

**COMMISSION ON AGING  
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES  
May 28, 2015**

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Members Absent</b>
Miriam Kelty	Barbara Mulitz
Isabelle Schoenfeld	<b>Liaisons</b>
Song Hutchins	Phil Smakula, Department of Recreation
Arva Jackson	Austin Heyman, Office of Community Partnerships
Sam Korper	Sarah Gotbaum, Elderly Women's Aging Alliance
Syed Yusuf	Morton Davis, Montgomery County Police Department
Jerry Morenoff	Leslie Marks, Senior Fellow-DHCA
Charles Kauffman	Jack Sprague, Rockville Senior Center
DaCosta Mason	Gail Gunod-Green, Housing Opportunities Commission
Paul DelPonte	Stephanie Gilbert, Housing Opportunities Commission
Spencer Schron	
Noelle Heyman	<b>Guests</b>
Myrna Cooperstein	Isiah Leggett, County Executive
Judith Levy	Uma Ahluwalia, Director, DHHS/Aging and Disability Services
Revathi Vikram	Gabriel Albornoz, Director, Recreation Department
Sally Shea	Rona Kramer, Secretary, Department of Aging
Rudy Oswald	Jeanne Anthony, AARP
Sue Guenther	Gail Kohn, Coordinator, DC Age-Friendly
Tammy Duell	Andrew Aurand, M-NCPPC
Grace Whipple	<b>Staff</b>
	John J. Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services
	Odile Brunetto, Director Area Agency & Aging
	Tremayne Jones, Department of Health & Human Services

Chair, Judith Levy welcomed everyone to the Annual Commission on Aging's (COA) meeting.

**Brief Business Meeting**

The COA members unanimously approved minutes from the April meeting.

The panel discussion was moderated by Commissioner Isabelle Schoenfeld who introduced the COA's panelists. Isabelle stated that the COA has been exploring aspects of Age Friendly communities and the County Executive and County Council both have expressed interest in Age Friendly communities. The first panelist was Jeanne Anthony, AARP. At the conclusion of her talk, County Executive Isaiah Leggett spoke. Following Mr. Leggett's talk Rona Kramer, Secretary of the MD Department of Aging spoke and then Gabriel Albornoz, Director, Department of Recreation. The panel then resumed with Gail Kohn, Andrew Aurand, and Uma Ahluwalia.

Guest speaker Jeanne Anthony from AARP discussed the benefits of membership in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

- Opportunities to encourage local residents, businesses and other nonprofit groups to play an active role
- Connections to global and national networks of participating communities as well as aging and civil society experts
- Access to news, information and guidance about best practices, models, results and challenges in the age-friendly movement
- Opportunities for partnership with other communities, both domestic and international
- Mentoring, assessments and peer review evaluation by experts and member cities and towns
- Recognition by AARP and the World Health Organization of the community's commitment to become more age-friendly

There are four steps to the Age Friendly Process:

1. Entering the Network
2. Planning Phase (Years 1-2)
3. Implementation & Evaluation (Years 3-5)
4. Continuous Cycle of Improvements (Years 5+)

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities has “8 Domains of Livability”

1. Transportation
2. Housing
3. Outdoor spaces and buildings
4. Community support and health services
5. Communication and information
6. Civic participation and employment
7. Respect and social inclusion
8. Social participation

Chair, Judith Levy introduced and thanked County Executive Isiah Leggett for attending the COA meeting. Mr. Leggett thanked the COA for their outstanding work on behalf of Montgomery County. Mr. Leggett acknowledged the growth of Montgomery County and the challenges that Montgomery County has faced. Mr. Leggett discussed the Supreme Court ruling on the Wynne case, in which a Howard County married couple sued the State of Maryland because they were denied Maryland tax credits for the taxes they paid on income earned in other states. Mr. Leggett stated that Montgomery County, the state's wealthiest jurisdiction, stands to be hit the hardest because of its large number of residents who earn out-of-state income. The decision impacted the State of Maryland by \$200 million dollars leaving Montgomery County responsible for \$115 million dollars. Mr. Leggett stated that taxes may have to be increased due to the challenges the County is facing. In the last two years there has been zero growth in property taxes in Montgomery County. The reason for the tax increase is to balance out the \$115 million dollars that is owed. Mr. Leggett discussed the Senior Summit that will take place in December 2015. The Senior

Summit will develop ideas to position the County for years ahead and provide a vision for Montgomery County.

