

Maryland Commission on Aging
North Laurel Community Center, 9401 Whiskey Bottom Road, Laurel, Maryland
September 26, 2018
Minutes

Members Present:

Rose Maria Li, Chair
Sharonlee Vogel, Vice Chair
Marianne Brackney
John Haaga
Hon. Jordan Harding
George Rebok
Hon. Barbara Robinson
Carmel Roques
Mary Ellen Thomsen

Members Absent:

Hon. Barbara Frush
Joy Hatchette
Dot Principe

Guests:

William (Louie) Kiskowski, Maryland Department of Planning
Cyriac Nchang, Coppin State University, Doctor of Nursing Practice Student
Lynetris Williams, Coppin State University, Doctor of Nursing Practice Student

Staff:

Rona E. Kramer, Secretary of Aging
Ashley Yost, Notetaker

Greetings:

Dr. Li greeted those in attendance and introduced the new commissioner, Marianne Brackney.

Presentation – *It Takes a Village: The Limitations of “Data Driven Thinking”* – William L. Kiskowski, PhD, Geography Planner IV – Projections and State Data Center, Maryland Department of Planning:

Dr. Kiskowski showed several graphs and charts reflecting population aging trends, and the new reality of the continuum of care. Commissioners raised a number of data issues for which the Department of Planning could provide helpful data, e.g.,

- Planning for multi-use buildings, for example, structures built for in-patient care that may need to be reimagined for more healthy older adults. (Ms. Roques)
- Data (including dot maps) helpful for evaluating funding formulas and service coverage which would necessitate consideration of multiple variables and cross tabulations. For example, health care utilization, proximity to an adult day care center, and number of seniors over age 60 with a disability who live within a certain distance from a service or service area. (Dr. Haaga)
- The percentage of people in the city living at or below poverty. (Ms. Robinson)

Dr. Rebok asked if there were certain parts of the State where there is greater redistribution of populations. Dr. Kiskowski replied that people left urban areas only to gravitate back to them later in life.

Ms. Roques addressed using the statistics for possible caregiver services. She was interested in determining prevalence of certain demographic groups, for example, single women over 55, overlapping with people 85+ in certain areas.

Dr. Li asked what other agencies ask for information regarding the elderly. Dr. Kiskowski replied that Transportation, Health and Emergency Management Planners are the three that he could think of immediately.

Secretary Kramer stated that the Department of Aging uses data from the Planning Department to evaluate funding formulas. The Department considers how different factors affect the formula and the outcome. The Secretary indicated that she has put several justifiable formulas in place, and considers funding formulas to be a more easily defensible approach.

Secretary Kramer asked that the requests by Commissioners for data from the Department of Planning go through the Department of Aging.

Secretary's Remarks: Rona E. Kramer, Secretary of Aging:

Secretary Kramer stated that the Department is currently working on the budget for the next fiscal year. She discussed the personnel changes at the Department, including staff who have resigned as well as staff on long-term leave. She explained how this has created a slight shift in the way the Department is doing things, but will not change the outcome or the amount of work being done.

The previous day, the Secretary was with Governor Hogan at a cabinet meeting in Montgomery County. In the afternoon, the Department held a press conference with Governor Hogan to announce Communities for Life, which has now gone public. Ms. Roques had come out and spoken at the press conference. There are four Communities for Life: Keswick, Broadmead, Talbot County, and Ocean Pines. Ms. Roques spoke briefly about Keswick. Secretary Kramer explained that each Community works a little differently, remaining slightly flexible.

Ms. Thomsen asked for an update about Senior Call Check. Secretary Kramer stated that it has been slow bringing people on, but the Department has a new staff person starting at the beginning of October to focus on this full time. His job will focus on marketing and recruiting for Senior Call Check. She said that it would be helpful if the Commission members could provide their feedback and questions.

Approval of Minutes of the June 20, 2018 Commission on Aging meeting:

The minutes were approved without changes. Marianne Brackney and George Rebok abstained.

Goal Setting/Focus for Upcoming Year:

Dr. Li welcomed suggestions for areas of emphasis in the coming year. Commissioners raised a number of topics for consideration:

- Elder abuse and funding for senior care (Ms. Thomsen). Hon. Robinson offered that several senior organizations getting together, for example, and hosting an event would be beneficial in getting feedback from residents about their needs.
- Hearing loss and the impact it has on the aging community (Dr. Rebok). Hearing loss is a major public health concern and has major consequences. Dr. Haaga asked Secretary Kramer if this topic falls within the domain of the Department of Aging, or if this is the responsibility of a different Department that is being neglected. Secretary Kramer answered that she has been talking about hearing aids for the past 2 years, but they are not covered by Medicaid or Medicare, so they are not a priority at the Department of Health. Secretary Kramer will explore applying some of the Department's unused grant funding toward hearing aid programs moving forward.
- Services for non-English-speakers (Ms. Brackney). Ms. Brackney asked about programs/activities for non-English speakers, and how the Department communicates with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) about them. She wanted to know how the Department and the local offices service those people who do not speak English, like with citizenship clinics. Secretary Kramer said that all of the programs are done through the 19 AAAs, and each county keeps statistics. However, much of what was being discussed could be solved with Communities for Life. Dr. Li mentioned that a future presentation about Communities for Life would be beneficial.
- Caregiving services in depth in a future meeting (Ms. Roques). Dr. Haaga agreed and stated that there has been a lot of research on programs for caregivers. Dr. Li offered to consider doing lightening talks in a future session, in order to discuss many topics related to caregiving in one meeting. Secretary Kramer suggested talking to the Department staff, because there was already a lot of focus being put on caregiver services within the Department. It would be helpful for the Commissioners to know what is already being done.

Hon. Harding asked Secretary Kramer if the Department was working on any new programs. Secretary Kramer listed Communities for Life, Senior Call Check, and Durable Medical Equipment.

Other:

Dr. Li told the group that the date for the next meeting might need to be changed, but there would be an email sent out about it.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM.

Minutes prepared by Ashley Yost.