



**Aging and Disability Resource Center  
(ADRC) Governing Board Meeting  
May 16, 2023**

The **Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) Governing Board** members convened virtually on Tuesday, May 16, 2023. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and conference call options.

**Board Members Present**

Rachael Bush, Vice-Chair  
Colleen Galambos, Ph.D., DSW  
Barbara Jones  
Debra Jupka  
Tracie Horton  
David Lillich, MD  
Brennan O'Connell  
Cindi Pichler  
Harvey Ross  
Levi Stein

**Milwaukee County Staff:**

Tina Anderson, DHHS  
Davia Fenton, DHHS  
Cleopatra Castaneda, DHHS  
Carrie Lausterer, DHHS  
Dan Idzikowski, DHHS  
Catherine Moe, DHHS

**Attendees from the Public**

Ramona Dicks-Williams  
Sara Truse

**Board Members Excused**

Kent Mayfield  
Kiran Sagar, MD

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice-Chair Rachael Bush called the meeting to order at 9:42a.m. Davia Fenton, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Administrative Assistant took roll call and addressed the duplicate meeting invitation issue to the board. Deleted meetings notifications were sent to the board from Vonda Nyang via email. Those notifications had to be accepted to be removed from their calendars and eliminate duplicate invitations. Fenton also explained that meeting invitations should only be accepted by her and that valid meeting invitations will always include links and attachments for meeting materials.

Jupka announced that she will be removing herself from the board as of December 31, 2023. She will, however, be available for contact and for reaching out to various school districts.

Fenton mentioned the following upcoming events that had invitations included in the digital meeting materials:

The ADRC Month Celebration Event  
Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup> 2023  
From 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Washington Park Senior Center  
4420 W. Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208

And

Free Memory Screening Event  
Monday, June 12<sup>th</sup> 2023  
From 12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
Wilson Senior Center  
2601 W Howard Ave. Milwaukee WI, 53221  
To Book an Appointment: Call Shannon at (414) 282-5566

## **II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE APRIL 18, 2023, AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER'S MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve April 18, 2023, Aging and Disability Resource Center's meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Jupka Moved, Lillich Second.)

## **III. County Executive Office, Schinika Fitch, Director of Community Relations:**

Fitch began her executive update by welcoming new board member, Barbara Jones. She continued and stated that the Wisconsin State Assembly Committee and local government passed significant legislation enabling Milwaukee County to enact a local option sales tax to address these unique financial challenges and avoid a fiscal cliff in just a few short years. Since the local government reform proposal was unveiled in late April, lawmakers on all sides continue to work towards a final deal that meets the needs of every community across the state of Wisconsin.

The historic proposal promises to be the largest increase in aid for local governments in a generation, providing a long-term solution for Milwaukee counties pension burdens and increased resources for critical services including critical needs along the entire public safety continuum.

Also last week, County Executive Crawley announced that after consulting with public health experts Milwaukee County has decided to end the vaccine mandate and masking requirements and all settings. The policy change comes after the

federal government announced that the COVID-19 public health emergency would end on Thursday, May 11th.

On May 8th, the County Executive joined the Milwaukee Mental Health Task Force for a frontline perspective about the urgent need to increase access to mental health and substance abuse disorder services. County of executive has made improving and expanding access to public health resources of top priority of his administration, including overseeing Milwaukee County shift to a cost-effective community-based model of care.

This concluded her executive update, and the board had no questions or comments.

#### **IV. ADRC Board In-Service, Transportation Presentation; Elena De Grado Transportation Coordinator (DHHS/ADS/AAA);**

DeGrado's presentation was in response to last year's report. She also intended to discuss how the department currently assesses barriers to transportation and how those will be addressed. Her presentation also identified transportation assets within the county to determine how those assets are serving the county's aging and disabilities populations.

She began with an explanation of her role as Transportation Coordinator, which was created in 2021 to fulfill multiple areas of work within the transportation field, specifically mobility management. Mobility management is a technical transportation term which means connecting the public to the transportation services they need.

Mobility management is conducted through outreach in the community, client referrals, and ADRC professionals.

DeGrado also acts as a contract coordinator for three different transportation contracts within aging services. This includes older adult transportation service, a volunteer driver program, and a culturally responsive transportation program run through United Community Center.

She continued that her role helps to promote coordination and collaboration across the county departments and divisions on transportation programming and policy. This includes working with the Department of Transportation, the divisions within Department of Health and Human Services, and throughout the county as a liaison between non-profits that have transportation options and surrounding counties.