Mr. Leggett spoke about the new recreation centers that are being built in Montgomery County. The new center in Wheaton that is scheduled to be completed by Fall 2017 will be located at the corner of Georgia and Arcola Avenues. The center will provide for the development of a combined facility to include a new Wheaton Library, Wheaton Community Recreation Center, and the Charles W. Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity. The Library and the Recreation Center will be comparable to other libraries and recreation centers with similar service needs. This will result in efficiencies due to the shared use of some spaces such as lobbies, meeting rooms, restrooms, and parking which could reduce the overall space requirements and the operational costs. Mr. Leggett discussed the challenges that Montgomery County continues to face such as affordable housing and transportation. Transportation and affordable housing continues to be a challenge for many seniors. Montgomery Housing Partnership, a nonprofit developer that creates affordable housing, and Donohoe Development Company are working together to build an apartment complex with units reserved for lower-income residents adjacent to the new Silver Spring library, at the corner of Bonifant and Fenton Streets, and the potential future Purple Line light rail station. The Bonifant at Silver Spring is a \$44 million new construction development that will result in an 11-story mixed-income apartment building for active seniors 62 and over. The project is expected to be completed by January 2016.

Chair, Judith Levy introduced Secretary Rona Kramer. Secretary Kramer spoke about the Maryland Department of Aging's responsibility and goals. The Department of Aging would like to prevent residents from going into nursing facilities. The Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) delivers most of the programming. Both federal and general funds come through the Department of Aging and are dispersed to each local Area Agency on Aging. Secretary Kramer's first goal was to change the process of how local AAA's were being reimbursed for their expenditures. Area plans were not being approved until late into the fiscal year making it hard for AAA's to pay their vendors. Changing of the process by which area plans were being approved, which would usually take 8 months to produce, must now be done in 2-3 months. The local AAA's had to have a response by April and they had to develop their plan within a month so that the state can review and approve the plan so that they can be paid on time. Secretary Kramer changed the hold harmless funding which is a funding that the State gave to a jurisdiction for big census losses. The State would give a jurisdiction supplemental funding to help them adjust over a period of a year with the loss of funding allotted by formula. Secretary Kramer also made some changes to the Nutrition Program funded allocation. Secretary Kramer also spoke about the 2% statewide cuts in FY15 & FY16 in order to eliminate overspending.

Chair Judith Levy introduced Gabriel Albornoz. Mr. Albornoz thanked the COA for their advocacy in helping White Oak be built. Mr. Albornoz stated that White Oak Community Center has become the 3<sup>rd</sup> most popular facility in the County. The North Potomac facility which will break ground in 2016 will be similar to White Oak Community Center in size. The transportation service which provides door to door service to senior centers is a success. This service is due, to a large extent, to advocacy by COA.

Ms Gail Kohn, Director of the District of Columbia's Age-Friendly Cities initiative spoke about the DC's participation in the international effort started by the World Health Organization (WHO) to respond to two significant demographic trends: urbanization and population aging. As of 2007, over half of the world's population lived in cities and by 2030 that population will rise to about three out of every five people in the world. At the same time, improvements in public health have led to more people living longer lives. To help cities prepare for the convergence of these two trends, the WHO developed the Global Age-Friendly Cities project. WHO maintains eight broad domains that help influence the health and quality of life of older people living all around the world. The District of Columbia has included two additional domains for a total of ten domains:

1. **Outdoor Space and Buildings**-accessibility to and availability of safe recreational facilities.
2. **Transportation**-safe and affordable modes of private and public transportation.
3. **Housing**- wide range of housing options for older residents, aging in place, and other home modification programs.
4. **Social Participation**- access to leisure and cultural activities and opportunities for older residents to participate in social and civic engagement with their peers and younger people.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion**- programs to support and promote ethnic and cultural diversity, along with programs to encourage multigenerational interaction and dialogue.
6. **Civic Participation and Employment**- promotion of paid work and volunteer activities for older residents and opportunities to engage in formulation of policies relevant to their lives.
7. **Communication and Information**- promotion of and access to the use of technology to keep older residents connected to their community and friends and family, both near and far.
8. **Community Support and Health Services**- access to homecare services, clinics, and programs to promote wellness and active aging.
9. **Emergency Preparedness and Resilience, a DC focus**- information, education and training to ensure the safety, wellness, and readiness of seniors in emergency situations.
10. **Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Fraud, a DC focus**- prevention and prosecution of financial exploitation, neglect, and physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of seniors.

