced communications with the Commission. The Legislative Office asked the Commission if he could resubmit his report to include a narrative in his report, which is to become the formal record for the Commission.
- B. **(Draft) Annotated COA-MCDA Governance Org Chart:** The Chair explained that the Commission had concerns about their authority being subverted on some of MCDA's departmental decisions, as well as which state statutes and county ordinances authorize the Commission's input. Therefore, the Commission created an org chart titled "(Draft) Annotated COA-MCDA Governance Org Chart" that cites specific federal, state and local laws and authorities for Aging unit oversight. The said chart was drafted from a governance perspective, not an operational perspective. The

department's org chart primarily illustrates the department's operations hierarchy, which was also included in the meeting packet.

The Chair shared Corporation Counsels email response to the "(Draft) Annotated COA-MCDA Governance Org Chart" that was sent to them from the COA Chair for review and feedback: The Chair's summary of Corporation Counsel's findings was there are "gray areas" that make it impossible for Corporation Counsel to draw any conclusions currently. Their recommendation was for all parties to come together with better communications. Commissioner Pumphrey suggested tabling this discussion for further discussion.

MOTION: Moved to table this discuss to a later date or a special meeting
ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Pumphrey Moved, Abston-Coleman Second.)

3. Budget issues, concerns and recommendations

- a. Commission collaboration, review and oversight of budget development: (This sub item was incorporated into general budgetary discussions held throughout today's meeting.)
- b. **Un-funded Executive Director position:** The County Executive's Chief of Staff, Mary Jo Meyers, affirmed that the Executive Director position in MCDA would be remaining at this time as Jon Janowski is serving as interim Executive Director until the County Executive decides on who will be the full-time Director for the department. The Chair raised the question of what type of director position will preside over the Department on Aging. The Commission asked questions regarding the Budget process and if there was still time for Commission input. Mr. Janowski provided an overview of the final County budget process with the Commissioners. It was unclear what would happen to the current Director of Administrator position under the proposed merger.
- c. **How to proceed with administrative contract renewals, given budget reductions and the COVID-19 impact on the delivery of services:** Serving Older Adults (SOA) Concern's about their 2021 MCDA Contract: Cathy Wood, President of SOA, informed the Commission that by keeping the Senior Centers closed, SOA will not be able to bring in earned revenue through actives fees, building rentals, gift shop purchases, which adds loss of income of \$86,000 to the projected \$170,000 MCDA contract budget cut. SOA surveyed their clients and had received 500 responses, in which 95% of their clients responded, saying they want the centers to reopen.

President Wood asked the Commission to help advocate for the senior center funding and requested to have the centers reopen as the seniors want them open. Wood stated that SOA could not run all five senior centers

five days a week, given the proposed contract amount. Due to the new everyday living with COVID-19, the Commission questions the new service expectations as the current contract may not reflect the department's expectations for the operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission's main concerns are a liability with reopening up the centers possibly too early. However, the decision about when to reopen senior centers is ultimately a County decision, not the Aging unit's.

- d. **Possibility of MCDA employee not being compensated between November 2019 and September 2020 for purported execution of the role and functional duties of Executive Director:** The Chair asked the Commission if they should take any action about purported claims of Executive Director workload being performed by the Director of Administration. The Commission decided to take no action on this item.

MOTION: Moved to make item D. MCDA employee not being compensated a mute discussion.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Moser Moved, Rodgers Second.)

B. Possible Action

- a. **Other related action(s), including appointment to the Senior Center Select Committee (see attachment):** The Chair asked the Commission to approve appointments to the Senior Center Select Committee.

MOTION: Moved to accept the 19 appointments to the Senior Center Select Committee.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Pitchford-Nicholas Moved, Pumphrey Second.)

IX. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: SHAKITA LAGRANT, DHHS INTERM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND JON JANOWSKI, MCDA INTERM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jon Janowski, Interim Executive Director thanked his staff and vendors for their hard work during this COVID-19 crisis. Everyone has worked her to ensure no interruption of services. Mr. Janowski reiterated MCDA's efforts with working collaboratively with DHHS and the Commission.

X. COUNTY SUPERVISOR REPORT: JASON HAAS, COUNTY SUPERVISOR

- The County Executive will present his 2021 Proposed County Budget to the County Board **on October 1, 2020.**
- The week of October 5, 2020, the County Research Division will be analyzing all the County's budget programming.

- A series of County Budget Hearings will star **on Monday, October 12, 2020**. Constituents can speak with their County Supervisors in advance (at least two days prior) to the hearings to have them incorporate your questions at the hearings.
- Supervisor Haas and Supervisor Ryan Clancy are hosting a virtual Town Hall meeting scheduled for October 20, 2020.
- The County Board will have a virtual public Town Hall meeting scheduled for Friday, October 30, 2020.
- The Full County Board Annual Public hearing is **on Friday, October 30, 2020, at 10 a.m.**
- The County Board's Budget Amendment meeting is **on Monday, November 4, 2020**.
- The Budget Adoption meeting is **on November 9, 2020, at 9:30 a.m.** If there are no vetoes, the 2021 Budget adoption will affect as of January 1, 2021. If there are vetoes, the County Board will schedule a meeting to review the vetoes **on November 16, 2020**.
- A Commissioner asked Supervisor Haas if he could email all of the hearing dates and times to the Commission.

Chairman Izard had to leave the meeting, so Secretary Griffith was asked to preside over the COA meeting in his absence.

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

Department and public comment regarding upcoming events, activities and opportunities for older adults:

- **A.D.R.C. Governing Board Survey:** Pat Bruce, Chair of the A.D.R.C. Governing Board, urged Commissioners to fill out the A.D.R.C. Survey received via email.
- **Voting/Vote Early:** The Commission expressed they should discuss ways that the Commission can get the word out to the community to ensure they vote.
- **A.D.R.C. Listening Session at the L.G.B.T. Community Center:** The L.G.B.T. Community Center hosts an A.D.R.C. Listening Session on Wednesday, September 30, 3030, from 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. Those who are interested in attending should contact the L.G.B.T. Community Center.
- **Big Night Out Fundraiser:** The L.G.B.T. Community has its big annual Fundraiser, the “Big Night Out,” on October 9, 2020. The virtual Fundraiser will be shown on YouTube and Facebook.

- Additional announcements were included in today's COA packet. For more information, visit MCDA's website at <https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Department-on-Aging> .

Announcements:

- ADRC Survey 2020 Flyer
- Flyer on Election Transportation Services
- Let's Talk Over Coffee DCS Flyer
- MCFPC Falls Prevention Week Flyer 2020
- Pancake Breakfast at Elks Lodge Flyer
- Virtual Support Group Flyer PDF
- Wellness Virtual Series Fall 2020 Revised Dates
- Aging Medicare Savings Ad_ 13x10.5 COMM JOURNAL 091520
- OKTOBERFEST FLYER FINAL

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at **11:54 a.m.**

The next Commission on Aging meeting is at 9 a.m. on Friday, October 23, 2020, as a Google Meets virtual meeting.