

Communications Committee Meeting  
**Minutes**  
**October 21, 2024**

**Attendees**

**CoA**

Jean Dinwiddie, Co-chair  
Beverly Rollins, Co-chair  
Linda Bergofsky  
Bob Levey  
Kathleen McGuinness  
Yvette Monroe  
Barbara Selter  
Marie Sloan  
Katie Smith

**Alumni**

Marcia Pruzan

**Staff**

Jennifer Long, Montgomery County Aging and Disability Staff  
Tina Purser-Langley, Montgomery County Senior Health and Wellness Coordinator

**Guests**

Odile Brunetto

**Roll Call**

The September 2024 minutes were approved.

Jean Dinwiddie announced that Linda Bergofsky and Marie Sloan will be the co-chairs of the Committee next year. Beverly Rollins and Jean thanked them for agreeing to do this.

**Meeting with Dr. Kimberly Johnson, Director, Area Agency on Aging**

Jean reported that Dr. Johnson could not attend today's meeting because of a meeting with the County Executive. We will try to schedule her for the November meeting.

## **Ambassador Program**

Jean reported on where the Committee stands with the Ambassador Program. The full CoA approved the report that was prepared about the pilot program and it was sent to Dr. Bridgers, Dr. McGhee, and Dr. Johnson. In addition, Beverly and Jean sent the Executive Summary to the Public Policy Committee for it to provide to the legislators who participate in the Legislative Breakfast.

Jean noted that the Committee has been asked by the Aging and Disability staff to hold off on scheduling Ambassador presentations until a new Community Outreach Manager is hired. The individual has been identified and is in the hiring process. . She stated that a presentation is scheduled at Holiday Park Senior Center in December featuring CoA alumnus, Marcia Pruzan, and CoA member, Virginia Cain. Jean commented that, currently, we should not turn down requests for the presentations, but we should not promote them.

Linda Bergofsky asked whether the Ambassador presentations will be listed on the CoA's website. Jean said that we have asked Dr. Johnson to consider doing that, and also include on the site a request form for a presentation. The requests, however, will have to go to a Montgomery County email address and we need to figure out whose address that would be. Jean asked whether the calendar should be on both the CoA's website and the County's Senior Website. Several members agreed that the calendar should go on both.

Jean said that we need to prepare a press release regarding the December presentation. The press releases go through the County's Public Information Office.

Barbara Selter stated that the Bannockburn Village Association has requested a presentation, and she asked whether she can go ahead and do it. She is on its Board. The presentation is scheduled for December 15 and will be held at their clubhouse. Barbara already has the needed handouts. The Village heard about the Ambassador Presentations through word of mouth. Jean said that holding the presentation is ok.

## **Library Liaison Program**

Jean stated that we have a new director of libraries, Darcell Graham. Ms. Graham will be invited to meet with the Committee in December.

Jean noted that we are now sending emails on a quarterly basis to the regional library managers asking them to confirm that CoA's older adult materials are in stock at the libraries. The regional managers have been responding to our emails. Jean commented that in light of those emails the Liaisons do not need to visit their libraries as often as they do for the Liaison Program.

## **CoA Brochure**

Jean asked the members to discuss whether we should pursue redoing the CoA brochure. She asked, "Would it be of any value?" Odile Brunetto responded that in the past the brochure was very useful but today it may not serve the purpose that it once did. Kathleen McGuinness asked

whether the *Beacon* ever prints information about the CoA, and if it does, is a CoA brochure needed? She noted that a lot of older individuals still like to see paper and have something to touch. Jean stated that she is leaning against having the brochure again because it simply tells what the CoA is, not about services and programs the County provides. Marcia Pruzan commented that it might not be bad to have something to handout at the presentations that tells what the CoA is.

Linda stated that she likes the idea of a postcard about the CoA with a QR code. She is wondering whether a monthly CoA newsletter would be a good idea, and having a QR code would be beneficial in that regard – individuals would be directed to the website containing the newsletter. Tina said that the CoA could add information to the County’s Aging and Disability Resource Unit’s newsletter. Linda suggested that the newsletter could be named something like the “Commission Corner.” Katie Smith noted that she likes the idea of having a postcard at events because it provides something tangible for the audience members to see. There would be two different audiences for the brochure or the postcard—one would be for possible new CoA members, and the other for the general public.

The question was asked about how individuals find out about applying for membership to the CoA. Comments were made that some of the Councilmembers advertise it, as does the County Executive. Also, the County’s Senior Website advertises it.

Jean stated that it sounds like a postcard with both County resources and information about the CoA would be good. Marcia said that the postcard will need to have more than a QR code because a lot of individuals do not know how to access them. There will need to be another way to access the websites. Jean suggested maybe a bitly address could be offered on the postcards, too. She noted that the CoA will probably have to get the PIO involved in this discussion, too. Odile commented that sometimes the CoA can do things without going through the PIO.

Jean asked whether anyone is interested in taking a stab at designing the postcard. Marie asked whether we need to get the full CoA’s approval. Jean said that once the Committee develops a draft then that draft can be shared with the full CoA for comment. Katie suggested that the Committee can use CANVA software to help design it.

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

Jean reported the following calendar for the upcoming 50+ programs:

- October – Ingrid Lizama, LHI, and Ralph Lokin of the League of Women Voters
- November – Ruth Kershner, Caregivers Month
- December – Staying Connected During the Holidays

Jean stated that for the December program they may try to feature someone from Senior Planet and also someone from the Recreation Department. Senior Planet could help individuals connect with others electronically. Linda suggested that we include other cultures that celebrate holidays at the same time as Christmas in the December program.

Jean reminded everyone that the Planning Committee meets the first Friday of each month.

### **Marian Merewitz's Proposal for Promoting Older Adult Information**

Marian Merewitz is a volunteer with Montgomery Community Television and has produced public access television shows since the early 1990s. She now wants to make videos that can be distributed throughout the County on public access television and YouTube and at venues such as doctor's offices to inform the public about older adult programs and services. She would like to enlist the aid of the CoA on helping with this, such as identifying who and what types of services should be highlighted and even possibly participating in the production of the videos.

Jean commented that she loves the idea of doing this. She suggested that maybe fact sheets could also be made available. Barbara Selter agreed, saying that it is a wonderful idea, and she does not think it would be difficult to distribute the videos to doctors' offices. Linda said that some medical offices have their own programming so we would have to figure out what places such as Johns Hopkins and MedStar use. She also thinks it is a great idea and may bring up information that doctors often do not talk about. Katie noted that we should get more information from Marian before we make a decision about this project. Jean suggested that we have Marian attend our next meeting to discuss this.

Jean closed by saying that for the Committee's November meeting we will invite Dr. Johnson and Marian to talk with the group.

**Adjourn**

### **Action Items**

1. Contact Dr. Kimberly Johnson and try to schedule her for the Committee's November meeting.
2. Contact the PIO to prepare press releases for the December 9 and December 15 Ambassador presentations.
3. Invite the County's new director of libraries, Darcell Graham, to the Committee's December meeting.
4. Invite Marian Merewitz to the Committee's November meeting to discuss her plans to make and distribute older adult informational videos.
5. Develop a draft CoA information postcard with a QR code.