



## **Commission on Aging Meeting Minutes June 2, 2023**

The **Commission on Aging** (COA) convened virtually on Friday, June 2, 2023. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting by video conference and conference call options.

### **Commissioners Present:**

Janice Wilberg, Ph.D., *Chair*  
Amber Miller, *Vice-Chair*  
Elliott Moeser, Ph.D., *Legislative Officer*  
Terrence R. Moore, Sr, *Secretary*  
Eugene Guskowski  
Gloria Miller  
Paula Pennebaker  
Supervisor Sequanna Taylor  
Cindy Van Vreede

### **Commissioners Excused**

Denise Callaway  
Jon Gaines  
John Griffith  
Sandra "Sandy" Pasch  
Cherie Swenson

### **Milwaukee County Staff:**

Schinika Fitch, *County Executive's Office*  
Shakita LaGrant, *DHHS*  
Daniel Idzikowski, *DHHS*  
Tina Anderson, *DHHS*

### **Milwaukee County Staff:**

Andrew Bethke, *DHHS*  
Alena DeGrado, *DHHS*  
Matt Fortman, *DHHS*  
Debra Horton, *DHHS*  
Carolyn Humphrey, *DHHS*  
Jill Knight, *DHHS*  
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*  
Clare O'Brien, *DHHS*  
Emily Petersen, *DHHS*  
Mary Proctor-Brown, *DHHS*  
Gaylyn Reske, *DHHS*  
Bekki Schmitt, *DHHS*  
Kayla Steinke, *DHHS*  
Carrie Koss Vallejo, *DHHS*

### **Attendees from the Public**

Thomas Gossett, Goodwill  
Al Hill, *CFI*  
Laura Langer, *WI-DHS*  
Cathy Wood, *SOA*  
David Lillich, *ADRC Bd.*

## **MINUTES**

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

Chair Janice Wilberg called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m., and Secretary Terrance Moore took roll. A quorum of Commissioners was present.

### **II. REMARKS UPDATE ON THE AGING UNIT AND THE INTERGRATION WITH DHHS, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHAKITA LAGRANT-MCCLAIN**

Director LaGrant-McClain had several speaking opportunities in May to speak about Older Americans Month at the Aging Summit, the County Board meeting, and ADRC recognitions. She referenced the themes of Older Americans' Month from previous years to date, which in 2023 is about "Aging Unbound." She and her staff are committed to addressing and breaking down stereotypes that restrict employment, education, and social engagement for seniors.

She talked about her and her staff's commitment to the mission, values, and work and their accountability. She briefly spoke about a recent County meeting that discussed having Age-Friendly Communities. Director LaGrant-McClain provided a few highlights on some of the successes and celebrations DHHS has accomplished since the integration with Aging 2022-2023, shown in the DHHS Annual report. Other talking points were racial equity, infrastructure support, and DHHS Strategies. Below are a few highlighted DHHS successes:

- The dine-out program reached over 10,000 residents and 1,000 new referrals.
- Financial Navigator Program
- Caregiver programs
- Adult Protective Services
- 35,000 OATS Rides in 2022
- Evidence-Based Programs for Older Adults (293-attendance 2022)
- Forty thousand residents received vaccinations in 2022.
- No Wrong Door initiative
- Population Health

### **III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 24, 2023, COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting minutes are laid over until the June 23, 2023, meeting.

### **IV. COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE REPORT: SCHINIKA FITCH, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

Director Fitch reported on the following upcoming events:

- **New Behavioral Health Access Clinic:** Today at 1:30 p.m., is the Grand opening of the new Behavioral Health Access Clinic which is in the Milwaukee Health Services MLK Clinic Building.
- **"Coffee with Crowley" series:** Tomorrow morning, Saturday, June 3, 2023, at 10 a.m., is "Coffee with Crowley", which will take place at the Oak Creek Farmers Market.
- **Pride "Month" Week:** The County Board adopted a resolution last month to display intersex flags at all County buildings and locations to recognize pride week throughout the month of June. Also, on Sunday, June 2, 2023, the County

Executive and staff, County Supervisors, and DENI Councils will participate in the Pride Parade starting at 2 p.m.

