



MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
**Department on Aging**

**Commission on Aging  
Meeting Minutes  
February 26, 2021**

**Commissioners**

Amber Miller, *Vice Chair*  
John Griffith, *Secretary*  
Elliot Moeser, Ph.D., *Legislative Officer*  
Jason Haas, *Milwaukee County Supervisor*  
Ronald Byington  
Richmond Izard  
Gloria Miller  
Gloria Pitchford-Nicholas, Ph.D.  
Shirley Sharp  
Janice Wilberg, Ph.D.

**Commissioners Excused**

Chairwoman Bettie Rodgers, J.D.

**Milwaukee County Staff**

Jon Janowski, *DHHS*

**Milwaukee County Staff Continued...**

Michael Bonk, *DAS-OPD*  
Sumaiyah Clark, *DHHS*  
Schinika Fitch, *County Executive's Office*  
Dan Idzikowski, *DHHS*  
Marietta Luster, *DHHS*  
Pam Mathews, *DAS Office of PSB*  
Vonda Nyang, *DHHS*  
Carrie Vallejo, *DHHS*  
Theodore Chisholm, *Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office*

**Guests**

Laura Langer, *State of WI, DHS*  
Neal Minogue, *State of WI, DHS*  
Pat Bruce, *ADRC Governing Board*  
Eve Eisenman, *Interpreter*

**I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**

A quorum of Commission on Aging (COA) members convened virtually on Friday, February 26, 2021. Vice Chair Amber Miller welcomed everyone at 9:04 a.m. and called the meeting to order. Secretary John Griffith took roll call.

**II. REFLECTION BY VICE CHAIR A. MILLER**

Vice-Chair Miller reflected on her childhood struggles with not having a traditional upbringing and having to grow-up fast. Vice-Chair Miller stated that servant leadership is in her blood and that she knew she was born to help others. She deeply appreciates her mother and enjoys being a Commissioner serving to help people.

**III. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 29, 2021 COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES**

MOTION: To approve the January 29, 2021, Commission on Aging meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Griffith Moved, Pitchford-Nicholas Second.)

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. The Executive Committee meeting minutes for January 1, 2021; Advocacy Committee meeting minutes for January 11, 2021; Advisory Council meeting minutes for October 26, 2020; and the Wellness Committee meeting minutes for January 20, 2021.

MOTION: To accept the entire consent agenda meeting minutes.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Griffith Moved, Wilberg Second)

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

Supervisor Haas's reappointment is in process, and Commissioner Griffith's reappointment was temporality delayed. The County Board will review a newly appointed Commissioner by the County Executive at the next County Board meeting in March. Director Fitch reminded Commissioners to use their Milwaukee County email address when conducting County business, as County employees use this email for correspondence, which is best practice. Currently, the Commission is searching for representation from the Native American, Latinx, and Hmong or Southeast Asian communities. Commissioners were encouraged to contact Director Fitch if they know of someone meeting those criteria that might be interested in being a Commissioner to forward their contact information to her.

**VI. INFORMATIONAL/DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

- A. Informational Item, "Jury Duty Scam", Ted Chisolm, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office:** Ted Chisolm informed the Commission that scammers are posing as representatives from the Sheriff's Department. They have obtained the Department's employee business information (name and job title and other pertinent information) from their website and other online sources, which allows them to pass as an official representative from the Sheriff's Office and sound very convincing to the public.

For the past two months, scammers have been calling people, informing them that they have missed "Federal Jury Duty," and if they don't pay a fee, they will arrest them. They instruct the person to go to a bank to withdraw money or a convenience store to purchase a pre-paid card to pay the fake fine. Pre-paid cards aren't traceable, so that is why they ask you to purchase this card. The Sheriff's Department is trying to increase constituent awareness about this scam, and especially the elderly population which is targeted the most. Mr. Chisolm strongly encouraged anyone who receives a phone call from these scammers to call (414) 278-4788, which is available 24 hours a day. The Commission requested that Mr. Chisolm provide them a copy of the informational document that the sheriff's office circulates to inform the public about this new scam.

Mr. Chisolm mentioned that they are available to provide group presentations if any organization is interested. They are happy to partner with the Commission to serve as a liaison in providing resources about scams and harassment calls. Also, they would provide follow-up information gained by the State Department of Justice, Unit of Consumer Protection, and the State Attorney General's office as an action item.

