

**Communications Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
June 17, 2024**

**Attendees**

**CoA**

Jean Dinwiddie, Co-chair  
Beverly Rollins, Co-chair  
Linda Bergofsky  
David Engel  
Kathleen McGuinness  
Marie Sloan  
Katie Smith  
Marsha Weber

**Alumni**

Stephanie Edelstein  
Marcia Pruzan

**Staff**

Jennifer Long, Aging and Disability Staff

**Guests**

Marie Brodsky, WISE Cities  
Chris Doyle

**Roll Call**

Jean Dinwiddie called roll and asked for approval of the minutes of the May Communications Committee meeting. The minutes were approved.

**Ambassador Program**

Jean asked Jennifer Long whether there are any updates on getting the Ambassador Program request form on the CoA's website. Jennifer said that she has not heard of any but she does not think there are. Jean said that we have a few presentation dates scheduled: one at Quince Orchard library, one at Ingleside, and one at the Damascus Senior Center. Kathleen asked whether the one scheduled on June 28 at White Oak is still on. Jean said that we can cancel that, as the request was for a table and not a presentation.

Marsha Weber asked whether we are still only to hold the presentations at Senior Centers. Jean said that this was discussed with A&D staff and we were asked to limit presentations to Senior Centers, recreation centers, and libraries. The presentations that were already on the books before the meeting can still be held, like the one scheduled for September at Oasis.

Marie Sloan said that she is meeting with the librarian at her library tomorrow and is going to ask him if we can hold a presentation there in September.

Jean said that a workgroup has been meeting to discuss making the Program more standardized. We are working on refining the process. One thing we will be doing is writing a report on how the Program has been doing. We are also standardizing the slides. We will have one set of Master slides and those will be tailored to each audience. Marsha Weber said that H&W is working on a new slide on mental health resources; she will check to see when it will be completed.

Marcia said that the general information on the County's Senior Site is confusing and should be more user-friendly. Maybe if the website provided more clear information about the County programs for older adults that are available it would be helpful.

### **Library Liaison Program**

Jean asked whether there is anything new to report. Beverly asked whether we should continue the program because she does not think most of the liaisons are visiting their libraries, as few reports have been received. Stephanie said that we made our initial contacts and there seems to be less need for frequent contacts. Marie agreed, saying that visiting once a quarter may be enough. Marsha said that she visits her library once a month and gets notes from the librarians when documents are getting low. David Engel said that it is important that the libraries know that we are checking on them.

Beverly asked whether we could just send a note to the Regional librarians and ask whether they need anything; doing that instead of visiting periodically. Chris said that the quarterly reports are pretty cut and paste, same old same old. She said that she visits her library frequently. Jean asked whether it is the reporting that is a problem or the actual visits. David said that maybe we should send notes to the libraries when we see they are low on older adult materials.

Marcia stated that maybe there are more members on the CoA who would be willing to make the library visits. Stephanie noted that it will be important for the CoA to meet with the new MCPL director (after Anita Vassallo leaves) and get that person's ideas on how to handle the program. Marcia said that possibly the new librarian could come up with a new system. Marie suggested that we keep the status quo until the new head librarian is named and we can meet with that new person. Jean added that we should ask for more volunteers from the whole CoA and its alumni. Jean will ask Tremayne to send a note to the CoA and alumni asking for volunteers.

### **Fact Sheet Update**

Jean asked David how the Committee can help him because all of the updates fall on him to make. He said that he is going to take them one at a time and make the revisions. He has notes from the Hearing Loss and the Social Isolation Factsheets. He did prepare a new Factsheet with a QR code and will be getting it out for review. He wants to make sure the QR code works. Marcia said to make sure there is website address on the FactSheet, too. David said that he has everything as a work in process.

Marsha asked what is happening with Access Hears? David said we need to make sure we have the correct phone number on the Factsheet. Jean said that the major thing on the Factsheet is the over-the-counter hearing aids. After David finishes his work he will send the Factsheets back to the appropriate committees. He wants to keep them in Microsoft Word.

### **Communications Committee Budget Priorities**

Jean discussed the need to develop a budget priority list. She showed the members the list that we submitted previously and asked whether there are any changes.

