



MILWAUKEE COUNTY
Department on Aging

**Commission on Aging
Meeting Minutes
November 2, 2020**

Commissioners

Richmond Izard, *Chair*
Sharon Abston-Coleman, Ph.D., *Vice Chair*
John Griffith, *Secretary*
Ronald Byington
Amber Miller
Elliot Moeser, Ph.D.
Bettie Rodgers, J.D.
Shirley Sharp

Commissioners Excused

Jason Haas, *Milwaukee County Supervisor*
Gloria Miller
Gloria Pitchford-Nicholas, Ph.D.

Milwaukee County Staff

David Crowley, *County Executive*
Mary Jo Meyers, *County Executive's Office*
Shakita LaGrant, *DHHS*
David Muhammad, *DHHS*
Jon Janowski, *MCDA*
Schinika Fitch, *County Executive's Office*
Isaac Rowlett, *County Executive's Office*

Milwaukee County Staff Continued...

Margaret Daun, *Corporation Counsel*
David Farwell, *Corporation Counsel*
Samta Bhatnagar
Jill Lintonen
Marietta Luster
Pam Mathews
Vonda Nyang
Dan Idzikowski
Mary Proctor Brown
Carrie Vallejo
Rachel Kaehny-Frank

Guests

Barbara Wyatt Sibley
Pat Bruce, *ADRC Governing Board*
Laura Langer, *State of WI, DHS*
Neal Minogue, *State of WI, DHS*

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

A quorum of Commission on Aging (COA) members convened virtually on Monday, November 3, 2020. Chairman Richmond Izard welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 11:49 a.m. Secretary Griffith took roll call.

Chairman Izard explained the purpose of today's special COA meeting. At the October 23, 2020 COA meeting, the County Executive and his administration provided an informative presentation on the proposed integration plan with the Milwaukee County Department on Aging (MCDA) becoming a division under the Department of Health Human Services (DHHS). The Commission decided they needed to hear from their Advocacy Committee and Advisory Council before adopting a resolution on the County Executive's integration plan, which is the purpose of today's meeting.

Chairman Izard reminded the Commission as they deliberate at today's meeting to vote for a final resolution on the County Executive's integration plan, to remember they must represent Milwaukee County's 170,000 seniors irrespective of their own opinions. And that

they need to preserve senior's interests as it relates to the spirit and the law of the Older American's Act, Wisconsin's Elder's Act and the Milwaukee County General Code of Ordinances. The Chair announced that Commissioner George Pumphrey has resigned from the Commission on Aging. Chairman Izard Commended Commissioner Pumphrey for his hard work and he quoted Alice Walker: "The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

Commissioner Moeser motioned to have action items two and three removed from today's COA agenda.

MOTION: To remove the word "confirm" in agenda items two and three and replace the word with "accept."

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Moser Moved, A. Miller Second)

DISCUSSION: The Commission discussed the motion and decided that the Chair should change the wording of the agenda items from "confirm" to "accept" because the Commission is accepting the Committee and Council reports and not voting to confirm they are in agreeance. Commissioner Rodgers stated the Advisory Council took action in the form of a recommendation at their October 25, 2020, to amend the Area Plan to include the integration plan. The Chair asked Commissioner Moeser if he agreed to amend his motion to accept the change of wording from confirming to accept for agenda items two and three. Commissioner Moser agreed to accept the amendment.

AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION: To accept the amendment to change the word "confirm" to "accept" on COA agenda items two and three.

Commissioner Moser motioned to have COA agenda Item 4 wording changed to read "A discussion and possible action item on the County Executive's Integration plan.

MOTION: To reword COA agenda item four to read "Action: A Discussion and possible action on the County Executive's Integration Plan."

