



AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING August 14, 2024

The Milwaukee County Aging Advisory Council convened virtually on Wednesday, August 14, 2024. Members and attendees joined the meeting by video and teleconference.

Members Present:

Commissioner Denise Callaway, *Chair*
Commissioner Mark P. Behar
Commissioner Eugene Guskowski
James Kimble
Sally Lindner
Kent Mayfield
Jim McLaughlin
Gail Morgan
Nancy Simuel
Barbara Wyatt-Sibley

Members Excused:

Commissioner Paula Penebaker
Patricia Dunn
John Griffith
Sandra Janzer
Anne Laatsch
Debrah Lewis
Martin Matson
Suzanne Ryer

Member Excused Cont.

George Schneider

Milwaukee County Staff

Christel Colorado, DHHS
Claire Enders, DHHS
Daniel Idzikowski, DHHS
Kaisa Kerrigan, DHHS
Jill Knight, DHHS
Carrie Koss Vallejo,
DHHS
Emily Petersen, DHHS
Kayla Steinke, DHHS
Vonda Nyang, DHHS
Nina Yang, DHHS

Attendees from the Public

Eric Grosso, DHHS
Zachary Wilks-Metrou

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Denise Callaway called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Director Idzikowski, took the roll call; A quorum was present at the beginning of the meeting.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE JULY 10, 2024, ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Minutes were not reviewed.

III. 2025-2027 AREA AGING PLAN SURVEY OUTREACH UPDATE

AAA Program and Planning Coordinator Carrie Koss Vallejo gave an update on the 2025- 2027 Area Aging Plan survey. She shared how the data will be used for goal creation. There are now 646 survey responses, an increase of about 200 since the last update. She'll review some of the preliminary results today, focusing on trends and the equity of representation among respondents. While this number provides a solid basis for analysis, it's important to note that we still have over 100 additional surveys to analyze. The data presented today is current but not final, so numbers and trends might shift slightly as more responses are processed.

Coordinator Koss Vallejo shared a PowerPoint. In reviewing the survey data, she has found that most respondents view Milwaukee County positively as a place to age, with over 75% rating it as a good place to live, and with 20% saying, it's excellent. Awareness of senior centers and significant challenges with meal preparation were noted, although the results do not yet include input from Meals on Wheels participants. She discussed how important living independently and in their own homes was to respondents with over 90% rating this as extremely important. Questions regarding loneliness and social isolation were analyzed. A majority of respondents say they rarely lack companionship, feel left out, or feel isolated. But it is just as import to focus on the number who say they always feel isolated, always feel left out and always lack companionship. Additionally, while loneliness and social isolation are less common, a notable percentage of respondent's report experiencing depression or anxiety. The data indicates high awareness of heart disease as a leading cause of death. Coordinator Koss Vallejo will continue to analyze the data, but asked the committee members to review the findings and let her know if they have specific questions they need analyzed for goal creation.

Koss Vallejo presented an update on Milwaukee County's demographics based on 2022 data. She shared a short 2-page brief with the committee, based on Eric Grasso, State demographer's work. The county's population has decreased by 12,000 people, but the proportion of older adults is growing. The older adult demographic is becoming more diverse, though it remains predominantly white, with a notable increase in those identifying as multiracial. In 2018, non-white older adults made up about 40% of the population, increasing to just over 45% by 2022. The growth in diversity is largely contributed to a rise in individuals identifying as two or more races. Additionally, the data shows that older adults are more likely to have disabilities compared to the general population and poverty among older adults is increasing despite being lower than for the overall population. The sex distribution in the older adult population aligns with expectations, with a higher proportion of females. Data on the LGBTQ+ community indicates that 4% of Wisconsin residents identify as LGBTQ+, suggesting there is a higher

percentage in Milwaukee County compared to the state average.

Director Daniel Idzikowski observed that while diversity has increased in most groups, the percentage of Black-only individuals among older adults has slightly decreased. He wondered if this is due to more people identifying as multiracial or worsening health disparities. Commissioner Mark Behar suggested that the increase in people identifying as multiracial from 2018 to 2022 might be due to greater awareness of this identity, rather than a real demographic shift. He also criticized the conventional separation of race and ethnicity in demographic data, arguing that these concepts are outdated and should be integrated for clearer representation. Commissioner Gene Guskowski expressed concern about the difficulty in understanding the geographic distribution of survey respondents and the challenges in aligning services with specific municipal needs. He proposed that a more detailed analysis of geographic and demographic feedback could help address these issues. Idzikowski questioned whether there is data on the impact of COVID-19 on the demographics of older adults between 2018 and 2022.

Carrie Koss Vallejo announced that the final area plan will integrate all the data and themes from the various reports into a cohesive document, rather than presenting them as separate appendices. She highlighted that the community feedback report, which summarizes public input from listening sessions and focus groups, will be included in the plan and is crucial for understanding the needs and experiences of older adults in Milwaukee County. Key themes from the feedback include concerns about isolation and loneliness, the need for better caregiver support, and issues with transportation, safety, and access to healthcare, all of which will be addressed in the final plan.

