

<b>MEETING MINUTES</b>	<b>COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING</b>		
<b>Date</b>	September 15, 2020	<b>Meeting Time</b>	10:00 AM- 11:30 AM
<b>Chairperson</b>	Barbara “Reba” Cornman	<b>Meeting Location</b>	Zoom meeting

Attendees:

<b>COMMISSIONERS</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>STAFF</b>	
Barbara ‘Reba’ Cornman, Acting Chair	√	Heang Tan	√
Allan Jensen, M.D.	√	Amanda Smith	√
Barbara C. Brody		Erika McClammy	√
Betsy Simon	√	Molly Martin	√
David L. Roth, Ph.D.	√	Raia Contractor	√
Elizabeth F. Johnson	√	James Macgill	√
Elizabeth Tanner, Ph.D.	√	Christian Dambreville	√
Bishop Dr. J. L. Carter	√	Lily Ross	√
Rev. Lee Michaels			
Sarah Matthews	√	<b>EX-OFFICIOS</b>	
Susan Francis, Esquire	√	Alice Kennedy	
Stephanie Brooks-Wiggins	√	Chris Ryer	
Hon Sharon Middleton, Councilwoman	√	Letitia Dzirasa, M.D.	
Thomas Cudjoe, M.D.	√	Michael S. Harrison	
Tracey Murray, DNP	√	Randi Walters, PhD	
W. Daniel Hale, Ph.D.		Reginald Moore	
<b>INVITED GUESTS</b>		<b>REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
Kate Yorick, Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services	√	Alice Huang, Planning	√
Katrina Schmidt, Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services	√	Sean Bloodsworth, DSS	√
Nikki Barr, Myerberg Senior Center	√	Holly Freishtat, Planning	√
Stephanie Archer-Smith, Meals on Wheels of Central Maryland	√	Leslie Yancey, Rec & Parks	√
Michael Friedman, AARP	√	Nicole Hart, Housing	√
Margaret Pittman, Morgan State University	√		
Lauren Averella, Civic Works	√		
Tasha Cornish, St. Mary’s Outreach Center	√		
Tiffany Nicolette, CHAI	√		
Elizabeth Briscoe, MD Philanthropy Network	√		

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Ms. Cornman called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM. She welcomed the Commission members and guests.

II. Approval of Minutes: July and August

Ms. Johnson moved, seconded by Dr. Tanner, that the July minutes be approved as written; the Commission voted unanimously in favor. Ms. Johnson moved, seconded by Ms. Francis, that the August minutes be approved as written; the Commission voted unanimously in favor.

III. Schedule for the Commission on Aging Meetings Remainder of 2020

Ms. Johnson moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews that the Commission meetings for the remainder of 2020 be scheduled for the second Tuesday, 10:00 AM- 11:30 AM. The meetings will be October 13, November 10, and December 8. The Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

IV. Commission Annual Report

Ms. Johnson moved, seconded by Dr. Murray, that the annual report be accepted as presented, and sent to the current Mayor and City Council. The Commission discussed whether the report should be sent to the current Mayor and City Council or to the new Mayor and Council after they take office in December. The consensus that the report should be sent to the current officeholders, and again to the new officeholders in December.

V. Board of Elections Update

Ms. Matthews reported on the committee convened by several Commission members and partners to support voting by older adults in November. The group will be assisting older adults in completing applications for absentee ballots, and in registering to vote. Ms. Simon commended Ms. Matthews for her leadership and the committee for its work. Ms. Francis thanked Ms. Matthews for her advocacy. She noted that Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Services is advising the committee, but is not officially representing it.

VI. Report from Ageism-Racism Committee

Dr. Pittman reported that her proposed research project is moving forward and awaiting approval by Morgan State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). She asked if the Commission wants to take additional action while the research is being conducted. In the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

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- The Commission needs to decide if it wants to make a commitment to addressing the racism and ageism issue.
- The Commission needs to have a continuing conversation about racism.
- The conversation should include a discussion of white privilege and implicit bias.

Ms. Francis recommended the Commission should have training on anti-racist concepts and then develop an action plan.

Ms. Cornman asked Deputy Commissioner Tan about the legal role of the Commission, and how it might shape its strategy for addressing ageism and racism.

Deputy Commissioner Tan said that the Commission is a public entity, and that all its meetings are a matter of public record. Its enabling legislation gives the Commission the ability to hold public hearings and to hold City agencies accountable.

Mr. Friedman suggested that the Commission begin by reviewing information and data addressing racial and health disparities, including variances in life expectancy, different rates of disease prevalence, and access to health care. Dr. Jensen said that sufficient data is available; the real question is what action is going to be taken.

Dr. Murray recommended that the Commission recruit a trainer to provide the Commission with the necessary grounding on the issue of racism, including a framework and definitions for understanding the issue, and what the Commission can do and not do. Dr. Pittman said that the trainer should be an expert in the field.

Ms. Simon moved that the Commission adapt Ms. Francis's proposal: Commission training to be followed by an action plan. Dr. Murray seconded, and the Commission voted unanimously in favor of the motion.

## VII. Report by Deputy Commissioner Heang Tan

Deputy Commissioner Tan provided updates on Baltimore City Health Department/Area Agency on Aging initiatives:

- Code Red is ending as of today (the date of the Commission meeting)
- The Department has initiated a food box program for City residents 60 and over with the Salvation Army as the provider. Maryland Access Point (410-396-2273) will enroll people for the project.
- The Department is planning an outreach campaign to increase the number of older adults who receive flu vaccines this fall. The plan includes vaccinations on a door to door basis in senior housing sites.

## VIII. Presentation Social isolation and COVID

Dr. Cudjoe and Dr. Roth provided a briefing on social isolation and older adults (the PowerPoint for this presentation was previously emailed to Commission members).

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Dr. Cudjoe provided data on the serious health impacts of social isolation for older adults, particularly those for who are low-income. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified social isolation in Baltimore, as resources for social interaction have shut down (senior centers, faith communities, etc.) Dr. Cudjoe raised the following issues for the Commission to consider:

- How do we address social isolation amid pandemic?
- What should guide reopening? (senior centers, nursing homes, assisted living, CCRCs)
- What impact will a vaccine have on reopening? (Effectiveness, benefit for older adults)
- What impact does long term physical distancing have on health disparities?
- What is the role of the Commission on Aging?

The Commission and partners responded to the presentation:

- Ms. Simon said that based on feedback from the Z-HAP network, that when senior centers re-open, many participants will not be able or willing to come to the centers. We need more virtual resources to connect with these persons, to avoid isolation.
- Dr. Cudjoe said we need both a virtual and an in-person strategy.
- Ms. Nikki Barr said that the Myerberg Senior Center has found that to ensure virtual participation, we need to provide both equipment and training on how to use it for participants.
- Dr. Roth said that planning should envision small group programs and outdoor meetings.
- Dr. Tanner said that a systematic approach is needed, where social isolation is linked to other issues affecting older adults.

#### IX. Updates by Commission Members and Partners

- Ms. Cornman announced that the Health Department and the Johns Hopkins Johns Hopkins Bayview Called to Care program are sponsoring a webinar on Technology for Family Caregivers, on Thursday, September 24. Thursday, September 24, 2020
- Ms. Alice Huang announced that the Department of Planning will be hosting a Citywide Food Policy Action Committee (PAC) on September 23, 3:00 PM- 4:30 PM via Zoom.
- Ms. Molly Martin said that the Area Agency on Aging has developed a plan for reopening senior centers (this plan were subsequently forwarded to the Commission).

The meeting adjourned at 11:42 AM

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