



COMMISSION ON AGING

COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING

Minutes

March 27, 2017

PRESIDING: Sharonlee Vogel, Chair

Members Attending

Jennifer Asher
Reginald Avery
Peter Brunner
Deborah Fleischmann
Susan Hailman
Jan Horan
Julia Mattis
Bob McLaughlin
Andrew Monjan
Eletta Morse

Excused

Angie Boyter
Barbara Catlin
S.K. Shin
Michael Willis

Office on Aging and Independence

Kathleen Swanson
Jeannie Decray

Howard County Police Department

Andre Lingham

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

Approve Agenda

Bob McLaughlin motioned to approve the agenda and Reg Avery seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Agenda accepted.*

Approve Minutes

Jennifer Asher requested a revision to her update in the February minutes. Bob McLaughlin motioned to approve the amended minutes and Pete Brunner seconded the motion. Motion was approved. *All in favor. Minutes accepted.*

Presentation on Stepping On Fall Prevention Program

Jeannie Decray, Exercise Specialist, provided the Commission with an overview of the Office on Aging's new evidence-based fall prevention program titled "Stepping On." Initial research shows a 31% decrease in falls as a result of completing the program. The program meets two hours a week for seven consecutive weeks, and includes a one-on-one followup with a facilitator and a three month check in. The ideal participant has a fear of

falling or has experienced a fall in the last year, but has not fallen more than six times; lives independently; uses a cane or walker outside only; and has no cognitive impairments. Class size is limited to 15 and currently, demand for space outweighs the enrollment space available. Jeannie provided a list of upcoming classes; while the flier indicates a \$28 fee for the series, the Office can provide scholarship funding to those unable to afford the class.

Committee Reports

Caregiving

No report.

Government Relations

Bob McLaughlin provided another update on the County's Transportation Planning. Bob shared that the planners studied Reston, Virginia, another planned community, and are predicting that there will be gridlock in downtown Columbia soon. These findings are leading to recommendations which call for increased park and ride, walk and ride stations which are not practical for older adults who require point to point transportation. Currently the planning does not seem to address alternatives for seniors and older adults. The county should be looking into public/private partnerships to address these gaps.

Sharonlee suggested the county form a partnership with Uber or Lyft and find corporate sponsorship or grants for school age riders and older adults via reduced fees or a sliding scale system.

Health and Wellness

No report.

Budget and Policy

Pete Brunner reported that the budget and policy committee did not meet. Pete shared that the Department of Finance's website is not currently updated with the revised Livable Homes Tax Credit information. He has reported this to the County Executive's office. Pete has worked to have information on this tax credit as well as the revised Senior Tax Credit and the Aging in Place Tax Credit advertised in the Village Newsletter. Howard County Citizens' Association also featured the tax credits in their newsletter. Pete is working with the Village to set up a workshop on tax credits and will coordinate with the Office on Aging and Independence.

Aging in the Community

The committee did not meet, but Eletta Morse shared that she attended the first of Long & Foster's Options in Wise Living seminars at the Hawthorne Center. The first class focused on legal issues and Eletta found it valuable. Tomorrow's session will focus on talking about difficult decisions.

50+ EXPO

Andrew Monjan shared that the EXPO will be held October 20. As the event nears he will be looking for volunteers for a committee to work on the COA booth.

Police Department

Andre Lingham shared that three arrests were made in a credit card scheme which focused on gas pumps. Overall, data breeches are up 64% nationwide in 2017. Andre also spoke favorably of a CNN story on nursing home sexual assault and suggested members try to watch.

Office on Aging Report

Jennie Rittenhouse shared some important dates with the Commission regarding the County's Budget process.

The Office held their annual Caregiver Conference on Saturday, March 25 at the Glenwood 50+ Center. The conference had more than 130 attendees, mixing family caregivers with professionals. Respite care was provided for 16 individuals. Feedback for the conference has been overwhelmingly positive.

The Loan Closet was featured in the most recent edition of the County Executive's newsletter. A short video highlighting the services was prepared and can be found on the County Executive's Facebook page.

Chair's Report

Sharonlee reported that the Maryland House of Delegates on Friday adopted its version and a Senate version of the Maryland Health Insurance Coverage Protection Act to plan for the potential loss of \$4billion in annual Medicare and Medicaid dollars that flow into the state annually, should the Republican-controlled Congress succeed in repealing the Affordable Care Act.

Sharonlee also suggested that the Commission partner with the CA SAC to undertake a study of handicapped accessibility at public venues and look at the County's handicapped parking requirements in view of the increased senior population in the County, while keeping in mind that age does not make you handicapped.

At the COA's May 22 meeting, Clive Graham of the Office of Transportation will return to present the County's Transportation Development Plan, including fixed-route recommendations although paratransit recommendations may not be available at that time.

Senior Issues Heard (Sharing from Commissioners)

Andrew's recent trip to Australia provided him with insights to their retirement planning structure; pensions are paid from general taxes and with employer contributions if you meet asset requirements. For those with assets, retirement is a combination of self-funding and funded by employer contributions. Healthcare needs are met by a system similar to British universal healthcare, although private insurance is offered.

Debra Fleischmann reported that the hospital is working on the full rollout of the Lay Caregiver Act.

Susan Hailman shared that The Village in Howard has four members using their Circle of Care program and has been surprised by some of the needs that have arisen. Both home decluttering and pet care have been common requests. The Village is learning a lot with their first users of the program.

Pete Brunner is preparing talking point on the new senior tax credits. Pete also shared that Gail Bates has introduced Senate Bill 601 which looks to lower the eligibility threshold on the Aging in Place Tax Credit from 40 years to 25 years.

Jennifer Asher attended the Caregiver Conference and worked the LHIC table. In talking with attendees, all indicated that the conference provided them with helpful information. Most attendees seemed to be attending with a specific program to solve; the day proved there's a real need for conferences like this one.

Jan Horan also attended the Caregiver Conference and gave kudos to the Medication Management presentation which was highly informative. Jan has been working to help people get signed up for the Aging in Place Tax Credit; the amount of time required to assemble the documentation has been overwhelming as it can be challenging to find the deed for property built that long ago.

Andre shared that the Police Department will be holding an unwanted medication turn in event in the Wilde Lake Village Center from 10am-2pm on April 29.

Reg Avery reported that the CA Board is looking at their capital budget and recognizes that they need young people but will not forget the needs of older residents.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

Bob McLaughlin motioned to adjourn. Reg Avery seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Recording Secretary: Jennie Rittenhouse

Next Meeting: April 24, 2017, Ellicott City 50+ Center, 7pm