



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
Department on Aging

Commission on Aging
Advocacy Committee

Minutes – March 4, 2019

The Milwaukee County Commission on Aging *Advocacy Committee* held its monthly meeting on March 4, 2019 at the Marcia Coggs Building, 1220 West Vliet Street, Room 104, Milwaukee, WI 53212 in Room 104.

Commissioners Present

Barbara Wyatt Sibley
Fred Knueppel

Committee Members Present

Sharon Abston Coleman, PhD
Barbara Bechtel
Casper Green
John Griffith
Jason Haas
Bob Haase
Tim Harrington
David Hoffman
Gary Mikolajczyk
Elliott Moeser
Judith Troestler

Committee Members Excused

Tom Frazier

Milwaukee County Staff Present

Holly Davis, MCDA Executive Director
Dan Idzikowski, MCDA Program & Policy
Coordinator
Jill Knight, MCDA Program Coordinator
Andy Bethke, MCDA - Outreach

Guests Present

Martha Collins, Hunger Task Force
Pat Dunn, SAAC
Vivette Hill-Nwagbarascha, SOA
Nick Janis, Office of Sen. Chris Larson
Orlando Munn
Harold Oemig
Betty Smith, Neighborhood Opportunity
Program

I. CALL TO ORDER

Fred Knueppel called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM followed by roll call.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Harold Oemig heard that the Senior Centers might be renamed, suggests “50+ Community Centers”. Pat Dunn, advocate for older adults, has attended every senior center since retired. She wouldn’t change name -- too confusing. Commission Chair Barbara Wyatt Sibley responds – We have NOT said the Commission is recommending changing the names of the Senior Center. The only reference was in regard to fund raising for future capital needs. Commission Wyatt Sibley mentioned that we might need public/private partnerships to maintain the senior centers and naming rights might go along with a future funding package.

Someone mentioned that they saw notice of Parks & Recreation Department building renovation funding of: \$294,000 to Wilson, \$422,000 Washington Park Senior Ctr. MCDA Director Davis stated she was unaware of this funding, but that it might be maintenance funding from the last budget cycle.

Bettie Smith, Neighborhood Outreach Program Director has been laid off from Unison. Works with 16 senior companions from SDC, with seniors who need help to grocery shop / officially we aren't working – several volunteering. Thanked Director Davis for her leadership in picking up the pieces from Unison and reconstituting the programs.

III. REVIEW /APPROVAL OF FEB 4, 2019 COMMITTEE MINUTES

MOTION: Approve the February 4, 2019 Committee minutes.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously (Coleman moved, Bechtel seconded)

IV. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF 2019 LOCAL POLICY PRIORITIES

The Committee reviewed the DRAFT local policy priorities document and considered each priority in turn.

Senior Centers

Hoffman questions the use of the word “build” – suggests eliminating it since the Centers will not necessarily be County owned in the future. Casper notes that in the 1970s feds provided funding to build senior centers, but then stopped funding. Bechtel suggests replacing “build” with “create.” Griffith & Mikolajczyk like idea.

Bechtel asks if this applies to all senior centers or just to the County centers? Casper notes five senior centers owned by Milwaukee County, others are private/municipal, e.g. Franklin. Elliott notes that the Wisconsin Policy Forum is conducting a study of the County owned senior centers, but the recommendations will be locally made. Griffith states that we need to move into the 21st century and think outside the “box center” – invest in a cyber/virtual senior center online. Haas notes the word “create” leaves a lot more room for creativity.

MOTION: Change the word “build” to “create” in the Senior Center section.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously (Griffith moved, Knueppel seconded)

Hoffman questions use of the word “capital” – can it be used to mean ongoing funding? “Operating” revenue is a separate category.

MOTION: Change the word “capital” to “funding” in the Senior Center section.
(Hoffman moved, Casper seconded).

AMENDMENT: Change the word “capital” to “resources” (Moeser moves to amend, amendment accepted as friendly by Hoffman & Casper)

ACTION: Question called by Knueppel. Carried unanimously as amended.
Haase wishes to drop the language after “to meet the needs of Milwaukee’s growing aging population.” Knueppel moves the discussion to the next item.

Voter rights

MOTION: Approve the voter rights section without modification.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously (Griffith moved, Hoffman seconded).

Livable communities

MOTION: Approve the voter rights section without modification.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously (Hoffman moved, Moeser seconded).

Fair Deal

MOTION: Accept the Fair Deal section of local policy priorities as written
(Mikolajczyk moves, Bechtel seconded).

DISCUSSION: Hoffman does not feel word support is strong enough because nothing else is achievable if we don’t have the funding. This should be one of our top priorities. Milwaukee County must take the lead in promoting. Advocates “promote” instead.

AMENDMENT: Change the word “support” to “promote” in the Fair Deal section. (Hoffman moved, Casper seconded).

AMENDMENT: Change the word “support” to “urge” (Haas moves to amend, amendment accepted as friendly by Hoffman, Mikolajczk).

ACTION: Question called by Knueppel. Carried unanimously as amended.

Transit

David – is the use of the word “low-income” appropriate. David strike the phrase “low-income” friendly amendment accepted. No more discussion. Fred calls the question. Passes.

MOTION: Accept the Transit section of local policy priorities as written (Griffith moves, Abston Coleman seconded).

DISCUSSION: Hoffman does not feel word “low-income” should be used in the phrase: “Advocate for routes that serve Milwaukee County Senior Centers, meal

sites, shopping, and health centers that low-income seniors wish to access.” Should relate to resources any senior wants to access.

AMENDMENT: Strike the phrase “low-income” from the last sentence of the transit priority. (Hoffman moved, Griffith accepts as a friendly amendment).

ACTION: Question called by Knueppel. Carried unanimously as amended.

V. LEGISLATIVE & POLICY UPDATES

Idzikowski described some of the issues he would be meeting with members of Congress about in the next few days through the n4a Policy Briefing. These include reauthorization of the Older Americans Act, caregiver crisis, and transit.

VI. STATE BUDGET PROCESS & ENGAGEMENT

Idzikowski noted that Governor Evers released his budget on February 28th. He proceeded to point out most of the budget provisions that affect seniors and align with the Committees budget priorities as passed at the last Advocacy Committee meeting. The Joint Finance Committee has not yet scheduled hearings on the budget. When they do, Idzikowski encourages the Advocacy Committee to attend the hearing and provide testimony in alignment with the Committee’s state budget priorities. He will provide briefing papers on the relevant issues and help organize the Committee’s response. He also hopes to provide budget briefings across the county prior to the JFC hearings. Moeser points out that it is also important to advocate directly with the Governor’s office and with his cabinet officers.

VII. 2019 MEETING LOCATIONS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Knueppel reminded members that the next Committee meeting will take place on Monday, April 1, 2019 at the Clinton Rose Senior Center, 3045 N. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive in Milwaukee. He hopes that community members will participate in this Committee meeting.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS & ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

- Senior Statesman Program (April 24-26th)
- Aging Advocacy Day (May 14th)

MCDA Executive Director Holly Davis announced that at the next Commission on Aging meeting, 9 am – 11 am Friday, March 29, 2019, the Wisconsin Policy Forum will present its final report on the suggestions for the future of Milwaukee County multipurpose senior centers & programming. Ms. Davis urged all members of the Committee to join the Commission for this presentation and discussion at a location to be determined.

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & MEETING DATES

Knueppel indicated that members should forward items they wished to consider on the next agenda by e-mail within two weeks of this meeting.

X. ADJOURN

MOTION: Approve the February 4, 2019 Committee minutes.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously (Green moved, Griffith seconded).