- **The New WisGo Fare (Umo Mobility app) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Systems:** Milwaukee County has a new fare system called WisGo, which uses an app titled “Umo Mobility”, and the County now has hybrid buses that use electric and clean diesel, which provides high-frequency transportation and a cleaner environment. WisGo is providing free bus fare for everyone on their new transit system app called “Umo Mobility” from now **until September 30, 2023**.
- On May 23, 2023, the County Executive testified before the Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection about the importance of creating a local revenue stream and reform for Milwaukee County to avoid a fiscal cliff. Also, the importance of the State’s partnership with this issue.
- **Mental Health Awareness Month:** Last month, County Executive Crowley was in DC discussing policy priorities on mental health and behavioral health as he is a member of the National Association of Counties, Commission on Mental Health, and Well-being. This Commission released new research highlighting the County’s perspective on this national crisis which was part of mental health awareness month’s efforts.
- **National Second Chance Month/April:** On April 25 through April 28, 2023, Milwaukee County’s Community Reintegration Center (Aka House of Correction) held its first reentry resource fair in partnership with the Milwaukee Bucks’ There were over 280 residents that participated. The fair had informational summits (expungements and pardons) led by Supervisor Sequanna Taylor, vendors discussing job skills, rebuilding resumes, etc.
- **Healthy County Challenge:** Last weekend was the kickoff of the “Health County Challenge”. It was held at the Lakefront’s Kite Festival. There was a walk around Veteran’s Park. There will be several opportunities to participate in the challenge throughout the summer. The next challenge will be at Zablocki Park for golf and foot golf on June 10, 2023, from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m.

## V. COMMITTEE AND COUNCIL REPORTS

Chair of the Advisory Council Denise Callaway was not in attendance. Chair Wilberg informed the Commission that the Advisory Council’s next meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2023, at 3 p.m. They will discuss Cardiovascular Health and Social Isolation, Loneliness, and Mental Health.

Elliot Moeser, Chair of the Advocacy Committee thanked the Commission for their attendance and participation at the WAAN Advocacy Day and the Commission on Aging’s Policy Makers gathering. There was great attendance at both events. The

Chair announced their next meeting is scheduled for next week Monday, June 5, 2023, at 3 p.m. He welcomed everyone to attend.

Chair of the Senior Center Committee, Eugene Guskowski informed the Commission of the next steps that are being taken to form the Senior Center Committee. He is in the process of recruiting members. Currently, Commissioners Terrence Moore, Amber Miller, and Cherie Swenson have stated they are joining the Committee. They need to figure out a strategic plan to implement the 2023 Milwaukee Hubs report.

Chair of the Wellness Committee, Gloria Miller, reported that the Wellness Committee's focus has been and continues to be on strategies to increase engagement among communities of color. This year some of the ARPA Title IIID funding will be used for a marketing campaign. The Committee is looking to hire an influencer marketing firm. She spoke about outreach to communities of color and finding sponsors.

Chair of the Service Delivery Committee, Amber Miller, didn't have anything to report.

## **VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda consists of the following meeting minutes:

- Executive Committee meeting minutes for April 3, 2023
- Advocacy Committee meeting minutes for April 3, 2023
- Nutrition Council meeting minutes (January 24, 2023)
- Wellness Committee meeting minutes (March 15, 2023)

**MOTION:** To Approve the consent agenda meeting minutes.

**ACTION:** Prevails unanimously (Moore, Guskowski Second).

## **VII. ACTION/INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a) **MCTS Save the Bus Campaign**, Chair of the Advocacy Committee and Legislative Officer Elliot Moeser: The Advocacy Committee and DHHS/ADS/Aging Staff members: Alena DeGrado, Transportation Coordinator, and Emily Peterson, Advocacy and Policy Manager, drafted five letters to send to local, state, and federal legislators supporting the "Save the Bus" campaign. The Advocacy Committee recommends that the Commission join the Advocacy Committee in endorsing the campaign. The sending of the letters is pending the Commission's approval and possible action. The Chair Wilberg and Legislative Officer Elliot Moeser will sign the letters.

**MOTION:** To approve and endorse the MCTS "Save the Bus" campaign by sending support letters to local, state, and federal legislators.

