



Ohio Advisory Council for Aging

Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2020

10:00am to 12:00pm

PRESENT:

Governor's Appointments: John Begala, Louis Borowicz, Semanthie Brooks, John Corlett, Misty Crosby, Stephanie Garrett, Diane Redden, Marian Schuda, Denise Shockley, Manish Srivastava, Philip Walton, and Lori Wengerd

Ex-Officio Legislative Appointments: Rep. Thomas West, Sen. Steve Wilson, and staff from Sen. Hearcel Craig's office participating as proxy.

Ex-Officio Cabinet Agencies: Icilda Dickerson (ODM), Adreana Tartt (MHAS), and Will McHugh (ODH)

ODA: Director Ursel McElroy, Assistant Director Julie Trackler, Stacy Browning, Ashley Davis, Matt Hobbs, Alex Lapso, Erin Pettegrew, and Jennifer Stires

Director McElroy, with assistance from Ashley Davis, called the meeting to order. Alex Lapso took the roll and a quorum was present.

Director McElroy advised that Ashley Davis will be the main point of contact for the advisory council. Alex Lapso is also a point of contact.

Director McElroy addressed the role and expectation for the advisory council which includes:

- Advise the director of the Department of Aging and offering guidance;
- Represent the interests of older adults;
- Conduct public hearings;
- Help develop and implement the State Plan on Aging;
- Review and comment on the state agency plans, budgets and policies which affect older adults;
- Develop recommendations for administrative or legislative action;
- Disseminate information concerning older persons;
- Serve as ambassadors for the Department at the local level by visiting, sharing, and gathering information and ideas.
- Consultant with experts, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers; and
- Make decisions around best practices, policies research, and budgetary items as it relates to aging within the State of Ohio;

Director McElroy added that Ohio has the sixth largest older adult population in the nation.

Ashley Davis provided an overview of advisory council bylaw revisions. This information was provided with the meeting invitation and is available in the share file. The revisions will be subject to a vote at the next meeting. Members were asked to comment on the current bylaws and the draft revisions.

Ashley Davis discussed the nominations and elections of officers. Both Chair and Vice Chair positions are vacant. Two members have previously expressed interest in the Chair position:

- Lori Wengerd
- Philip Walton

Members may submit their names for consideration. The election will take place next meeting.

Ashley Davis advised that information related to the advisory council is available in a share file. New members will be provided access by the department.

Director McElroy provided a general update on the department's ongoing work during the COVID-19 emergency. The Director spoke about the department's coordination with the departments of Medicaid, Development Disabilities, and Health to address the needs of the aging network during this challenging time. The Director also addressed the Governor's Responsible Restart Ohio initiatives and their application to the aging network.

At the request of Lori Wengerd, the Director provided information on the newly created Staying Connected Program to offer wellness checks and reduce isolation for older Ohioans.

John Begala asked whether the BMV could offer specific business hours for older adults. Director McElroy will follow-up with Registrar Norman at the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

John Begala indicated that there has been some resistance towards certain restrictions during the emergency. He asked if anything been done with buttons that say "thank you for wearing your mask" that the Golden Buckeye Card members can wear when they go to the grocery store. Director McElroy expressed interest in leveraging the Golden Buckeye Card program and will look into it.

Director McElroy provided an update on federal investments to Ohio's aging network, Older Americans Act programs, and state approval to release these dollars by increasing the department's appropriation authority. The Director also briefly touched on the state's economic outlook and related budgetary reductions to address solvency.

Director McElroy discussed the public-private partnerships benefiting the aging network which include:

- Many pallets of donated hand sanitizer and personal protective equipment (PPE), which have been shipped to AAAs around the state to protect home and community-based providers and to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 among older Ohioans; and
- 13 pallets of non-medical dust masks which were shipped to Ohio's 12 AAAs.

Several businesses provided donations of hand sanitizer and bottling supplies, coordinated by the Ohio Manufacturing Alliance to fight COVID-19. Those businesses include Anheuser-Busch, Axium, Cleveland Whiskey, GOJO Industries, Manufacturing Advocacy & Growth Network (MAGNET), Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction's Penal Industries, and Proctor & Gamble. AEP Ohio, Anthem, Inc., Fiat Chrysler Automobiles US, and Meijer, Inc. donated the masks. In addition to the movement of materials and supplies by the Ohio Department of Transportation, R & L Transfer delivered the pallets to the AAAs at a greatly discounted rate.

Marian Schuda requested that such donations should be publicly acknowledged and touted. Director McElroy responded that information is available on the department's website and also shared via press releases. Additionally, the department is represented on the Philanthropy Strike Force Team.

Phil Walton agreed with Marian's comments and further expressed an appreciation for the volume of supplies that ready for distribution in Northwest Ohio. Director McElroy agreed. Assistant Director Trackler added that the AAA's have templates to do local news releases as well. Within the Ohio Department of Aging, there is a plan to share this information via social media.

