

**District of Columbia Commission on Aging
Meeting Minutes for
Wednesday, May 24, 2017**

Commissioners Present

Romaine Thomas; Ron Swanda; Grace Lewis; George Arnstein; Guleford Bobo; Carolyn Nicholas; Constance B. Woody; Marguerite Pridgen; and Brenda Atkinson-Willoughby.

Ex-Officio Members

Jean Badalamenti, DCPL; and Sheila Jones, DHS.

D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) Staff Present

Garret King, Chief of Staff; Tanya Reid, Executive Assistant; and Michael Kirkwood, General Counsel.

Guests Present:

Gail Kohn, Age-Friendly DC; and Hannah Miller, Corewood Homecare.

Call to Order

Chairwoman R. Thomas (Chairwoman) called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Inspiration

Chairwoman shared a message from a book written by George Bernard Shaw regarding two things to live an active life.

Review and Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes from the Commission's April 19, 2017, meeting were reviewed; there was a correction for page six, paragraph two. The minutes were approved upon condition that the correction be made.

Presentations

A. Accessing Meeting Minutes: Tanya Reid, Executive Assistant, DCOA

Ms. Reid gave a brief presentation on how and where to access the Commission's meeting minutes on www.open-dc.gov.

Questions/Concerns:

Vice-Chair Swanda: If we wanted to see something prior to 2013 is that possible? It's Ms. Reid's understanding that the meeting minutes prior to 2013 were lost after the agency's move from 441 4th Street, NW to 500 K Street, NE. However, Ms. Reid agreed to check to confirm if prior minutes exist and to follow-up with the Commission.

B. Age-Friendly DC Update: Gail Kohn, AFDC Program Manager

AFDC Initiative's Origin

The World Health Organization (WHO) came up with the idea of age-friendly cities in 2005. DC joined the WHO network fairly early. The world has engaged in the initiative; some countries are not engaged, however. AARP is the WHO's agent in the U.S. However, AARP began after DC's initiative was underway. Jurisdictions are finding this an easy way to frame changing themselves to age-friendly cities.

The process: 1) Study Phase; 2) Planning Cycle; 3) Implementation Phase; and 4) Evaluation Phase. They've wanted more community involvement.

The 2012-2017 strategies are still being implemented. Sessions are being held around the city. This is all about setting the stage for the 2018-2022 taskforce. A new taskforce will be formed and new initiatives established.

Well-being Study

Emily Morrison was unable to attend today's meeting. She's been studying the well-being of DC residents across the city. She's been working with undergraduate students, many of whom have never spoken with adults older than their parents. The well-being study is going to be very revealing!

Questions/Concerns:

Vice-Chair Swanda: Can we get a written report? Ms. Morrison was going to present slides; Ms. Kohn does not know if she has a written report. However, if there is a published report Ms. Kohn has agreed to share it with the Commission.

AFDC Survey

Ms. Kohn requested copies of the survey she forwarded to the Commissioners in advance of today's meeting. Commissioners who did not bring their completed surveys with them were provided with copies to complete during the meeting. Ron Swanda agreed to collect the forms in Ms. Kohn's absence because she needed to depart the meeting early.

Ms. Kohn has four research interns starting next week in her office. She would like for the Commissioners to host the students in their neighborhoods and assist them with facilitating discussions on issues of concern to seniors. Specifically, her office is interested in what residents are doing: Are they using parks? Are they driving, or what types of transportation are they using?

Housing is one of three things that are most important; Ms. Kohn's office is interested in whether DC is making progress regarding housing people. The focus now is on home sharing. Gallaudet and Howard Universities are both challenged with having enough housing. They see the value of having students live with people who are 50+. For example, students with handyman skills training would be able to share their skills with seniors they are housed with.

The interns will start with a week of orientation. They will get an AFDC domain each week to focus on. They will draft stories about seniors and take photos of the people they meet. Ms. Kohn asked the Commissioners to provide the interns with feedback regarding the community

consultations. She would like to know if the groups' opinions coincide with the opinions from the previous community engagements that were held around the city.

The discussions will be held at seven public library branches located around the city: Anacostia, Lamont Riggs, Tenleytown, Southwest, Northwest One (inside a school and recreation center), Deanwood, and Chevy Chase.

Questions/Concerns

Commissioner Pridgen: What happens after the sessions and what is the incentive for participation? Having a final impact on what has been heard over the last three months, being able to affect the final report that goes to the WHO, according to Ms. Kohn.

Commissioner Willoughby: Will the students be at the libraries interviewing seniors? Yes. We can make people available to them at the libraries.

Commissioner Woody: Any reason Dorothy Heights library was not included, because lots of seniors go there? The focus was on libraries connected to recreation centers.

Commissioner Willoughby: "I would suggest that you be in all eight wards and consider some other libraries." She also expressed concerns about seniors providing information concerning when they would not be home.

Vice-Chair Swanda: "The form is for the Commissioners to communicate with Gail."

Commissioner Nicholas: Is there any discussion about traffic law enforcement? The community consultations will show that there are fewer people with cars; the fewer cars on the road the better. The traffic issue is something AFDC can approach with MPD.

Commissioner Willoughby: Is there any way for us to imbed in the discussions something about traffic? Yes; it's possible because it's of importance.

Commissioner Pridgen: Will you (Gail Kohn) bring in experts regarding the domains? Yes, people who are knowledgeable about the domains will be included in the discussions.

Vice-Chair Swanda: During the summer there will be ten meetings of ten different taskforce committees. What's different about the activity with the Commissioners is that we want verification on the information we've heard or received previously.

Commissioner Nicholas: Are there work plans for each of the domains? There have been and they've been carried out. However, there are some that nothing has been done.

C. DC Office on Aging Update: Garret King, Chief of Staff

Director Newland had a scheduling conflict and apologizes she could not be here.