DeGrado also participates on regional and statewide transportation policy groups, including Wisconsin Area Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers, the Wisconsin Non-Driver Advisory Committee which is run at a statewide level through

the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the non-emergency medical Transportation, Technical Advisory Committee, and the governor's Committee for Persons with Disabilities which has a task force specifically for transportation. These groups work within their niches of transportation to advocate for the needs of the older adult and people with disabilities community when it comes to transportation.

Milwaukee County is unique in that it has a plethora of transportation resources publicly available for the community including those through the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS), which is both the fixed route bus system, paratransit, and WisGo Reduced Fare Card.

The most recent data from 2021 reports that the fixed route system has 300 buses and approximately 50 routes that run throughout the county with a concentration on the urbanized region. DeGrado reported that there is a great concern for our transit system with the impending fiscal cliff that presents a crisis of inadequate funding which cannot continue to support the service at its current rate.

Despite those issues, MCTS it is a well-developed transit service that has undergone significant planning process over the last few years focusing on high frequency routes. Most recently transitioning over to an entirely new payment system known as UMO, which is an app that you can download to schedule a ride book a ride, pay for the ride itself, and validate the transaction when the passenger boards the bus.

A ride costs \$2.00 and a fare capping mechanism was instituted this year for frequent riders. The more you ride, the more you save capping daily fares up \$4 and weekly fares at \$19.50.

Regarding accessibility features through MCTS, there are Travel Trainers available through MCTS whose role it is to help people with disabilities and older adults become comfortable using fixed route transit. They will help them use the transit system by learning how to board the bus, make transfers, and read route schedules.

DeGrado also informed the board of IRA, a free interactive smartphone app that allows users who are blind or with low vision receive free one-on-one assistance using MCTS. By accessing this app, the individual can better orient themselves by receiving real-time guidance to the entrance on buildings they have travelled to

The buses are also equipped with accessibility features including priority seating ramps and hydraulics that can lower the buses for wheelchairs and other mobility devices, which are then secured. Audio announcements and the allowance for PCA's and service animals to accompany a passenger are also available.

Transit Plus is the federally mandated ADA paratransit accessible van (or in some cases taxi car service) for those in the community who are not able to use a fixed route bus system. It provides transportation throughout Milwaukee County.

DeGrado is proud of the fact that this service goes above and beyond the federal mandate for paratransit. The mandate stipulates that it must be supplied within a three-quarter mile buffer of a fixed route service, and some years ago, Milwaukee County decided to apply paratransit throughout the entire county which opens accessibility for riders considerably. This service is provided through private transportation providers First Transit, Transit Express, and American United taxi service.

The Transportation department offers a new reduced fare card for fixed route buses throughout Milwaukee County called WisGo. This offering combines the previous reduced fare card with the previous Go Pass to implement the new payment system. This WisGo reduced fare card is available for those aged 65 and older, ages 6 through 11, currently covered under Medicare or riders with a qualifying physical or mental impairment. The fare for these riders has been reduced from \$2.00 to \$1.00 ride with fare daily fare capping still in place at \$2.00 and weekly fares at \$11.00

DeGrado oversees the older adult transportation service for residents aged 60 or older who reside in Milwaukee County but are not enrolled in a long-term care program that offers transportation. The service provides accessible vans to specific destinations like grocery stores, senior centers, and healthcare facilities in the county. Last year approximately 38,000 rides were provided, and the service is on track to provide about 40,000 this year. All rides are \$4 each way for a health care related ride, and a voluntary contribution of \$4 per ride for the other destinations are also requested.

There is also a volunteer driver program funded through the Older Americans Act. for folks 60 year older. They ride with volunteers within the community to take care of basic needs destinations like banks, pharmacies, grocery shopping and healthcare. These rides must be scheduled seven days in advance.

Veyo/TM is the statewide broker for smaller transportation providers across the entire state to provide healthcare related transportation for those enrolled in Medicaid or Badger Care Plus.

DAV (Disabled American Veterans) provides a volunteer van driver to get people to the VA which is very specific kind of niche transportation service. An individual enrolled in a long-term care program can have their managed care organization work to include a transportation benefit within their plan with a private transportation provider. Those options vary depending on the persons' level of need and which organization they are enrolled in.