- B. Informational Item, Update on DHHS "Future State" Planning Process, Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS):** Sumaiyah Clark, Enterprise Project Administrator for DHHS, provided today's update for Director LaGrant.

Ms. Clark discussed DHHS's vision of the integration, the outcome results they expect to come from this integration and the nine integration projects (Communication, Evaluation, Workplace culture, Workplace rules/policy, Cross-training, Stakeholder engagement, ADRC application, Area plan, and Veteran's services coordination) which encapsulates the integration process for an expected result. Ms. Clark provided a synopsis of each integration project listed.

One of the Department's focuses is aligning the Area Aging on Agency goals with the County's goals and investigating how they can expand access to all services throughout the entire division for all disabled persons. The Advisory Council met in February and formed a small committee to develop a survey instrument to gather public input (listening sessions) to address the community's needs.

A Commissioner wanted to know if there were process measures per the Commission's request for the entire integration process. Ms. Clark responded that there are process measures to evaluate and provide data on the progress for each of the nine integration projects up to completion. Population research and data analysis will exist within the development of the next Area on Aging Plan.

**C. Informational Item, Update on the 2022-2024 Area Plan Planning Process, Dan Idzikowski, Program and Policy Coordinator, DHHS Division on Aging**

Dan Idzikowski reviewed the next steps in the process for creating the 2022-2024 Area Plan. One of the main goals is to align Aging's goals with the County's Executive's goals for achieving health and racial equity. The integration will provide the opportunity to expand access to services for the entire disability population and take a fresh look at our community will address racial health disparities.

The Advisory Council, which is instrumental in developing the Area Planning process, met in February to discuss the best ways to collect input from the senior community during this pandemic. The Advisory Council meets on the second Wednesday of every month, and they need more members and input from the senior community with the Area Plan. At their February meeting, the Council decided to create a workgroup that would work to develop a public survey to provide community feedback opportunities addressing the community's needs and evaluate the Aging network as it exists today.

The Advocacy Committee is looking for more members and needs seniors to advocate for critical priorities that will affect seniors in the State Budget. Mr. Idzikowski asked that people read his emails that go out with necessary information. If anyone is interested in joining the Advisory Council or Advocacy Committee, please contact Mr. Idzikowski at [Daniel.Idzikowski@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Daniel.Idzikowski@milwaukeecountywi.gov) or call (414) 289-6546.

**D. Informational Item Update on ADRC Integration Application Project, Rachel-Kaehny-Frank, Aging Resource Center Manager:** The ADRC Integration Project Manager Marietta Luster provided today's update for Aging Resource Center Manager Rachel Kaehny-Frank.

The ADRC Application workgroup completed the proposed ADRC organizational chart that they will present at next month's ADRC Governing Board meeting. The Aging Resource Center manager apologized for not having it available at today's COA meeting for review. They are in the process of analyzing the differences between the ARC and DRC on how they can work together on aligning both resource centers in closing service gaps.

The COA Secretary requested a copy of the ADRC Governing Board meeting schedule sent to Commissioners. Marietta Luster asked the Division on Aging's Executive Assistant Vonda Nyang to obtain a copy to send to the Commission.

**E. Action Item: Review and Approval of Non-Commission Member Appointments to COA Standing Committees:** Interim Director Jon Janowski explained the process for appointing Committee and Council members to the various COA Committees and Councils to the Commission. And he presented the names of each Committee and Council that needs a motion from the Commission to approve the appointed members. The Commission requested Interim Director Janowski to provide the names in a document for easy view, and according to the Bylaws, the Committee members are subject to submit biographical sketches to the COA for review before the Commission makes approvals. The Commission must ensure they are fulfilling the requirements of the Bylaws.

Director Janowski stated it would take months to collect biographical sketches for everyone listed on the Committees and Councils. The Commission stated they only need biographical sketches for newly appointed members, not existing appointed members. Commissioner Izard moved to approve the full list of Committee and Council members who are preexisting members from previous years, but newly appointed Committee and Council members must have biographical sketches sent to the COA for review before the next COA meeting. The Commission will review and approve those members at the next COA meeting.

Motion: To accept each appointee who has served on a Committee and Council in the previous year and vet out new members on the Committees or Councils. The effective date for approval of appointed members will be seven business days from today.

Action: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Izard Moved, Pitchford-Nicholas Second.)

