



ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES JUNE 11, 2025

The Milwaukee County Aging Advisory Council convened in-person at the Wilson Park Senior Center, 2601 W. Howard Ave., Milwaukee, WI. Members and attendees also joined virtually and by teleconference.

Members Present

Denise Callaway, *Chair*
Commissioner Mark P. Behar
John Griffith
Eugene Guskowski
Kent Mayfield
Gail D. Morgan
Nancy Simuel
Barbara Wyatt Sibley

Members Excused

Paula Pennebaker, *Vice Chair*
James Kimble
Anne Laatsch

Members Excused continued...

Debra Lewis
Suzanne Ryer
George Schnieder

Staff Present

Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*

Attendees from Public

Roland Dittus Plath
Michelle Droulliard

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Advisory Council Chair, Denise Callaway, called the meeting to order at 3:03p.m. Emily Petersen, Advocacy and Policy Manager took the roll call. A quorum of Council members was present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MAY 14, 2025, ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the May 14, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes

ACTION: Motion prevailed unanimously, (Behar Moved, Simuel Second)

III. OLDER AMERICAN'S ACT ADVOCACY UPDATE

Emily Petersen, AAA Advocacy and Policy Manager, discussed two critical pieces of legislation: the Budget Reconciliation Bill (focused on Medicaid) and

the Appropriations Bill (which outlines the annual budget). The Reconciliation Bill aims to address issues related to tax cuts and federal debt. The House has passed its version of this bill, titled the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," but significant changes are expected in the Senate. These changes could impact Medicaid coverage for approximately 63,000 Wisconsin residents, including older adults who rely on long-term care programs.

The Reconciliation Bill was introduced this year because Congress and the President wanted to tackle tax cuts and the federal debt. On the other hand, the Appropriations Bill, which funds programs under the Older Americans Act, has seen positive developments, such as no cuts to aging services and the establishment of a new agency that combines functions from the Administration for Community Living and the Administration for Children and Families.

Emily encouraged advocacy with federal representatives to support both Medicaid and aging programs. She noted that while the reconciliation bill has an ambitious deadline of July 4, 2025, its passage remains uncertain.

IV. RECRUITMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ms. Petersen provided an update on recruiting members for the Advisory Council, outlining the outreach plan and membership categories. Staff are actively seeking individuals from diverse backgrounds, including service providers, local elected officials, Native American representatives and for Service providers of Nutrition and Wellness programs, Long-term care ombudsman, local elected officials, and the Milwaukee County residents for appointments and the process for approval by the Commission on Aging's executive committee and commission. She summarized the profiles of the 13 candidates on the updated list, most of whom are 60 years or older and meet the criteria under the Older Americans Act.

The Advisory Council aims to expand from 15 to 26 members, with the potential to reach 30 through ex officio appointments. Current members Patricia Dunn and Ann Laatsch may need to step down due to scheduling conflicts. Council members emphasized the importance of demographic representation, noting that the current nominees are mostly women with some racial and ethnic diversity.

There is an ongoing effort to enhance geographic representation, particularly in southern areas like Franklin. New nominees have emerged from municipalities such as Greendale, South Milwaukee, and Whitefish Bay. The Advisory Council is focusing on recruiting an elected official member from a municipal office or mayor who is non-partisan. Advisory Council member Barbara Wyatt Sibley offered to reach out to Brown Deer Village President Wanda Montgomery.

V. UPDATE ON TRANSITION STATUS OF ADVISORY COUNCIL

Ms. Petersen discussed the transition of the Advisory Council, highlighting that

new members with fresh ideas will be joining and that the council will chart a new course. She mentioned that the current social media strategy for the Area Agency on Aging is not as effective as it could be, as staff members are responsible for both creating and posting content. Additionally, Ms. Petersen provided an update on the Advisory Council's schedule, stating that there will be no formal meeting in July 2025, and the first full meeting of the new council will take place in August 2025.

VI. ANNOUNCEMENTS

AAA Director Daniel Idzikowski made two important announcements. First, he noted that today is "World Elder Abuse Awareness Day," and Gail Morgan, an Advisory council member, attended the event, which took place at the McGovern Park Senior Center. The second announcement concerned the Milwaukee County Board hearings for a proposal to establish a new senior center at McGovern Park, which is currently being reviewed by the county board. Yesterday, the proposal received unanimous support from the Parks Committee with a 4-0 vote. It is scheduled to be presented tomorrow to the Committee on Health Equity, Human Needs, and Strategic Planning and will be reviewed by the Finance Committee next week. He encouraged the Advisory Council to attend these hearings.

Commissioner Eugene Guskowski discussed a proposal to lease land to Jewish Family Services for a mixed-use development in a park, which would combine affordable housing and a senior center. He emphasized the financial benefits of reducing the county's burden of maintaining old buildings and the opportunity to better serve seniors. Mr. Guskowski highlighted the need for creative solutions as Milwaukee County's senior population continues to grow, noting that constructing a new senior center alone would cost approximately \$16 million.

Additionally, an announcement was made about the upcoming grand opening celebration of the new Marcia P. Cogg's Health and Human Services Center, scheduled for Friday, June 13, 2025.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn.

ACTION: Motion prevailed unanimously, (Behar Moved, Mayfield Second)

Meeting Adjourned at 4:19 P.M. The next Advisory Council meeting is August 13.

Sincerely,

Vonda Nyang
AAA Executive Assistant