Budget

\$936,000 has been added to DCOA's budget by Council member Bond's committee. \$500k will be allotted to the Alzheimer's initiative. \$208K will increase case management support to lead agencies; \$100K will go to Iona Senior Services for intake; and \$128k will be directed for intergenerational programs to give out transportation stipends to seniors.

Announcement/Updates

The senior symposium will be held on June 20, 2017 at Ballou Senior High School. Maxine Waters was invited to be the keynote speaker; the agency is waiting to hear back from her office.

DCOA won the n4a Innovative Award from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging for its Safe at Home program. The award will be presented in August 2017 in Savannah, GA.

The agency's Medicaid Enrollment team, along with staff from the Department of Healthcare Finance, won a Cafritz Award!

Questions/Concerns:

Commissioner Bobo: What do you mean when you say "intake" at Iona? The council decided to restore Iona's intake. The seniors at the recreation centers; how will they register for the symposium? Mr. King agreed to ask the EAC team to provide applications to seniors at the recreation centers.

Commissioner Bobo: He thanked Mr. King and DCOA because seniors were complaining they were underserved. However, the Ward 8 lead agency planned a trip to the Kennedy Center recent; but the bus did not show. Yet, Mr. King stepped forward and satisfied the group. One of the buses broke down but the seniors weren't informed about the breakdown. After numerous calls, the group talked to Seabury; they apologized profusely. They offered a free trip for the seniors and to refund them for the tickets to the Kennedy Center.

Vice-Chair Swanda: Back in May 2016, Director Newland requested help from the Commission with identifying and communicating with underserved communities. The first step was for you to give us data on those communities; may we have that? Mr. King indicated the agency can give the Commission data regarding seniors on the fringes or people DCOA is not reaching.

Chairwoman Thomas: Have you been able to establish a date for the retreat? Last year was the first year the Commission had it in July; or would you like for it to be held in June?

Commissioner Bobo: He visited 6 to 7 sites and one issue that is brought up at every site is transportation. They get a two hour window to do activities; will that window be expanded when they get additional transportation funding? According to Mr. King, they will be able to contract out for their own transportation. I will have to follow-up. The SWCs will plan their own trips inside the beltway. They'll have control of their transportation and will not have to contract with Seabury.

Commissioner Bobo: At St. Albans; the Director has 5-7 people; it was hard for her to get transportation because they don't meet the minimum requirement of people. Mr. King agreed to talk to Seabury about what wiggle room they'll have to work with St. Albans.

D. Standing Committee on Fairness and Access to the D.C. Courts: Michael Kirkwood, DC Office on Aging

Mr. Kirkwood gave a brief report update of the standing committee's request for feedback from the Commission on ways the D.C. courts could improve access to seniors. The following Commissioners agreed to serve on a subcommittee and come up with feedback: Pridgen, Willoughby, Nicholas, and Woody.

New Business

- A. **Retreat:** (lead by Vice-Chair Swanda.) Can we agree to hold the retreat in July? There were no objections regarding the holding of it in July. Communications regarding underserved communities might be a good topic. It was suggested to host the retreat on July 19, 2017. Commissioner Nicholas suggested that we invite the mini-commission chair persons.

Chairwoman Thomas: Requested to establish a subcommittee for the retreat. The following persons volunteered: Willoughby, Lewis and Pridgen.

Committee Reports

- A. **Elder Abuse and Financial Exploitation:** Commissioner Nicholas recently testified before the two council committees and Council member Bonds invited her to meet with her about her testimony; their meeting was successful.
- B. **Education and Employment:** Commissioner Willoughby met with Judge Mary Terrell recently. Commissioner Willoughby is trying to figure out how to craft the committee's pending report; she wants to be clear about the outcome of the report. She also wants to consider opportunities for elders to be educated and how to educate the public about issues relative to seniors. She'd like guidance from the other Commissioners.
- C. **Health and Wellness:** Vice-Chair Swanda shared that money to fund or start a PACE program was in the Mayor's budget and was approved by the Council. It's a small amount to hire someone to work on the program. But it's encouraging that the program will be coming to the District. Also, Medicaid funding was not cut for DCOA and DHCF.
- D. **Governance:** Although asked, no one expressed an interest in the leading the Governance Committee.

Ward Reports

Ward 7: Commissioner Woody asked if East of the River is still in the budget? For this fiscal year, yes, according to Mr. King. They are on a continuation for FY18. Mr. King has spoken to

Mae Best concerning the issues that have been reported.

Ward 4: Commissioner Nicholas reported there were complaints about Hattie Holmes not receiving new people well. Commissioner Lewis think that's something the Center's director should address; the customers should not be setting the tone for what goes on in the site.

Ward 8: Commissioner Bobo is trying to get senior services at the Bald Eagle recreation center.

Ward 6: Vice-Chair Swanda shared that in Ward 6 there is a recreation center that does not have senior services/program. Mr. King expressed that he's willing to reach out to DPR to inquire about the matter.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Announcements

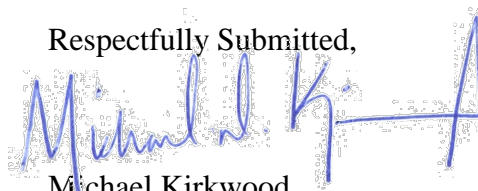
Chairwoman Thomas recently attended Seabury's award program; Executive Ike Leggett of Montgomery County was honored. According to the Chairwoman, it was well attended and was an excellent affair!. She shared the program booklet with the group.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 p.m.

These minutes were recorded by Michael Kirkwood, General Counsel, D.C. Office on Aging, and were formally approved by the Commission on Aging on June 28, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael Kirkwood
General Counsel
District of Columbia Office on Aging