



MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
**Department on Aging**

**Milwaukee County Commission on Aging  
Aging Advisory Council Meeting  
May 13, 2020**

The Aging Advisory Council held a quarterly meeting on Wednesday, May 13, 2020, online via Google Meets and telephonically.

Attendance was taken verbally by the Chair.

**Members Present:**

Commissioner Bettie Rodgers, Chair  
Judy Troestler, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Sharon Abston-Coleman  
Commissioner John Griffith  
Barbara Bechtel  
Pat Dunn  
Gene Guskowski  
Nia Norris  
Patti Pagel  
Alice Pugh  
Walter Wochos  
Barbara Wyatt Sibley

**Commissioners Present:**

Commission Chair Richmond Izard  
Commissioner Jason Haas

Commissioner George Pumphrey  
Commissioner Shirley Sharp

**Staff Present:**

Dan Idzikowski, MCDA Program Policy Coord.  
Pam Matthews, Milwaukee County DAS  
Isaac Rowlett, Milwaukee County CEX  
Schinika Fitch, Milwaukee County CEX

**Attendees from the Public**

Pat Bruce  
Rita Bruce  
Judith Free  
Dain Maddox  
Morgan Morgan  
Cathy Wood

**MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order.**

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 1:35 p.m. and introductions were made.

**II. Review of the Aging Advisory Council meeting minutes from February 13, 2020.**

**MOTION:** Approve Minutes of the Advisory Council from February 13, 2020.

**ACTION:** Passes unanimously (Rodgers, Troestler).

**III. Review Progress on MCDA Area Plan & Suggested Updates to Area Plan**

Idzikowski references written plan updates for the first quarter of the second year of the 3-year plan. No real updates to the plan since the last meeting on the plan goals.

Planning for virtual programming. Advocacy – WAAN and the Advocacy Committee continue to meet. The Senior Statesman program was postponed.

#### **IV. COVID-19 Response: MCDA & Vendors**

Idzikowski presents on the Department on Aging responses to COVID-19. Staff have moved off site, non have been furloughed and all programming through the Aging Resource Center remain operational.

Congregate meal sites were closed but have switched to take-out and meal delivery at all but 6 meal sites. Added weekend meals and increased the number of participants. Meals on Wheels also delivering additional meals.

Group transportation services were suspended, but individual rides to the grocery store or health care appointments continue. Able Access now delivering meals & stockboxes. ERAS Senior Network providing rides through volunteer driver network.

10,000+ wellness calls through the ARC and a variety of partners. Flyers distributed to all HACM senior housing. Legal Action switched to online legal services.

Commission and committee meetings continue as scheduled. Continue with legislative, voting, and census advocacy efforts as well as virtual Medicare presentations.

Wochos asked how many meals were being delivered on a weekly basis. Idzikowski answers about 1074 per day through the meal sites and 1550 for Meals on Wheels per day. At least 200 additional people have joined the program.

Rodgers notes that the courts have decided to hear non-contested guardianships virtually.

Morgan Morgan from Serving Older Adults presented on SOA's efforts to make wellness calls to senior center participants while the centers are closed. Made 9237 calls to more than 5100 participants. Common themes were anxiety for health of self and family, sense of isolation, desire to return to normal activities, boredom.

In addition to safety check-ins, reminded participants about absentee ballots and registration for voting and census and asked if wanted regular follow-up calls. Needs requested included access to transportation, food, medical appointments, depression, freedom constrained, intergenerational friction. Will continue with regular check-ins on monthly basis and conducting a technology survey. Will implement virtual programming in the future.

Rodgers asked how SOA is planning for reopening? Morgan answers that they are looking at the possibility of opening for the 50 -60 age group and implement more virtual programming. At [servingolderadults.org](http://servingolderadults.org) can find a calendar for virtual programming.

Izard asks about census participation. Also do participants feel comfortable speaking with SOA callers. Morgan answers that she will provide the census response results and notes that all callers are familiar to the participants.