Andrew Aurand, of the Maryland –National Park and Planning Commission, spoke about the Planning Department's role in Montgomery County for older adults. The Planning Department's Research and Special Projects Division (RSP) is coordinating with the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to conduct an 18-24 month study of rental housing in the County that will assess how they can best meet the needs of residents across the income spectrum.

The economic trends of Montgomery County and the Metropolitan DC region have exacerbated a rental housing shortage, and providing the appropriate housing stock to meet the demand for affordable housing is a challenge. The purpose of the study is to identify Montgomery County's rental housing issues and needs, and offer holistic and sustainable approaches to meeting them. A goal of the study is to help guarantee long-term affordability of rental housing for a diverse range of households. The study will provide recommendations for increasing the availability of affordable rental housing by determining factors that contribute to increased housing costs,

identifying best practices that could be implemented to preserve and add to the affordable rental stock, and recommending potential changes to current policies and programs.

Uma Ahluwalia, Director of Health and Human Services spoke about the summer studies and the December senior summit. The senior subcabinet raised the profile of senior services. The senior summit will take place in December. A survey of senior residents across the county will be conducted prior to the December event and may be completed online or on paper. The summit will set the stage for the next wave of work that will be done in the next three years.

**Vote to select summer studies**– The Commission on Aging members unanimously voted for the following two Summer Studies for 2015.

“Commonalities and Differences in Local Government Approaches for Aging in Community”  
Presented by Isabelle Schoenfeld and Leslie Marks

Issue or Concern to be Addressed: There is much discussion about the WHO Age Friendly City’s approach; the Montgomery County Community for a Lifetime: Senior Agenda approach; N4A’s Livable Communities approach; the AARP Livability Index; and other approaches to aging in community. What is evident is that the general public and policymakers are often not clear about the commonalities and differences of these approaches in terms of how the local government and the private sector systematically develops and implements their activities/programs/policies to support senior residents of a community.

This study would explore a few approaches that are well regarded and identify their commonalities and differences and provide practical, realistic information that would help to understand what characteristics (including processes, policies, and organizational infrastructure) should be considered in the development and implementation of an aging in community approach.

Anticipated Outcome(s):

- Information about a few well-known, well-regarded approaches/models that have been developed and implemented in communities around the country to support their aging population.
- Information about the resources involved and the infrastructure or intra/inter-organizational coordination that should be considered to efficiently and effectively implement an approach in support of the senior residents of a community.
- Analysis of the commonalities and differences among the various approaches/models and identification of the key characteristics that are needed to support a community to be “age-friendly” or a “community for a lifetime.”
- Recommendations to be considered by Montgomery County decision-makers.

“Long-Term Care and Supports: Nursing Home Quality  
Presented by Arva Jackson and Noelle Heyman

Introduction:

Nursing home care and services are critically important to vulnerable adults, mostly seniors, as well as their caregivers. According to the 2014 annual report by Voice for Quality Care, there are some troubling trends in nursing home care and quality in Maryland including a large percentage of repeating deficiencies. In order for the COA to understand and advocate for the needs of seniors in Montgomery County and Maryland, it is important for commissioners to learn about the challenges faced by nursing home providers and consumers as well as best practices and opportunities for improvement in quality of care and services. Long-term care services and supports also have important economic considerations for national and state governments. Medicaid spending for long-term care in Maryland in fiscal year 2013 can be found at <http://kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/spending-on-long-ter-care>

Anticipated Outcomes:

1. Educate Commission members on issues related to nursing home care and quality in Montgomery County including:
  - Review of Medicare Quality Compare Ratings
  - Reimbursement Structure
  - Care Transitions
2. Collaborate with other Montgomery County Commissions and groups including the Commission on Health and the Montgomery County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program as well as local nursing home experts and leaders to better understand the challenges associated with nursing home care and quality.
3. Possible recommendation of bills related to nursing home care and quality that the CoA might want to promote and support during the 2016 Session of the Maryland General Assembly (e.g. education requirements for staff).
4. Identify best practices and make recommendations related to nursing home quality.
5. Raise awareness about this important issue.

**Treasurer's Report**-\$1,833.09

The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm

Respectfully Submitted  
Isabelle Schoenfeld, Secretary