

MEETING MINUTES	COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING		
Date	March 8, 2022	Meeting Time	10:00 AM
Chairpersons	Olivia Farrow & Jim Campbell	Meeting Location	Zoom meeting

Attendees:

COMMISSIONERS	Status	STAFF	
Claudia Balog	√	Raia Contractor	√
Dr. Yvonne Bronner	√	Kathe Hammond	√
Jim Campbell	√	Alice Huang	√
Barbara “Reba” Cornman	√	James Macgill	√
Dr. Thomas Cudjoe	√	Molly Martin	√
Jenny Pena Dias-Hayes	-	Rochelle Purnell	-
Dr. Odessa Dorkins	√	Keidra Rowe	√
Monte Ephraim	√	Amanda Smith	-
Olivia Farrow	√	Heang Tan	-
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	
Sarah Szanton	-	Christopher Ryer	
		Brandi Stocksdale	
INVITED GUESTS			
Mayor’s Office of Neighborhoods		REPRESENTATIVES	
Office of Neighborhood Safety & Engagement		Nicole Hart, DHCD	√
Office of Equity and Civil Rights		Ondoria Harmon, MON	
		Leslie Yancey, Rec & Parks	√
		Sean Bloodsworth, DSS	√
		Katie Yorick, Homeless Services	-

- I. Roll Call
- II. Opening Remarks – Jim Campbell & Olivia Campbell
Congratulations to Commissioner Jenny Dias-Hayes and Senator Hayes on the birth of their baby last week.
- III. Approval of February Minutes – Commission Members
The February minutes were approved as presented.
- IV. Dept. of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) Programs for Older Adults – Nicole Hart
Ms. Hart provided an overview of the programs provided by DHCD that assist older adults. The presentation is attached.
Ms. Hart supplemented the presentation with additional information:
 - Older adults who care for children 6 and under or who have children 6 and under who visit at least 10 hours a day could qualify for the Lead Hazard Reduction Program.
 - Older adult home modification programs include installation of safety bars in the home, specifically the bathroom.
 - Larger projects like ramps and lifts should be requested through the Assessible Homes for Senior program run by the State of Maryland.
 - Ms. Hart provided clarification as to the differing roles of the Baltimore City Housing Authority and DHCD.
 - The Authority focuses on subsidized housing and assistance with rental vouchers.
 - DHCD focuses on housing preservation, code enforcement and home ownership opportunities.
 - There is one application for the Lead Hazard Reduction, Weatherization and Rehab programs. This allows for a full assessment; even if a resident request services for one program, he or she may be eligible for additional services. Call 410-396-3023 for information on all programs.

Additional Resources

Water4All Program – <https://cityservices.baltimorecity.gov/Water4All>

Water Delinquency Assistance – <https://dhs.maryland.gov/office-of-home-energy-programs/low-income-household-water-assistance-program/>

Tax Sale Assistance – <https://probonomd.org/for-legal-help/tax-sale-information/>

Maryland Housing Assistance Funds (HAF) – Assists in mortgage foreclosure, delinquent property taxes, ground rent redemption

<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/HomeownerAssistanceFund.aspx>

Nicole Hart – Nicole.hart@baltimorecity.gov

The Commissioners had several comments:

- Councilwoman Middleton noted that she has sponsored successful legislation: The Emergency Security Deposit Relief Act, which established a grant program to help low-income renters pay security deposits. This legislation benefits City residents of all ages, including older adults.

- Dr. Bronner emphasized the importance of persons of color having access to contracts for DHCD administered programs.
- Co-Chairs Campbell and Farrow asked staff to reach out to the Housing Authority for a presentation at a future Commission meeting.
- Reverend Murray said that a future presentation from the Department of Public Works on the issues around water bills would also be helpful.
- Ms. Francis provided some information on resources to help with water bills and tax sales. Her contact information is sfrancis@mylslaw.org

V. Area Agency on Aging Update – Jim Macgill

- BCHD Aging and Care Services is seeking Baltimore City American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funding for two projects: upgrades to senior centers and care coordination/community outreach.
- The Maryland Dept of Aging, in its FY 2023 budget submission has requested \$6 million in new State funding for four programs; Maryland Access Point, Senior Care, Senior Assisted Living Group Home Subsidy Program, and the Congregate Housing Program.
- City senior centers are now open three days a week with congregate meals and some programs. Beginning in June, we hope to move to five days. To confirm days programs are available, contact the senior center.
- Aging and Care Services has partnered with Action in Maturity (AIM) to assist in transportation to senior centers. AIM also provides transportation across the City including to doctor's appointments and shopping. Another transportation program, funded by the Division of Aging is the Taxi Card program (<http://www.caretaxicard.com>).
- Community Services is currently serving 2000 meals a week through several different programs, including the Food Box program supported by Amazon and the Maryland Food Bank.
- The Family Caregivers Program continues to provide family caregiver support virtually. Community Services continues to strengthen healthy promotions and programs and is reaching out to new partners.
- Client Services is working with the BPD and Fire Department developing a training for first responders to assist older adults in assisted living facilities who frequently have behavior health issues.
- The Senior Care Program focuses on in-home service programs for people not eligible for Medicaid. The waiting list which previously had had 500 clients, is now running around 300. Hopefully, additional state funding will continue to reduce that number.
- Advocacy Services includes MAP, Ombudsman, RSVP and the SHIP Programs. The current MAP call volume is between 75-125 calls per day. MAP has recently sent our letters that include resources for residents on the tax sale list and have lived in their home for more than 25 years. The SHIP Program is an outreach program assisting eligible residents in enrolling in Medicare subsidy programs.

VI. Reports from Commission Committees

- Advocacy Committee – Jim Macgill has created a spreadsheet to track the bills of interest during this legislative session. Commissioner Murray is interested in joining the committee. We are currently halfway through the session. The committee is closely following four bills addressing these issues:
 - SNAP program – A State supplement will be increased for older adults.
 - Establishing a registry of adult abuse
 - Reducing the wait list for Medicaid Waiver services
 - Family Leave Bill
- The Outreach Committee will schedule a meeting soon. The first two meetings discussed the direction of the committee and how they can assist in communicating information about programs serving older adults, possibly creating a network to include other agencies.

VII. Updates from Commissioners

Ms. Johnson thanked Ms. Hart for the informative presentation and encouraged the invitation of other agencies to present on issues related to older adults.

The next meeting will be April 12 at 10:00 AM.