

**D.C. Commission on Aging
Virtual Meeting Minutes
Wednesday December 16, 2020
10:00 a.m.**

Commissioners Present

Guleford Bobo, Chairperson; Carolyn Matthews Vice Chairperson; Gloria Whitfield; JoAnne Hersh; Mary Taylor, Barbara Lee; Hattie Pierce

DACL Staff Present

Laura Newland, Director, Tanya Reid, Administrative Support Manager, Lance Holt, Staff Assistant

Ex-Officio Members Present

Cesar Barreto, DDOT, Aimelia Siemson, from Councilmember Bonds Office; Danilo Pelletiere, DHCD; Dr. Sheila Jones, DHS; Veronica Longstreth, DC Health; Judge Mary Terrell, DOES

I. **Call to Order**

Chairperson Bobo called the meeting to order at 10:06 am. He began the meeting with a moment of silence.

II. **Review and Approval of Minutes**

November meeting minutes were approved as read.

III. **Presentations**

a. **Laura Newland, DACL**

There will be no holiday celebration this year. Director Newland asked the Commissioners if they know of a senior who would like to receive a call during the holidays to submit their names to Tanya. The calls will be done by staff who have volunteered. There will be a special Holiday Meal given to the seniors the week of Christmas. Grantees are making calls to their normal participants. Participation is lower than in-person participation.

DACL will be in contact with DC Health about the procedures for flu vaccinations for seniors. Once people get vaccinated for COVID-19 they will still need to practice social distancing and wear mask. Vice Chairwoman Matthews reminded the Commissioners about the importance of getting the shingles vaccine.

IV. New Business

Vice Chairperson Matthews mentioned that Washington Interfaith Network held a meeting on December 15th. They want people to work with them, so they can go before Council regarding development in the city. The target is affordable housing and homelessness.

V. Committee Reports

- a. **Transportation:** Cesar Barreto reported Move DC Round 2 public engagement will start in February. DDOT will present to the Commission on Move DC at January's meeting.
- b. **Housing:** Commissioner Miranda sent out a letter regarding senior affordable housing, homelessness among seniors, preservation, tenant protection programs. When Commissioner Miranda returns, Chairman Bobo would like to look at the programs that DACL has initiated and the program's success, such as Genesis. Vice Chairwoman Matthews has done research on the Affordable Dwelling Units (ADU) and homelessness among adults, seniors, and children.

Dr. Jones added through the PEP sites they have brought in over 200 chronically homeless older adults and matching them with permanent supportive housing. The challenges they face is that a lot of the clients are not document ready, mental and behavioral issues, and early stages of dementia. Also, people with criminal backgrounds make it difficult for landlords to accept them.

- c. **Health and Wellness:** Chairman Bobo attended a meeting hosted by the Attorney General. There was a discussion about long term care in which they discussed the concerns of caregivers and COVID-19. He learned that if a facility had someone with symptoms, they would stop visits for 14 days.

Also, Chairman Bobo drove by some of the wellness sites and wondered what security precautions were taken by DGS. Administrative Support Manager Tanya Reid mentioned that DACL facilities staff perform site visits to each wellness center. She also mentioned that PSD is doing security analysis of all of the sites to see how security can improve. Also, Chairman Bobo pointed out that Congress Heights Wellness Center has added a socialization hour on Zoom. This is slightly different because the virtual participation is generally a class, however this hour just allows the members to talk and catch up.

VI. Ward Reports

Ward 1: Vice Chairwoman Matthews informed the Commission that the Bernice Fonteneau Wellness Center was having their virtual holiday party.

Ward 2: Commissioner Hersch found a resource for virtual training called Cyber Seniors. They have a free 1:1 consultation service. Contact information: 844.217-3057, Cyberseniors.org.

Ward 5: Commissioner Pierce mentioned on Saturday December 19th at 2:00pm the Wesley House was having a door decorating celebration.

Ward 7: Commissioner Taylor stated she will be giving out socks and blankets to the homeless.

Ward 8: Congress Heights Wellness Center will have a New Year's Eve celebration on Zoom. He also mentioned he's participated in the Legacy senior village for approximately two years. The village uses the Visility phone app to distribute information. He gets a notification on his phone whenever they post.

VII. Ex-Officio Updates

DC Council: Amelia Siemson stated that the Council is wrapping up Council period 23.

DHCD: Danillo Pelletiere informed the Commission that DHCD is focusing on getting as many tenants enrolled in the latest rental assistance program by December 31st. They are distributing the funds in two ways: 1) DHCD will pay 80% of the rental arrears and have the landlords waive the 20%. 2) for landlords who have less than 20 units.

DHS: Dr. Sheila Jones informed the Commission that they have seen an influx of coming into the Isolation and Quarantine sites, especially families.

DC Health: Veronica Longstreth reminded the Commissioners to be mindful of their interactions over the holidays. After Thanksgiving they did see an uptick in COVID-19 cases. DC Health is working with long term care facilities to combat isolation due to the virus.

VIII. Announcements

Commissioner Whitfield: every Wednesday food is giving out at the ARC on Mississippi Avenue SE. Just drive up and someone will hand you a bag.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:21

These minutes were recorded by Lance Holt, Staff Assistant, DC Department of Aging and Community Living, and were formally approved by the Commission on Aging on January 27, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lance Holt

/s/ Lance Holt

Staff Assistant

DC Department of Aging and Community Living