



**ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 7, 2025**

The Milwaukee County Commission on Aging Advocacy Committee convened in person at the Clinton Rose Senior Center on Friday, February 7, 2025 at 9:00 AM. Members and attendees also joined the meeting virtually and by conference call.

Members Present:

Commissioner Brian Peters, *Chair*
Commissioner George Banda, *Vice-Chair*
Commissioner Janice Wilberg, Ph.D.
Harold Oemig
Maureen Conrad
Paulette Maclin
Trina Koch

William Meunier
Sopheya Farrell

Milwaukee County Staff

Migdalia Pacheco Pacheco, DHHS
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*

Attendees from the Public

Jill Kenehen-Krey, *ASL Interpreter*
Steph Zito, *ASL Interpreter*

Members Excused:

Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, *Commissioner*

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Brian Peters called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM. Emily Petersen, AAA Advocacy and Policy Manager, took roll call. A quorum was present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 10, 2025 ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the January 10, 2025 Advocacy Committee meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Wilberg moved, Banda second).

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

- A. 2025 Senior Leadership Program Applications Open! See attached flyer—** Emily provided information about the upcoming Senior Leadership Program and asked committee members to circulate the application within their networks.
- B. 2025 Alzheimer’s Association Wisconsin Advocacy Day—Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Register before February 21—**No discussion occurred on this item.
- C. 2025 Disability Advocacy Day with the Survival Coalition—March 12, 2025. Registration opens February 1. See attached flyer—**Chair Peters encouraged committee members to register and attend.

IV. LEGISLATIVE AND POLICE UPDATES

A. Federal Aging Policy

I. Federal Budget and Issues

- a. **Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Status Updates:** Emily provided an update to the committee regarding the latest FY2025 budget and the next opportunity for a budget bill to pass. Emily also provided details on anticipated Medicaid spending cuts and the importance of contacting legislators to share your experience with Medicaid. Chair Peters informed the committee that he, Commissioner Wilberg, and Emily would be meeting with staff from U.S. Senator Ron Johnson's Office that afternoon to advocate on behalf of older adults and has pending meeting requests with Senator Baldwin and Congresswoman Moore.
- b. **Older Americans Act Reauthorization:** Emily informed the committee that there are no updates on reauthorization of the Older Americans Act at this time.
- c. **Comment: Impact of Ageism in Health Care—due Saturday, March 15, 2025 (Action)**—Emily explained the comment opportunity to the committee. Because the portal to accept comments, the Federal Register, is no longer active due to changes in the White House, Emily provided the committee with the choice whether to dedicate time to fulfilling this comment opportunity, which opened in 2024. The committee decided not to submit comments, since it did not seem like there was still a mechanism for the federal government to accept them.

II. Federal Regulations and Executive Orders

- a. **Executive Order: "Initial Recissions of Harmful Executive Order and Actions" (1/20/25)**—Emily explained the effect of this executive order and how it impacts older adults, especially with respect to voting rights initiatives and changes to Medicare. The committee discussed with no action taken.
- b. **Executive Order: "Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing" (1/20/25)**—Emily explained the effect of this executive order and its impact on the county's work related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The committee discussed with no action taken.

B. State Legislative Issues

I. State Budget & Legislation

- a. **Governor Evers Budget Address—Tuesday, February 18, 2025—** Chair Peters encouraged committee members to watch the Governor's Budget address and prepare for upcoming state budget advocacy. The committee discussed with no action taken.
- b. **Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program changes (Action):** Emily discussed how the changes to the federal regulations of the Older Americans Act impact our state matching grant program, the Alzheimer's

Family Caregiver Support Program. Emily requested the committee's support in advocating for state law changes that remove any means-testing components, including an income limit, so that we can continue to use this state program as a match for federal funds. The committee was supportive of this action.

MOTION: to support changes to the Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program that remove any means-testing requirements.

ACTION: motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Conrad moved, Banda second).

- c. **LRB-1302: Health Care Costs—Health care costs omnibus bill—** Emily provided details about a bill introduced in the state legislature related to provisions related to healthcare costs. The committee discussed and decided not to take action until additional details are provided or it moves forward with a hearing or vote.

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 Advocacy Goals Review

- A. **Review and discuss 2025-2027 Aging Area Plan goals in the Advocacy category—**the committee went through all of the advocacy goals in the current area plan and discussed status updates and plans to accomplish goals in the near- and long-term. For goal three, the committee decided to set its three specific policy proposals to work on for the plan period as:

1. Increase funding for Older Americans Act programs and services and other local government services that support older adults.
2. Increase funding to support Home and Community Based paid caregivers as well as family caregivers to address the caregiver workforce shortage.
3. Support increased funding for transit and paratransit to ensure access to services, supports, employment, and recreation for older adults.

MOTION: to approve the three policy proposals as part of the 2025-2027 Aging Area Plan advocacy goals as listed above.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Banda moved, Conrad second).

VI. 2025 POLICY PRIORITIES DISCUSSION

- A. Review and approve 2025 policy priorities document

The Committee reviewed the 2025 Policy Priorities document and discussed potential changes to the local, state, and federal priorities. They added a local priority related to the AARP Livable Communities initiative and removed several priorities in all categories to create a more streamlined, focused list.

MOTION: to approve the 2025 Policy Priorities document.

ACTION: motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Banda moved, Wilberg second).

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Conrad moved, Banda second).

Meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM. The next Advocacy Committee meeting will be at 9 a.m. on Friday, March 7, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Petersen
Advocacy and Policy Manager

DRAFT