David explained that he thinks we should go beyond just submitting two top priorities. We need to synch better with what the Council is pushing through. He envisions a policy statement from the CoA that shows what is important to the CoA and its Committees. The Communications Committee could come up with a statement that says what its priorities are and why—an issue paper saying what we are trying to do and who we want to reach. The CoA needs to explain what its priorities are. Marcia said that we could look at the Age Friendly mission statements. David wants to develop a pure advocacy slate showing what the CoA’s mission is. He would like to have our statement before the next Public Policy Committee meeting in July so that Committee can incorporate them with other Committee reports.

Marie Brodsky said that her organization, WISE Cities, will be happy to get the word out about the budget priorities and vision statements.

Jean asked whether the group agreed with the priorities we developed last year. The members agreed. Jean will get the Age Friendly Communications Committee’ vision statement for our Committee to borrow from. Marsha suggested that we change the second priority to show how important the public forums are. Marcia asked whether it would help to say why the help is needed; e.g., the Public Information Office is overloaded, A&D understaffed, etc.

### **Review/update of County’s Senior Website**

Jean said that a group has volunteered to review the website. She said that the County does not seem to have a way to test it before they put it up live. Jennifer said that she thinks the website has been updated a bit. Jean stated that she will ask Shawn about when the group is expected to review it. Jennifer said that visibly the site now looks different.

### ***50+ in Montgomery County Update***

- June – WEAAD; preventing elder abuse.

- July – First Spanish Program!! Jean talked with Katie about doing this. It will feature Dr. Anna Marie and Ingrid Lizama. It will talk about things available to the Latino population.
- August — Repeat of the Show on Fashion

Jean stated that in September we are hoping to have an in-person panel discussion where we will honor Austin Heyman.

Planning Committee meets 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of each month

## Other

David asked Jennifer whether we have any more Life Transitions folders remaining. She said that we may have a couple of hundred left. Tina Purser-Langley may know exactly how many we have. Beverly asked whether there would be enough of them for the Palliative Care Coalition to pass out at their Ambassador Program. Jennifer and Marsha responded that the Coalition should use the information that it already has. Jean said that maybe if the Coalition would be willing to pay for them they could use them. David suggested they could print the pages from the CoA website. Jean suggested that they use the sheets that David and Tina developed with the QR code.

Marcia said that she is concerned that we will not have enough for the Ingleside presentation. Jean said that we should probably do another folder stuffing party. We will ask Tina Purser-Langley how many of the documents we still have.

## Adjourn

### Action Items

1. Jennifer Long will ask staff what the status is of getting the Ambassador Program request form on the CoA's website. **Beverly sent a note to Jennifer on 7/9/2024.**
2. Marie Sloan will ask the librarian at her library if we can hold an Ambassador presentation there in September. **Ask Marie about it at the July CC meeting.**
3. Marsha Weber will check on the status of the presentation slide that the Health and Wellness Committee is developing for the Ambassador Program. **Slide received 7/8/2024.**
4. The Committee will set up a meeting with the new County librarian once that person is appointed to discuss the CoA's Library Liaison Program and what changes should be made. **We will wait until the full-time librarian is named.**
5. We will ask for more Library Liaison volunteers from the entire CoA. Beverly Rollins will bring it up at the next CoA meeting and Jean Dinwiddie will ask Tremayne Jones to send a note to the CoA and alumni. **Beverly mentioned it at the CoA meeting and Jean sent a note to Tremayne on 7/9/2024. A few responses have been received.**
6. We need to make sure we have the correct phone number on the Access Hears Factsheet. **Note sent on 7/9 to David Engel to confirm.**
7. After David Engel finishes his revisions on the Factsheets he will send them back to the appropriate Committees for review. **Note sent on 7/9 to David for status.**

8. The Communications Committee will develop a budget statement that says what its priorities are and why—an issue paper saying what we are trying to do and who we want to reach. It needs to be submitted to the Public Policy Committee before its July meeting. Jean Dinwiddie will get the Age Friendly Communications Committee’s vision statement for our Committee to borrow from. **Budget statement was sent to David in June.**
9. Jean Dinwiddie will ask Shawn Brennan about when the website workgroup is expected to review the new Senior Site. **Jean sent a note to Shawn on 7/8. Shawn responded that no date is scheduled yet.**
10. Jennifer Long will ask Tina Purser-Langley how many of the Life Transition folders we still have. **Marcia Pruzan asked Tina and Tina said she has enough for Ingleside presentation and Oasis presentation but we need to soon have a stuffing party. She also said that she may have money for printing.**