IV. 2025-2027 AREA AGING NETWORK GOALS

Director Idzikowski provided an update on the 2022-24 Area Aging Plan, Aging Network Goals listed under the broader network strategies of Health Equity, Communication and Collaboration, and Dimensions of Wellness. Idzikowski asked the Advisory Council whether they would like to again include specific goals under these broad categories in the 2025-27 Aging Plan, or if these categories should only be defined without specific goals. Chair Calloway asked for clarification on how the current goals were developed and whether they were intended to remain until they are more fully achieved. She asked for a brief explanation for those who were not involved in the previous Area Plan.

Commissioner Guskowski emphasized the importance of having a clear and simple "elevator speech" for the Aging Network goals, focusing on health equity, coordination, communication, and dimensions of wellness. He suggested updating the previous simple statement to reflect current information but stressed the need for a straightforward approach.

Commissioner Behar agreed with Commissioner Guskowski's approach and noted that the goals seemed specific enough to address. He raised a concern about the status and progress of the goals from 2022-2024. Behar proposed evaluating these goals alongside potentially adding new ones to ensure a comprehensive focus.

Director Idzikowski summarized the discussion by noting three key points the Council requested: 1) There is interest in setting specific goals under each area, 2) These goals should be simplified, potentially reducing their number, and 3) Some existing goals should be continued and refined rather than creating entirely new ones. He offered to provide updates on each goal and discuss them further with the Council. Behar requested a written summary highlighting the progress made on each goal, including what has been accomplished and what may need to be changed or modified. Barbara Wyatt Sibley agreed with Behar's request and asked for clarification on whether the goals discussed are considered fully accomplished or still ongoing.

Chair Callaway suggested that goal setting should be done by different committees based on their areas of focus, such as addressing emerging public health issues like social isolation. Idzikowski emphasized the need for committees to decide on specific issues and encouraged input from community experts and organizations. Member Jim McLaughlin from the United Way highlighted the importance of community centers and hubs, like senior centers, in the infrastructure for serving older adults. He emphasized that while he couldn't specify priorities without more data, the United Way values community involvement and volunteerism, particularly among older adults. He supported Chair Callaway's point about addressing loneliness and isolation as public health issues and noted that the United Way aims to offer older adults meaningful opportunities to contribute to and connect with their communities.

Mark P Behar emphasized the need for more detailed information to effectively move forward. He requested a comprehensive report from Carrie and a written narrative, along with Dan's status update on each goal, to review before making any decisions. Behar suggested that committees use this information to decide if goals need updating or if additional focus is required. He stressed the importance of having this information in written form for better analysis and planning. Chair Callaway clarified that the Advisory Council's role is to set broad goals, not to delve into specific issues like social isolation within those goals. She indicated that detailed goal setting would be the responsibility of specialized groups and committees of the Commission. Idzikowski confirmed this approach and explained that the current plan includes broader goals for the aging network, which was a new approach adopted in the previous plan cycle. He asked if the Council wanted to continue with these overarching goals or simplify to focus only on specific areas. Chair Callaway outlined several options for moving forward with the goals: could either keep the current goals

unchanged if they remain relevant, update the goals from three years ago based on new insights, or use the enhanced definitions provided as a sufficient guide instead of setting new goals. She emphasized the need to decide among these alternatives to determine the best course of action. Idzikowski will provide a written report on the goals, and the focus will shift to having other goal-setting committees reflect these broad topics in their own goals. Essentially, they will maintain the overarching themes but eliminate the specific sub-goals under the broad aging network categories.

V. AREA AGING PLAN TIMELINE

Director Idzikowski provided an update on the plan's timeline and next steps. DHS Office on Aging informed the AAA that we have additional flexibility to submit the final plan by the end of the year, since they do not plan on reviewing it until after the New Year. We are now updating data and preparing goal worksheets for various committees. These worksheets will detail service areas, existing goals, progress, and suggested new goals. Committees will use these worksheets to set specific goals for the 2025-2027 cycle.

Idzikowski encouraged Council members to attend the Aging Network Summit, which will serve as an additional forum to gather broader input on needs in the Aging community from the perspective of service agencies. The Summit will be held at the Zoofari Conference Center, on September 13th from 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The initial goals will be reviewed by the Aging Advisory Council in September and, if approved, will be advanced to the Commission on Aging on September 27th. Public hearings on the goals will be held in October and feedback will be presented to the October Advisory council meeting for any revisions. The final plan with the rest of the sections will be presented for approval by the Commission on Aging and County Board of Supervisors by mid-November.

VI. NEXT STEPS & MEETING SCHEDULE

Chair Callaway acknowledged the updated timeline and encouraged feedback or questions about it. She noted that the next steps involve reviewing and providing input on the goals as they are developed. The September 11th meeting will focus on reviewing materials, suggesting changes, and addressing any questions. Chair Callaway concluded by asking if there were any announcements or further thoughts before moving on to the next items on the agenda.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Director Idzikowski asked the council to mark their calendars for the Aging Network Summit, September 13th. Chair Callaway reminded everyone about the opportunities to provide public comment on the proposed 2025 Milwaukee

County budget at two upcoming events: tonight, at Kosciuszko Community Center and tomorrow at Greenfield Public Library, both from 6 to 9 PM.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn.

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

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:39 P.M.

The next Aging Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Christel Colorado
Executive Assistant