ACTION: Motion prevailed by unanimous consent (Moeser Moved, Rodgers Second)

II. ACTION: MOTION TO ACCEPT THE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE'S OCTOBER 5, 2020 RESOLUTION OPPOSING A MCDA/DHHS MERGER

Chairman Izard read a statement on the Advocacy Committee's position on the County Executive's proposed merger. The Advocacy Committee passed a motion and resolution on Monday, October 5, 2020, that the Milwaukee County Commission on Aging communicate to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors that they are in support of maintaining a separate and independent Milwaukee County Department on Aging and opposing the merger as a unit within the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services. The chair added that the Advocacy Committee has a specific duty charged by the Commission to advocate and be the senior community's voice. Chairman Izard asked Advocacy Committee Chairwoman Sharp is she had anything to share. Commissioner Sharp had nothing else to report.

MOTION: To Accept the Advocacy Committee's October 5, 2020, resolution opposing an MCDA and DHHS merger.

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

III. ACTION: MOTION TO ACCEPT THE ADVISORY COUNCIL'S OCTOBER 26, 2020 RESOLUTION OPPOSING A MCDA/DHHS MERGER

Chairman Izard read the Advisory Council's resolution. The Milwaukee County Aging Advisory Council opposes amending the 2019-2021 Milwaukee County Area Plan to incorporate the Milwaukee County Department on Aging as a Unit within the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services for up to one year to allow further consideration for older adults in Milwaukee County in consultation with Milwaukee County's Executive Office.

The Advisory Council Chair informed the Commission that the Advisory Council's responsibility is with approving the Milwaukee County Department on Aging's Area Plan (copulation of goals to provide seniors' resources) special programs for seniors. The Advisory Council is supposed to inform and recommend to the Commission on whether the 2019-2021 Milwaukee County Area Plan should be amended to incorporate the Milwaukee County Department on Aging as a Unit within the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services. The Advisory Council is opposed to the MCDA and DHHS Merger and amending the Area plan and thinks they should wait a year before making this decision. However, the Advisory Council Chair stated that after hearing the County Executive's presentation and reviewing the financial stats, she is for the merger under the condition that the integration plan is to have an evaluation performed on a semi-annually basis. They report out each time to the Commission.

MOTION: To accept the Advisory Councils October 25, 2020, resolution opposing a MCDA and DHHS Merger

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

IV. ACTION: A DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S INTEGRATION PLAN

Usually, the Commission would have received seniors' input before making a decision; however, it was unobtainable due to the timeframe constraints when the Commission had received the information from the County Executive's Office and the 2021 budget final due date.

The Commission deliberated on whether they should support the County Executive's integration plan. Although the Commission has received information on this plan, a few of the Commissioners were unable to support the integration plan due to the County's Administration had failed to solicit feedback from Milwaukee's seniors and the Commission before moving forward with their projected 2021 budget and integration plan. The

Commission is deciding without the input from its senior community, which they are supposed to support.

A lengthy discussion continued whether to move forward or to insist on waiting until next year so the Commission can receive input from the senior community. A few Commissioners found the entire process to be troubling, as it defies the Older American's Act. If the Commission approves to accept this plan without receiving feedback from the senior community, it will disobey what the Commission represents.

The majority of Commissioners agreed with the integration proposal as long as it is in Partnership with the County Executive and that there will be a formalized evaluation process in place. A Commissioner mentioned the Commission needs to keep in mind that County is dealing with a pandemic and that the Commission should look at how a business needs run differently. Some of the commissioners asked if the County Executive could answer a few questions at the meeting; however, the Chair felt that the County Executive had responded to most of the Commission's problems at the past COA meeting and today's meeting is solely to decide on a resolution. The Commission commenced voting.

MOTION: That the Milwaukee County Commission on Aging approve the County Executive's integration plan, and in the spirit of partnership, both the County Executive and the Commission on Aging will work together cooperatively in making the integration plan successful. The County Executive will establish a formal evaluation process for the integration plan.

ACTION: Motion prevailed by the following vote: 6-Aye: Byington, A. Miler, Moeser, Sharp, Rodgers, Haas, Abston-Coleman, and 2-No: Griffith and Izard. The motion prevails.

V. ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at **1:10 p.m.**

The next Commission on Aging meeting is at 9 a.m. on Friday, November 13, 2020, as a Google Meets virtual meeting.

Respectfully,

Vonda Nyang
Executive Assistant