

Communication and Information Workgroup Meeting Minutes - January 30, 2020

PRESIDING: Terri Hansen, Age-Friendly Coordinator

Members Attending

Manuel Evangelista
Kim Henry
Jill Kamenetz
Kelly Kessler
Diane Leonard
Sandy Levy
Georgea Moore
Stuart Rosenthal
Sharonlee Vogel
Judy Pittman
Scott Ripley
Mae Beale
Angie Boyter
Niti Srivastava

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 1:00PM

Welcome & Purpose of Meeting

This was an initial meeting and was considered an “exploration” meeting. The meeting’s intention was 1) to have members get to know each other, 2) learn about the role of the Communication and Information workgroup, and 3) to look ahead to what’s possible in the future.

Introductions

Each workgroup member was asked to write down why they wanted to be a part of the Communication and Information workgroup and then introduced themselves and shared with the group what they had written down.

- **Manuel Evangelista:** He has started a virtual staffing unit which is another way to communicate.
- **Georgea Moore:** information is the integral backbone to everything, it is a critical element
- **Judy Pittman:** Nothing else will work without communication
- **Angie Boyter:** Howard county has great things; we need to get the word out better. People need information to make decisions.
- **Stuart Rosenthal:** Worked for 5 yrs. on the Washington DC Age-Friendly committee and currently on advisory board for Montgomery County
- **Sandy Levy:** Retired research librarian
- **Mae Beale:** Older people don’t seem to get the information that is available. Need to develop programs for older people. Part of Leadership Howard County.
- **Kelly Kessler:** As LHIC coordinator I am always looking for ways to engage coalitions, be synergistic. On a personal note my family was caught in a scam. Serve on Veterans Commission

- **Diane Leonard:** We need to connect the dots (we have great staff) but this is not well communicated. Sometimes work in silos
- **Scott Ripley:** Work in Recreation and Parks Active Aging Programs. Retired police officer. See need for improved communication. Want to reach more people.
- **Kim Henry:** Work for DCRS; want to know how people want to get their information, We need to offer choices.
- **Jill Kamenetz:** I try to get out to talk to older adults in groups, I am concerned people are getting lost; I feel that people only want to deal with acute issues.
- **Niti Srivastava:** Communication is a huge issue for immigrants; 28% of Howard Countians speak Hindi, or a related language.
- **Sharonlee Vogel:** County needs to improve communication; one type of communication is insufficient. However, we are all overloaded but there is not enough depth.

Roles

- Coordinator
 - Terri Hansen is the Coordinator of the entire Age-Friendly Howard initiative.
 - She will attend as many workgroup meetings as she can
 - She will work collaboratively with the Steering Committee.
- Steering Committee
 - The Steering committee will be made of members from the government, non-profits, faith-based communities, chamber of commerce, library, Howard Community College, Howard County General Hospital and others.
 - The Steering committee will receive all the action plans from each workgroup and will determine which recommendations will be included in the final action plan
- Workgroups
 - Members need to be committed and be an active member of the group
 - Each member of the workgroup will need to register as a volunteer on the Howard County volunteer website, www.hocovolunteer.org
 - Each member will be responsible for logging in all their volunteer hours
- Co-Chairs
 - Each workgroup will have Co-Chairs
 - One must be government staff
 - One must be from the community
 - If interested in becoming a Co-Chair, submit answers to following questions to agefriendly@howardcountymd.gov by February 5
 - Why do you want to serve as co-chair of the workgroup?
 - What previous community experience in a leadership role or experience on the topic make you a good candidate for co-chair?
 - Responsibility of the Co-Chairs
 - Keeping the workgroup on task
 - Developing agendas
 - Delivering the work of the workgroup at designated timeframes
 - Meeting quarterly with Terri.

Age-Friendly Overview

Age-Friendly is a community effort and is not considered to be just the work of Howard County Government. It is a joint effort between the government, non-profits, businesses, and the community at large. There are 8 domains of Age-Friendly. Many domains overlap. The Age-Friendly initiative will allow workgroups to explore 1) where we are today, and 2) how we will look 5 years from now. The 8 domains are:

- **Social Participation** – Access to leisure and cultural activities; opportunities to socialize, engage and combat isolation

- **Community Support & Health Services** – Assistance and affordable care options for all ages
- **Work and Civic Engagement** – Opportunities for active community engagement, paid employment and meaningful volunteer options
- **Respect & Social Inclusion** – Programs that promote ethnic and cultural diversity, as well as multigenerational interaction and dialogue
- **Transportation** – Sidewalks and safe, crossable streets for pedestrians; dedicated bicycle lanes; public and other transportation options
- **Outdoor Spaces & Buildings** – Availability of safe and accessible recreational facilities and accessible buildings
- **Communication & Information** – Information sharing through a variety of delivery methods, with respect for cultural and age-related differences
- **Housing** – Housing options to meet the needs of those with differing incomes, ages and life stages

Age-Friendly Process

Developing an Age-Friendly community is a five-year plan

- **Years 1 & 2:** 1) Conduct a survey and listening sessions, and 2) develop a comprehensive action plan
 - The action plan will identify benchmarks and will be able to measure success.
 - The action plan is to be submitted to the Steering Committee by the end of October 2020 and the final draft to be completed by December 2020 in time for the 1-year anniversary of Age-Friendly Howard County on December 3, 2020.
- **Years 3-5:** Implementation
- **Year 5:** Progress/status update

Survey

A survey has been developed through the Howard County Office on Aging and Independence and is in its final stages. The purpose is to get feedback from the community. The survey will go live on February 3rd. The survey will be available online at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Community-Resources-and-Services/Office-on-Aging-and-Independence/Age-Friendly>

A paper copy of the survey will also be available at 50+Centers, libraries, county buildings, and other places throughout Howard County. The survey will be in four languages 1) Korean, 2) Hindi, 3) Mandarin Chinese, and 4) Spanish. The survey is geared toward the 50+ population, however all adults of any age are encouraged to complete it. The survey will be available until the end of February 2020. The survey will be analyzed, and the data will be available by the end of March 2020.

Other Discussion Items

There was a discussion about the Survey including adding it to the Columbia Flyer and the Beacon. Also asked was if a question could be added whether a person is a Veteran. One person asked when the results of the survey will be available, late March was the answer given.

Next meeting

The next meeting was set for Thursday February 20th at 1:00pm at 9830 Patuxent Woods Drive, Columbia. Subsequent meetings will be the 3rd Thursday of each month at 1pm, same location.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 2:35pm.