**ACTION:** Prevails unanimously (Moeser, Moore Second).

- b) Federal Debt Ceiling**, Chair of the Advocacy Committee and Legislative Officer Elliott Moeser: Because the Advocacy Committee will meet on Monday after today's COA meeting and due to the urgency of the Federal Debt Ceiling and time constraint to send correspondence to legislators, Chair Moeser is asking the Commission for its support at today's meeting if the Advocacy takes action on sending a letter to legislators thanking them for their support with senior issues (Examples: Pension, Medicare/Medicaid,) and for their support with keeping the nation whole concerning the Federal Debt Ceiling.

**MOTION:** For the Commission on Aging to support the Advocacy Committee's response to the Federal Debt Ceiling.

**ACTION:** Prevails unanimously (Moeser, Guskowski Second).

Commissioner Moore asked for lucidity on the Advocacy's support regarding the Federal Debt Ceiling. Is the Advocacy Committee only supporting one part of the Federal Debt Ceiling and not both, in which the other would be the student loan forgiveness? Chair Moser affirmed that Advocacy Committee focuses only on items that positively impact seniors.

Chair Wilberg asked for a roll call vote:

**Roll Call Vote:** Van Vreede (Yes), Pennebaker (Yes), Guskowski (Yes), G. Miller (Yes), Moeser (Yes), Moore (Yes), A. Miller (Yes), Wilberg (Yes).

Chair Wilberg concluded that she doesn't condone giving support before a Committee or Council has met and decided on final actions.

- c) Volunteer Time Tracking Project for Commissioners, and Request for Proposal RFP Update, Milwaukee County Area Agency on Aging Program and Planning Coordinator, Carrie Koss Vallejo:** Currently, the AAA is piloting a project to track the Commissioner's work with Milwaukee County to acknowledge the value of time spent working for the AAA on behalf of older adults. Koss Vallejo is emailing an Excel spreadsheet to each Commissioner to fill out for the fiscal year, which is from October 2022 – September 2023 on how much time they have spent working on any projects that involve the AAA (All Commission meetings and their sub-committees and Councils, phone calls, projects, etc.). Executive Assistant Vonda Nyang has entered their time for their Commission meetings. Koss Vallejo would like the Commission to review the time entered in the spreadsheet so she can record their time. Koss Vallejo will send a new spreadsheet to Commissioners every quarter in a continuous process.

Presently, there are two open Requests for Proposals (RFPs): The Telephone Reassurance Program, currently operated by Vital Voices, and the Multiple Site Meal Coordination Project, currently operated by Milwaukee Christian Center.

- d) **Follow Up on Livable Communities**, Chair Janice Wilberg. Last week, Chair Wilberg, Vice-Chair Amber Miller, and Secretary Terrence Moore met with the Wisconsin State Director of AARP, Martha Cranley; Bill Armbruster, Senior Advisory AARP Livable Communities; the Directors of Health and Human Services; the Parks Department, Transportation Department, and the County Strategic Planning Director all met to discuss the challenges seen in communities and how collaboration can be done with Creating Livable Age-Friendly Communities in Milwaukee County. The following steps to be taken considering this initiative is for the group (listed above) to have a strategic planning process meeting inviting smaller cities and non-profit and philanthropic communities.
- e) **Policy Makers Event Report**, Legislative Officer Elliott Moeser: For Advocacy Chair Elliot Moeser's report, he wanted to share pictures from the event with the Commission. Due to time restrictions, Emily Peterson, Aging Policy and Advocacy Manager, will email the pictures to the Commission. Chair Moeser thanked both Coordinator Peterson and AAA Director Idzikowski.

**VIII. AGING UNIT DIRECTOR REPORT, DHHS AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES, AGING UNIT DIRECTOR DANIEL IDZIKOWSKI**, Director Idzikowski provided several highlights on the AAA's accomplishments.

- Director Idzikowski discussed Older Americans Month and the outreach opportunities this month. The ADRC Recognition event held this month was sponsored by ADRC Director Tina Anderson, the Aging Summit, and the policy maker's event.
- A brief report on new programs and improving current programs.
- MCTS Save the Bus Campaign
- Senior Center Improvements
- Nutrition Services/Program Updates & in-person dining openings

**IX. WISCONSIN STATE OFFICE ON AGING REPORT, LAURA LANGER.**

The Bureau of Aging and Disability Resource staff and core members of the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) are attempting to address two long-term vital problems affecting the Aging Network: The lack of funding to support aging programs and services and the deficiency of volunteers. Also, the Bureau is working with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA's) and the Aging and Disability Professional Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW) to address the need for various training for the Aging and Disability network staff to support local County Aging Unit staff, both during the pandemic for staffing professionals in their network, and currently, to address training needs.