Alex Lapso provided the following legislative update, which is also available in the share file:

State Legislation

- HB 287 – Bill has passed and most recently sent to the Governor for his action. This bill will require that Medicaid Home and Community Based Services waivers to reserve a portion of their capacity for the dependents of military members who transferred to Ohio and are receiving similar services in another state.
- HB 441 – Bill received its 2nd hearing. This bill requires EMS personnel and peace officers receive dementia training related to identifying and interacting with individuals who are living with dementia.
- Two bills that are currently being heard in the House of Aging Long-Term Committee.
 - HB 461 – Authorize the use of electronic monitoring devices/Authorize the use of cameras in a nursing home units under specified circumstances.
 - HB 498 – (receiving its 3rd hearing today) Authorizes a refundable one-time tax credit of up to \$5,000 for costs associated with disability related home modifications for those aged 60 and older.
- HB 679 – Bill received its 2nd hearing. This bill expands and clarifies tele-health services requirements for health plans as well as Medicaid programs.
- HB 606 – This bill provides civil immunity for health care and emergency services provided during a government-declared disaster or emergency and grants immunity to essential workers who transmit COVID-19. The bill assed the House on May 28 by a vote of 84 to 9.
- HB 308 – Most recently passed the Senate on June 3 by a vote of 24 to 9. This bill would expand existing civil immunity for health-care workers and facilities throughout health emergencies.

Federal Legislation

- ODA received \$8.8 million to support home delivered meal and nutrition services. This came from the Families First Coronavirus Response Act: Phase 2
- ODA received approximately \$31 million from the CARES Act which stands for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.
- ODA received \$29.3 million to support Older Americans Act Services, including support for the Ombudsman program under Title VII of the Older Americans Act.
- ODA received a \$1.7 million grant from ACL to help support no wrong door relief efforts.

On behalf of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, Erin Pettegrew provided an overview of the office's response to the pandemic. Erin spoke about resident contacts and managing complaints and investigations. The office is reviewing infectious disease control policies and helping to coordinate window visits for loved ones of long-term care residents. Discharges remain the top complaint.

Matt Hobbs provided an updated on the Division for Community Living. Matt said that the Division oversees the Medicaid programs administered by and coordinated through ODA. This includes administration of the PASSPORT and the Assisted Living waivers as well as Ohio PACE Program in Northeastern Ohio. There are approximately 22,000 participants who are receiving services provided by 2400 certified providers. The division also oversees the PASRR program. Matt also provided that ODA has continued to coordinate with ODM to discuss feedback received from the PAA's, MCO's, the Ohio HomeCare Waiver, case management agencies, providers, and others in the field. The outcome of this work was the development of emergency protocols issued to the field. Matt concluded that the department had conducted webinars to provide regular updates on changes to the programs.

Ashley Davis provided an update on the Elder Connections Division. Ashley spoke about the federal investments administered through the Administration for Community Living to the state, as well as the expansion of the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Lastly, Ashley addressed the Summary Assessment of Older Ohioans which informs our Strategic Action Plan on Aging. Initial findings relate to life expectancy and disparities thereof, as well as housing and transportation. This information is available on the department's website and the advisory council's share file.

Separately, Ashley Davis indicated that advisory council members must take yearly ethics training. This will be shared via email and also available on the share file.

A discussion, led by Director McElroy, ensued. The Director asked the members what their expectation was for the advisory council. Ashley Davis helped to facilitate the conversation.

Misty Crosby appreciated the budget and legislation updates.

Semanthie Brooks is interested in advocacy and the department's role in advocacy, lobbying, and related policy decisions. Alex Lapso responded to Semanthie's questions. Semanthie expressed particular interest in the pending immunity bills. At the request of Director McElroy, Alex was asked to further address Semanthie's questions after the meeting.

John Corlett appreciated the budget update and expressed an interest in being notified of how the department is handling ongoing budget changes. John also would like to know more about ODA's budget priorities.

Marian Schuda discussed her background as a geriatrician and expressed willingness to use her professional experiences for the benefit of the advisory council.

Philip Walton would like for the advisory council to fulfill their role and offer guidance and suggestions to the department. Director McElroy responded that that is the ultimate goal moving forward.

Denise Shockey expressed interest supporting kinship caregiving and expanding broadband access to rural areas.

John Begala would like to learn and know more about advisory council members at the next meeting, since there are new members. John also would like to address legislative priorities.

Diane Redden would like to hear more about what is going on around the state.

Lori Wengerd is involved with the needs of older adults locally and would like to be of use to the department moving forward. Lori is seeking opinions from people who can help action certain matters impacting older adults.

Stephanie Garrett is willing to be of assistance to help address the needs of older adults.

Additional considerations included addressing ageism, particular during the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on older adults and society at-large.

With no further business before the advisory council, the meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.