Other transportation options include NEMT (the non-emergency medical transportation, other private providers in the county, traditional taxis and ride share.

To assess the barriers, the department researched data utilizing surveys and conversation. The data shows that transit needs encompass a combination of four factors including populations of older adults aged 75 and older, those who are low income, those with disabilities, and households without a vehicle.

DeGrados' presentation included a map which indicated higher percentages of those populations within the urban areas of the city proper. There are also several suburban locations that have higher percentages of individuals with transit need.

This feedback helped the department better understand the unmet transportation needs and gaps in services for older adults and people with disabilities and served to expand on some existing plans that had limited interaction with the community.

The survey results were from people who used several types of available services, and most people responded that they got rides from friends and family followed by the MCTS buses and then followed by paratransit and older adult transportation service.

The results indicate that transportation insecurity exists within the county regarding the inability to reach destinations outside the service area of the selected transportation option. In a poll, 54% of participants said sometimes and 18% of folks saying often. Other summaries noted problems with transportation causing lateness to very important (and often difficult to obtain) appointments, interruption of their plans, and palpable contribution to an increased stress level.

Another poll indicating the top five transportation issues faced by older adults and people with disabilities are as follows:

- 1- Service hours are limited (82%)
- 2- Options for traveling outside the Milwaukee County border are limited (80%)
- 3- Rides are required to be scheduled too far in advance and are not on-demand (78%)
- 4- Real-time tracking for on-demand services is limited (76%)
- 5- Wait times are long (75%)

Although there is a wealth of transportation assets in the county, the transportation department still recognizes the needs of its community.



DeGrado explained that this data coming directly from the community provides proof that these needs are real and assist greatly to find grants or other funding to make improvements to transportation services. This is how the department wants to expand process in the community.

To address barriers, DeGrado proposed an expansion of awareness and education about services that exist while clarifying the perceptions and realities of accessibility.

For example, the transportation department continues to seek collaborations with neighboring counties through the Wisconsin Association of Mobility (WAM) by connecting with their managers. They work together to coordinate transportation and pursue grants to fund cross-county transportation. A provision has also been included in the older adult transportation service to provide transportation outside of the county within a five-and-a-half-mile radius. This addresses some client's issue regarding their inability to travel to the suburbs to visit relocated healthcare providers, but not all. DeGrado recognizes this as a systemic issue and reports that the department realizes this can be an expensive option and continues making realistic efforts to expand the solution.

The Same Day Taxi Task Force is part of the paratransit service that the department is participating in. It is currently being re-envisioned to determine what an on-demand taxi service may look like for populations with disabilities.

Andy Bethke, Outreach Social Worker, connected DeGrado with Wisconsin DHS to provide feedback as they create a resource services directory to be used by ADRC professionals and their clients.

The department is also advocating more funding for fixed route and specialized transportation funding at both the local and state level by writing to representatives. The correspondence expresses the importance of continued support options for community members, conducting outreach and engagement in the community to educate about available options, and improving coordination among providers for client referrals.

Jupka questioned how information about services is being disseminated to those who need them. DeGrado further explained about outreach efforts.

Stein mentioned some transportation challenges faced by members of the Friendship Circle and suggested the possibility of implementing a government recognized rating system that would act as incentive for existing transportation vendors to improve services.

Stein then questioned the validity of a claim made at a previous Friendship Circle meeting by the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) secretary that transportation was allotted \$10 million dollars and some of those funds could

be used for ridesharing programs like Uber as a possible alternative means of transportation for the disabled population. DeGrado has no knowledge of this funding and could not confirm the validity of that claim and will investigate it. She commented that entities like Uber are not regulated by ADA because they are considered a technology company that hires independent drivers and not a transportation provider. Additionally, those independent drivers are not mandated to comply with ADA which poses a real problem, and a great deal of advocacy surrounds the issue.

DeGrado reported that the Wisconsin Policy Forum just published a transit report to determine the state of transit in Milwaukee County. The comparative analysis included our peer cities and indicated that Milwaukee ranks second and third out of ten for service efficiency and efficacy.

DeGrado continued that the threat of potential funding cuts to the transit system looms while trying to build up ridership post-pandemic.

Stein invited DeGrado to give her presentation at the Friendship Circle later. Galambos offered her thanks to DeGrado for such an informative presentation and echoed the concerns around consistency of care for Milwaukee County residents who have healthcare providers that relocated to the suburbs. She mentioned that several programs require downloading application which may be problematic for those who are not technologically savvy and inquired of training for them. DeGrado replied that the original payment options are still available, and the application was merely an enhancement of the existing service. The mobility managers also offer application training to those who need it.