There are more than 5,000 county professionals in the State providing a variety of functions relating to aging service and support (Aging units, AAA's, and ADRCs), all of whom have a role in supporting training and education for staff across the State. The



State has been working on defining responsibility for the specific training and who will support the Aging Network staff. Later this month, the State will present an initial draft training structure to guide shared work relating to ADPAW and recognize that well-trained staff is essential to meeting the needs of people throughout Wisconsin.

Lynn Gall, Caregiver Program Coordinator for the State Office on Aging, was named to the Administration of Community Living Caregiving Advisory Council. Ms. Gall is one of many critical partners in securing several millions of dollars in additional funding from legislators to support the Wisconsin Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support program. Also secured was a three-year Administration for Community Living (ACL) grant to support the work of the Respite Care Association for Wisconsin. Her work, along with many other county staff and Caregiver Coordinators across Wisconsin, has caught the attention of the Administration for Community Living, which wants other states to replicate Wisconsin's programs. ACL has asked Ms. Gall to sit on their Caregiver Advisory Council. The Wisconsin Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support Program is unique to Wisconsin.

The Bader Foundation and the State Office on Aging are pleased that Milwaukee County has committed to hiring its own Caregiver Coordinator, Kayla Steinke.

Ms. Langer thanked everyone who worked on Milwaukee's Aging Summit; it was a great day. She also thanked the Aging Unit Director Idzikowski, for his work and collaboration with the State Office on Aging

#### **X. COUNTY SUPERVISOR REPORT, SEQUANNA TAYLOR, COUNTY SUPERVISOR**

Aging Unit Director Daniel Idzikowski provided a report on behalf of County Supervisor Taylor, who could not attend today's meeting because she is receiving a Humanitarian of the Year award out of state.

- The County Board of Supervisors was excited to celebrate Older Americans Month during their Board Day in May. Supervisor Taylor thanked everyone who has helped pave the way and made things possible for older adults and the Commission on Aging for their years of service, and a special appreciation to the COA Chair Janice Wilberg, DHHS Director Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Aging Unit Director Daniel Idzikowski, and the team. Supervisor Taylor looks forward to hosting Wilson Park Senior Center guitar players and getting the Clinton Rose Senior Center Rosette dancers back.
- Supervisor Taylor has asked County Supervisors to refer seniors in their districts to become involved in the Commission on Aging.
- Supervisor Taylor, Aging Director Idzikowski, and Serving Older Adults (SOA) are working together to identify exercise and arts and crafts equipment and secure funding for needed upgrades in equipment at the County's five owned senior centers.

- Supervisor Taylor attended the Aging Network Day at Wilson Park Senior Center and the Policy Makers Event at Washington Park Senior Center. She enjoyed speaking with all the seniors and legislators at the event.
- McGovern Night Out is **on June 14, 2023**, in the evening. There will be food resources, vendors, elected and community representatives, firefighters, and police. Supervisor Taylor would like the ADS Aging Unit to have a table at this event and welcome everyone to attend.

## **XI. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

Chair Wilberg reminded Commissioners who still need to be assigned to a Committee or Council to think about and consider which Committee or Council they would like to serve on and let her know. Commission pins were distributed at that Policy Makers event. Chair Wilberg stated that the Commission needs to be more visible to the public, and wearing your pin identifies that there are real people on the Commission representing seniors who are visible in public. She encouraged Commissioners to wear their pins at the senior centers or any event they attend. Commissioners John Griffith and Ron Byington received proclamations from Chair Wilberg at the County Board meeting. Pictures were taken of the recognition.

There is an Older Adult's "Coffee with Crowley" scheduled **on June 20, 2023**, with a few representatives (About five people) to discuss senior issues. Chair Wilberg will be in attendance. She encouraged those with concerns they want to address with the County Executive to contact her.

Chair Wilberg has decided to have an in-person meeting for the June 23, 2023, Commission on Aging meeting.

## **XII. COMMISSION ON AGING PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

### **XIII. Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 11: a.m.

**MOTION:** To adjourn.

**ACTION:** Prevails unanimously (Pennebaker, Moore Seconded).

The next Commission on Aging meeting will be Friday, June 23, 2023, an in-person meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Vonda Nyang  
Executive Assistant