## **VII. AGING DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT: JON JANOWSKI, INTERIM DIRECTOR**

Interim Director Janowski provided service updates to the Commission. He reported that the Division on Aging received approval from the State on their 2018-2021 Area Plan Amendment. Director Janowski stated that this is a crucial advocacy year as the Governor's proposed budget will impact seniors. Also, he encouraged the Commission to read the emails that Dan Idzikowski sends on advocacy issues as there are many action items. Also discussed were other advocacy events coming up this year. The Alzheimer's Association is hosting its Advocacy Day virtually **on March 22 and March 24**. For more information, please visit their website or contact Jon Janowski at [Jonathan.Janowski@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Jonathan.Janowski@milwaukeecountywi.gov) or (414) 289-6073.

Since the closing of the senior centers due to the pandemic, Serving Older Adults (SOA) and the Division on Aging continues to conduct wellness calls to isolated seniors to ensure they receive necessary resources. The Division on Aging's vendors has also received opportunities to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations. Most of the Division on Aging staff are not yet eligible for vaccinations based on state criteria, and all Aging staff continues to telework from home. Serving Older Adults of Southeastern Wisconsin and their volunteers, and the AAA-staff, contact seniors by phone to register them to receive their vaccination at the County's "closed pod" site. Thus far, SOA has registered 20 people to be vaccinated.

There is also a state vaccine outreach grant available for the ADRC's that would provide additional funding to subsidize current work. Milwaukee County DHHS is applying for this grant funding.

## **VIII. STATE REPORT: NEAL MINOGUE, STATE OFFICE ON AGING**

Neal Minogue from the DHS State Office on Aging briefly mentioned Federal funding is forthcoming through the Consolidated Appropriations Act for the Title III Program, and counties will hear about how much money later. It aligns with a smaller amount of money that came out in March 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Act. It will help counties meet the needs of older adults with the home-delivered meals/nutrition program.

Mr. Minogue discussed the State aging plan and the difficulties of providing virtual communications and gathering information through online surveys. Also, he discussed focus areas for the new Area Agency plan goals, and a new requirement is for the Area Agencies to develop long path goals that would span anywhere from 5, 10, or even 15-years from now. The draft Area plan is due to DHS by November 15, 2021, with a final version deadline of January 15, 2022.

Minogue informed the Commission that all State workers continue to telework from home and possibly won't return to the worksite until fall of this year.

A Commissioner informed Mr. Minogue that the deaf community prefers to answer surveys through a sign language interpreter instead of filling out forms. He asked if they could try this method for collecting data for the Area Plan this year. Also, a Commissioner asked to have brail questionnaires available for blind and tactual signing for deaf and blind people. For assistance in completing these tasks, the State and Division on Aging can contact the Center for the Deaf and Blind.

**IX. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT: NO CHAIR REPORT**

**X. COUNTY SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:** County Supervisor Jason Haas provided the following report.

The pandemic is affecting funding. Supervisor Haas's constituents are asking when the Senior Centers will reopen. Currently, he doesn't have an answer due to the pandemic still being in effect, and the County Board is very concerned about senior safety.

Supervisor Haas has informed the Commission that he has a monthly column in the Bayview Compass newspaper and has written two articles on the Commission on Aging (COA). He asked if anyone is interested in becoming a Commissioner on the COA to contact him. Thus far, three people have responded with interest, and he asked them to apply.

Supervisor Haas provided an update on his project's progress for upgrading the drinking water fixtures in the Senior Centers to touchless technology devices to make Senior Centers a healthier place for seniors.

**XI. COMMISSION ON AGING ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Since March of last year, AARP has postponed its in-person events. AARP anticipates their events will continue in a virtual format until the end of this year. A question arose about AARP's Tax Return Assistance program. Last year AARP had 16 tax assistance sites, but they only have two open sites in WI due to COVID. The pandemic has limited its resources of volunteers. This year AARP is asking people to drop off their taxes, call the tax preparer with any questions, and they will contact them when to pick-up their paperwork. For more information on this service, contact Commissioner Miller at [Amber.Miller@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Amber.Miller@milwaukeecountywi.gov)

A Commissioner stated that they should work this year to make Wisconsin accessible to all.

Pat Bruce, Chair of the ADRC Governing Board, briefly discussed the brochure that the ADRC Governing Board created for recruiting new Board Members.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT:** Meeting adjourned at 11 a.m.

The next Commission on Aging meeting is at 9 a.m. on Friday, March 26, 2021, as a Google Meets virtual meeting.

Respectfully,

Vonda Nyang  
Executive Assistant