Pichler expressed concerns about the real human cost of inefficiencies in transportation. She said she had several recent assessments where she was asked to come up with transportation options for people that initially had to wait four to six months to get an appointment with a specialist but arrived late to the appointment because of the transportation provider and were forced to reschedule the appointment and wait another four to six months to be seen. For someone with significant health problems, that can be a potentially lethal transportation barrier.

Pichler continued stating there are a litany of reasons why people cannot use public transportation, most of which are life threatening issues. She suggested inquiring of long-term care providers who have done accessibility assessments for people who need transportation modifications and cannot use public transportation. The assessment results can be used to justify funding.

Ross mentioned that technology is great, but it has the potential to remove human interaction and accountability. DeGrado agreed, and regarding transportation said two reasons for the implementation of the app was to improve boarding times and keeping bus routes on time.



- a) **(June Mtg)** Jupka explained that Tracy Wozniak will be attending our next our next meeting. She oversees the Transition Coordinators in Milwaukee Public Schools for students, as well as numerous other programs. Jupka encouraged the board to prepare specific questions they would want her to address during her presentation.

## **V. Update on ADRC Governing Board Membership: Tracie Horton**

Horton welcomed Barbara Jones as the newest member of the ADRC Governing Board.

Currently, Ramona Dicks-Williams has been invited to attend the board meetings. She's currently in the pipeline having completed her interviews with Tracie and Tina Anderson and will be conversing with Shanika Finch about board appointments soon.

Amanda Laurila is interested in becoming an ADRC. Unfortunately, governing board members must be a Milwaukee County resident. And while Amanda works in Milwaukee County at Marquette University as a crisis officer, she does not live in Milwaukee County. Amanda wants to be involved and has a passion for supporting our aging population so she will attend these meetings when time permits and look for opportunities to assist on some of our subcommittees. Horton will share some of the community outreach events with Amanda to partake in various opportunities.

The governing board has 17 positions and currently has 13 members. Regarding representation, most board members are under aging, so there is a need for disability representatives. Galambos commented that there is often an overlap of interests between the disability and aging populations. Jupka agreed and said the issues are generally looked at through two lenses, aging and disability, by each board member.

An updated roster will be sent to the board.

## **VI. ADRC Governing Board Roles and Duties**

**a) Action Item: 2022/2023 ADRC Listening Sessions Report - Follow-up Work,** Debra Jupka, Co-Chair; Rachael Bush, Co-Chair) of the Listening Sessions subcommittee

- i. Jupka reported the next Milwaukee Community Conversation is May 18<sup>th</sup> at North Division High School.
- ii. Jupka, Bush, Anderson and Schmitt met with Green Onion, the new scribes contracted to complete the Listening Sessions report. Jupka said she was impressed and thought they will be very efficient.

The current focus of the subcommittee in May is to set and meet deadlines regarding the listening session dates and locations.

Jupka reported having beneficial conversations with subcommittee members Mayfield and Lillich and have accomplished a great deal in creating listening sessions that will be appropriate for specific groups in the community (healthcare and older adults). She also invited new board member, Barbara Jones to attend.

**b) Discussion Item: 2023 Timeline Update**, Debra Jupka, Co-Chair  
April and May Updates consisted of:

- Lillich will concentrate on medical community outreach for healthcare
- Jupka following up the three sessions from 2022 and create a new session with Transitional Services
- Mayfield will concentrate on creating a listening session specifically for the senior population.

Jupka encouraged the board to use the timeline as a “to-do” list between sub-committee meetings.

**c) Chair Reports:** TBD, Chair

- i. Chair Report & Elections – No report; Elections pending. Dates are being considered for a more informal meeting to discuss. Chair description will be sent out to the board.

Lillich stated the importance of meeting in person to connect and increase the cohesiveness of the members. He also mentioned that previous Chair was convinced to fill the position once discussions were had that clarified expectations.

**VII. ADRC Reports / Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disabilities Services (DHHS/ADS):** DHHS/ADS Director, Tina Anderson;

- i. **ADRC Dashboard Report:** Anderson reviewed the March 2023 ADRC Dashboard report. Covered in the report were the following topics: The quality and volume measures for Information and Assistance (I & A) call wait times, the number of incoming calls, customer satisfaction survey scores, complaints, and staffing reports with the board.

