

MEETING MINUTES	COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING		
Date	April 12, 2022	Meeting Time	10:00 AM
Chairpersons	Olivia Farrow & James Campbell	Meeting Location	Zoom meeting

Attendees:

COMMISSIONERS	Status	STAFF	
Claudia Balog	√	Raia Contractor	√
Dr. Yvonne Bronner	√	Alice Huang	√
James “Jim” Campbell	√	James “Jim” Macgill	√
Barbara “Reba” Cornman	√	Heang Tan	√
Dr. Thomas Cudjoe	-	Safiyah Baxter	√
Dr. Jenny Pena Dias-Hayes	-		
Dr. Odessa Dorkins	-		
Monte Ephraim	√		
Olivia Farrow	√		
Susan Francis, Esquire	√		
Dr. W. Daniel Hale	√	EX-OFFICIOS	
Elizabeth F. Johnson	√	Dr. Letitia Dzirasa	
Sonja Merchant-Jones	√	Michael S. Harrison	
Pastor Brian Murray	√	Alice Kennedy	
Councilwoman Sharon Middleton	√	Reginald Moore	
Dr. Sarah Szanton	√	Christopher Ryer	
		Brandi Stocksdale	
INVITED GUESTS			
Harriet Johnson, Housing Authority of Baltimore City	√	REPRESENTATIVES	
Jeffrey Hochstetler, Ethics Board	√	Nicole Hart, DHCD	-
Maura Ford, Ethics Board	√	Ondoria Harmon, MON	-
Tracey Murray	√	Leslie Yancey, Rec & Parks	√
Betsy Simon	√	Sean Bloodsworth, DSS	-
Deputy Mayor Faith Leach	√	Katie Yorick, Homeless Services	-

The minutes of the March were accepted as submitted.

Jeffrey Hochstetler and Maura Ford from the Baltimore City Ethics Board briefed the Commission on the financial disclosure statements Commission members are required to file each year. The Ethics Board has sent an email to each Commission member with the link to the portal which Commission members are to use to submit their information. The email came from Ethics@baltimorecity.gov The on-line form should take 15-30 minutes to complete, and is to be submitted by May 2. New Commission members have 30 days from their appointment to complete the form. Ms. Ford can assist Commission members in completing the form, and can be reached at maura.ford@baltimorecity.gov or by calling (410) 396-7986. Unfortunately, this year's form cannot import from previous year's filing; submitters have to re-submit the form each year.

Ms. Harriet Johnson, Support Services Unit Administrator, RS Employment & Empowerment for the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) presented information on HABC's strategy for seniors. Ms. Johnson represents the Office of Resident Services, which provides supportive services for residents in HABC buildings and scatter sites, and for those participating in the voucher program. Ms. Johnson described services her office provides for older adults in HABC's "low rise" buildings and in two buildings that are part of the RAD initiative: Bernard E. Mason and Rosemont Tower. She presented information on HABC's Senior Plan Strategy 2022 (see attached).

The Commissioners had the following questions for Ms. Johnson:

Co-Chair Campbell asked what Ms. Johnson perceived as the biggest need of seniors. Ms. Johnson said that the older adults in HABC buildings wanted to remain in their apartments, but needed more support services to do so, such as those funded through the Medicaid Waiver. She noted that the waiting list for the Waiver was years long.

Co-Chair Farrow asked if HABC could arrange for depression screening for residents. Ms. Johnson responded by noting that HABC has access to a consultant which can assist with behavioral health issues.

Commissioner Cornman said that residents unable to manage their affairs due to competency issues could have an impact on other residents.

Ms. Tracy-Murray said that she would be happy to be a liaison for Ms. Johnson in tapping into the resources Coppin State can provide.

Commissioner Merchant-Jones mentioned her previous experience working for the Housing Authority, and working with Ms. Johnson. She noted that residents who are having housekeeping issues can affect the quality of life of other residents.

Ms. Johnson concluded her presentation by recognizing previous partnerships with Dr. Dan Hale.

Co-Chair Campbell recognized Deputy Mayor Faith Leach who had just joined the meeting. Deputy Mayor Leach thanked the Commission and Deputy Commissioner Tan for their commitment to serving older adults.

Deputy Commissioner Tan provided these updates, on behalf of the Baltimore City Area Agency on Aging:

- **Staff changes**
Special Assistant Kathe Hammond and Assistant Commissioner Molly Martin have resigned. Staff responsibilities will shift; Director of Community Services Alice Huang will oversee senior centers, which will be under the leadership of Jose Jimenez.
- **Funding Opportunities**
The Area Agency is pursuing several funding opportunities including grants to expand in-home services for persons above scale for Medicaid, and to enhance senior center operations, including an initiative to address the digital divide by strengthening senior center broadband capacity.
- **Older Americans Month**
May is Older Americans month; staff will soon provide a list of activities to celebrate the month. In addition, the annual Area Plan will be due in May or June. Deputy Commissioner Tan will provide an overview of the Plan in the May meeting.

Co-Chair Campbell reported on the Advocacy Committee. The Committee had a successful meeting in March to review General Assembly bills of interest. Several bills the Committee is tracking have passed both Houses of the General Assembly, including

- SB 275 Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program (sets up a new family leave program to be paid for by payroll deduction matched by employer contribution)
- HB 1034 State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home Administrators Renaming and Licensure of Assisted Living Managers and Penalties (requires assisted living managers to be licensed by the State and expands the Board of Examiner's oversight to assisted living facility managers))
- HB 636 Maryland Health Care Commission - Assisted Living Programs – Study (requires a State study of assisted living facilities with nine or fewer beds)
- HB 456 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - State Supplement (expands a State supplement to SNAP for persons 62 and over)
- SB 28/SB 636: (These bills address the waiting lists for Medicaid Waivers).
- SB 357 Adult Protective Services - Vulnerable Adults Registry (establishes a workgroup to best practices for implementation of a statewide vulnerable adult registry).
- HB 6 Maryland Medical Assistance Program – Dental Coverage for Adults (adds dental services for persons at 133% of poverty or lower, subject to limitations of the State budget and federal law).
- SB 838 Transportation – Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Service – County Funding (requires MDOT to increase what it allocates to the counties and Baltimore City for elderly and disabled transportation by an inflation factor each year).

- **HB 73 Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School Programs -Funding** (sponsored by Delegate Lewis, this bill allows Baltimore City to use funds from vehicle monitoring systems such as speed cameras to make pedestrian improvements in accordance with the Complete Streets program).

Commissioner Cornman reported on the Outreach Committee. The Committee is meeting once a month, and is looking at how the Division of Aging can consistently communicate information about services through multiple channels. Director Alice Huang added that the Committee is also reviewing how the Division gets feedback from the community and how the Aging Framework developed several years ago can be updated.

Co-Chair Farrow announced that Commissioner Cornman has been recommended for appointment to the Guardianship Review Board, as the Commission's appointee on that Board. Co-Chair Farrow also noted that there is an opportunity for the Commission to have appointments on the Local Health Improvement Coalition (LHIC). She asked Deputy Commissioner Tan to provide more information at the next meeting.

The next meeting of the Commission will be Tuesday May 10th at 10:00 AM.