Dunn asks how the seniors identify anxiety and fear. Morgan replies that they were afraid to open up windows, go outside, etc.

Wyatt-Sibley asks if there are any conversations about what to do in the coming year? Morgan replies that they are conducting the IT survey to determine whether participants

have access to virtual technology. Also learning from other senior centers how they are responding. Have discussed using mailings and meal distribution to provide information.

Rodgers agrees with Wyatt-Sibley that “new-normal” is going to look very different and may take a long time. Seniors might not want to return to physical senior centers.

Griffith asks how to sustain community based programming after COVID-19.

Rodgers notes that this issue will be discussed through the Senior Center committee.

Pagel asks if participants are comfortable contacting their primary care providers. Morgan states they did not ask this question specifically, but if participants expressed concern about their health they were encouraged to contact their doctor.

Is newsletter still coming out monthly? Newsletter turned into a more general publication without specific programming to be used for outreach on website and Facebook.

## **V. COVID-19 Funding & 2021 Budget**

Idzikowski suggests taking some time to reflect on priorities for the 2021 MCDA budget and use of additional funding from the CARES Act, particularly for nutrition programming.

Izard suggests tabling this discussion and move to consider the Senior Center Committee proposal.

## **VI. Transportation Coordination**

Item tabled and moved to next meeting.

## **VII. Milwaukee County Strategic Direction & Racial Health Equity**

Isaac Rowlett, Director of Strategic Planning and Schinika Fitch, Director of Community Relations for the County Executive present the new Milwaukee County strategic plan. Understand how Government, Health, and Racial Equity are connected.

Health is more than absence of disease and includes quality of life. Milwaukee County is now rated 71<sup>st</sup> of 72 counties in Wisconsin. Milwaukee has tremendous racial inequity between black people and white people across a broad spectrum of quality of life measures. Explains difference between equality and inequity. By our vision of achieving racial equity, Milwaukee County will become the healthiest county in the state. Mission is we enhance the quality of life in Milwaukee County through great public service. In 2019 Milwaukee County declared racial inequity a public health crisis.

Milwaukee County government is seeking to address racial equity both through programming and services and through changes to institutional practices including policies, employment, and fiscal health. Ensure that power for decision-making is help by groups that are racially diverse.

Isaac Rowlett is available for questions by email at: [Isaac.rowlett@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Isaac.rowlett@milwaukeecountywi.gov).

Wyatt-Sibley – this is a great start on a critically important issue, but we have a lot of questions. The Commission on Aging and the Department need to address how they are going to implement this vision within their particular constructs and programs.

Rodgers – Would Commissioner Izard be amenable to placing discussion on this plan on the Milwaukee County Commission on Aging agenda. Izard replies yes.

### **VIII. Update on Envisioning Senior Centers**

Rodgers asks for four members from the Aging Advisory Council to join her in developing the parameters, structure, and composition for the Senior Center Committee.

Abston-Coleman: Commissioners Abston-Coleman, Pumphrey, and Miller already appointed to this group by Chairman Izard. Already met once and plan on meeting again tomorrow. We invite you join use in this planning process.

Izard appoints Abston-Coleman as interim chair of the Select Committee on Senior Centers. Invites Dunn to participate as well as Council chair Rodgers.

Dunn, Guskowski, and Wyatt-Sibley offer to join the Commission.

Discussion ensues about holding the meeting. Idzikowski notes that because this meeting would include committee members of a public body, we would have to have comply with the public meetings law, including public notice of the meeting. Under the PHE at least 24-hour notice. Will decide on another meeting time and date to comply with public

**MOTION:** To reconvene the Aging Advisory Council in June 2020 to consider remaining issues.

**ACTION:** Approved unanimously (Izard, Abston-Coleman).

### **IX. Announcements**

None.

### **Adjournment**

**MOTION:** To adjourn this meeting.

**ACTION:** Motion passes unanimously (Pumphrey, Abston-Coleman)

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Idzikowski  
Program and Policy Coordinator