I & A call answer times have steadily decreased since January 2023. In April callers had to wait under 3minutes to contact a specialist.

Brennan questioned what the cause of the significant improvements was. Anderson replied that a change in leadership in the ADRC and I & A is the main reason. The new leadership fostered a fresh approach to the department overall and the No Wrong Door policy encouraged staff to learn new tools and utilize the tools they had more efficiently.

Currently, there is one Advanced position open in the I & A Department and three Options Counselor positions open due to internal promotions. The county board approved the addition of eight positions in the ADRC which includes supervisory roles for continued staff support.

- ii. **Outreach Report:** Board members should have access to the ADRC events calendar and were encouraged to sign up to participate in them.

Anderson specifically mentioned the May 25<sup>th</sup> ADRC Month Celebration event at Washington Park senior center for noon to 4pm.

Schmitt reported that May is Older Americans month as well as ADRC Recognition month which calls for several big events and projects. There will be celebrations and activities at all five of Milwaukee County senior centers for National Senior Health and Fitness Day.

The County Executive will be joining the ADRC at McGovern Park Senior Center later in June.

She continued that the ADRC IS is partnering with Adult Protective Services (APS) for world Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

Schmitt also offered special thanks to ADRC Governing Board Vice-Chair, Rachael Bush for her leadership as a member of the planning committee for the Aging Network Summit.

For more information, see the report titled "Dashboard April 2023".

- iii. **State Update:** Anderson offered comments on the meeting with the state the day before. APS hired a supervisor to improve efficiencies going forward. All calls are being filtered going into APS.

## VIII. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGING AND DISABILITIES SERVICES (DHHS/ADS), Tina Anderson on behalf of Marietta Luster, DHHS/ADS ADMINISTRATOR:

- a) **ADRC and APS Update:** The Combined Community Services Board invited the ADRC Governing Board to attend their next virtual meeting on May 31<sup>st</sup> at 11:50 p.m. to hear a State Representative address the

privatization of Family Care. The administrator for that meeting will forward calendar invitations to all board members.

- b) **Technology Report Update:** No current update

## IX. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

- a) **Department Of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Budget Update,** Matt Fortman, DHHS Chief Financial Officer (CFO). 2.0

No current update.

- b) **Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disabilities Services, Area Agency on Aging, (DHHS/ADS/AAA)** Daniel Idzikowski, Area Agency on Aging Director

Idzikowski reported an update on the Technology report. Stating that the ADS, collectively presented to the senior leadership team and was authorized to move forward on an upgrade of the current case management software technology within ADS, particularly including the ADRC to upgrade from what is now the Midas system which is owned by My Choice Family Care.

He continued that the county system presently utilized by BHS is being implemented at Children, Youth and Family Services and is scheduled to be implemented in ADS also. Idzikowski stated this important development will assist ADS with all aspects of improving referrals, communication, and the efficiency of Information & Assistance staff. He identified Netsmart as the new platform expected to be rolled out over the next year.

Idzikowski invited the board to share in another advocacy opportunity on May 24th, from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the Washington Park Senior Center. The Milwaukee County Commission on Aging and its advocacy committee have invited the county supervisors, state representative's offices, and the City of Milwaukee alder people to gather for a discussion about aging priorities and other issues of concern to older adults in Milwaukee County.

He continued that policymakers have responded positively to the event and reiterated his invitation to the members of the ADRC Governing Board to join in that opportunity to have dialogue with legislators about the needs of older adults and people with disabilities in our community. He stresses the importance of reporting to the legislators what the county is doing, and

where the county needs assistance from our legislative branch in terms of funding, policy, relationship building.

Idzikowski mentioned that he would be sure to have advocacy and policy manager, Emily Peterson present at the event in his stead since his role has been to give advocacy updates.

He invited the board to honor Older Americans month by attending County Board Day on Thursday, May 25th at 9:30 a.m.

Lastly, since the executive committee meeting has not yet taken place to announce a change to its next meeting, Idzikowski unofficially reported that the next Commission on Aging meeting is going to be moved to Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**X. ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 11:33AM (Jupka/Jones)

The next ADRC Governing Board virtual meeting will be Tuesday, June 20, 2023, at 9:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Davia Fenton  
Administrative Assistant  
Aging and Disability Resource Center