



Ohio Advisory Council for Aging
Meeting Minutes
August 12, 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: Sen. Hearcel Craig, Rep. Tim Ginter, Sen. Wilson, and Rep. Thomas West was represented by Sean McCann

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

ODA: Assistant Director Julie Trackler, Stacy Browning, Ashley Davis, Alex Lapso, and Bev Laubert

At 10:03am, Ashley Davis called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and participants to the meeting.

Alex Lapso called the roll and a quorum was present.

Alex Lapso asked that the members review the minutes from the previous meeting. Misty Crosby moved to accept the meeting minutes. Louis Borowicz seconded the motion. Without objection the minutes from the June 10, 2020 meeting were approved. The approved minutes will be uploaded to the website.

Ashley Davis asked that the members review the draft bylaws. She briefly explained the changes and provided an overview of the bylaws as-drafted. Alex read the roll to initiate a voice vote to approve the bylaws as-drafted. Having received sufficient votes, the bylaws were approved. The approved bylaws will be uploaded to the website.

The advisory council then considered the election of officers. Alex Lapso said that two members, Phil Walton and Lori Wengerd, have expressed interest in a leadership position of either Chair or Vice Chair. He explained the elections process. Louis Borowicz moved to formally nominate both Phil Walton and Lori Wengerd for the positions of Chair and Vice Chair. John Corlett seconded the motion. Without objection, both Phil Walton and Lori Wengerd were nominated to serve as either Chair or Vice Chair.

Both candidates had an opportunity to briefly address the advisory council to again express their interest in a leadership position.

With no further discussion, Alex Lapso read the roll to initiate a voice vote to elect a Chair and Vice Chair. By a vote of 10-2, Lori Wengerd was elected to serve as Chair and Phil Walton was elected to serve as Vice Chair.

Ashley Davis and Alex Lapso provided general department updates. Ashley spoke about Governor DeWine's COVID-19 risk level guidelines and explained the colored-coded system and what it means for each county. Ashley also provided information on the Department of Aging's ongoing Friday webinar series and shared where members could find archived information on the department's website. An update on Assisted Living testing for staff and residents was provided. The department's approach to addressing minority health disparities was also discussed. Ashley referred members to the department's website to review minority health updates as well as the summary assessment for older adults. She also clarified how the department is working with The Health Policy Institute of Ohio to coordinate this work. Alex provided background on the phased-in approach to outdoor visitation at nursing homes, which was authorized July 20. He also briefly spoke about the state budgetary outlook, indicated that budget cuts needed to be made for the state to remain solvent at the close of State Fiscal Year 20. Alex concluded with addressing the Ohio Controlling Board's approval of financial relief for nursing facilities and Medicaid waiver providers in the amount of \$182 million and \$157 million, respectively, from the state's CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund.

In response to the department updates, council provided their thoughts and asked questions related to the following:

- Economic solvency of home and community-based providers. Alex responded that the department has had communications with providers and provider associations.
- Number of COVID-19 cases in nursing homes and how the present surge in cases is impacting long-term care and visitation. Bev Laubert, the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman responded and provided background on the Office's work during the pandemic.
- The Department of Health offered their assistance should it be requested.
- Budgetary needs and access to PPE.

Alex Lapso provided a legislative update. He spoke about the Governor signing HB 287 on June 16, 2020. Alex told the advisory council that on June 10, 2020, he testified before the Sunset Review Committee in support of the Advisory Council for Aging. Alex addressed that the Ohio House of Representatives has elected a new Speaker, Representative Bob Cupp. As Speaker Cupp continues to announce changes to his leadership team, the department awaits confirmation on what the Speaker's priorities are moving forward and how they may directly or indirectly impact older adults. With regard to federal legislation, Alex spoke about the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate's proposals to provide additional economic relief during the pandemic. He addressed the HEROES Act and the HEALS Act and the provisions within each bill that directly and indirectly support older Americans and their caregivers.

John Begala asked what the state revenue projections were versus actual revenue. Alex responded that a response to John's question will be provided to the full Advisory Council.

Ashley Davis invited Vice Chair Walton to provide an update on the Strategic Action Plan on Aging (SAPA). He provided background on the SAPA process, including the number of participants, and that the work of the SAPA is a continuation of the work previously accomplished through the State Health Improvement Plan and the federally approved State Plan on Aging. Ashley Davis provided a link to resources available on department's website regarding the SAPA. Vice Chair Walton also referenced that HPIO.net houses SAPA information and reports.

John Begala asked how the advisory council can provide input on the SAPA. Ashley said that the department will communicate with advisory council leadership to determine next steps.

Ashley Davis encouraged an open discussion on the focus of the advisory council moving forward, including addressing the impacts of COVID-19.

A discussion ensued and the following thoughts were addressed and considered:

- That clear expectations need to be established with a mechanism that supports immediate feedback.
- It was recommended the council help influence, educate, and support the need for a vaccine and encourage older adults, particularly rural and minority populations, to get vaccinated once a vaccine is available. Council members responded by encouraging antibody testing and supporting convalescing at home.
- Encourage the council to develop educational materials, including online resources, but also be cognizant of populations and areas of the state with limited access to internet.
- Availability of real-time data.
- Have the council address and recommend policies that combat hunger and food insecurities.
- It was asked that Dir. McElroy provide an update on the work of the Minority Health Strike Force.
- Concerns related to isolation, depression, and suicide rates were raised, and it was asked what can be done to address these matters. A response was provided recommending a review of best practices and sharing that information with the area agencies on aging.
- Concerns about the financial stability of older adults was raised. It was added that certain older adults have just enough means to pay for services but are not eligible for subsidized assistance or are being denied access to services.
- Support consumer voice.
- Council engagement in the SAPA was recommended. It was asked when the SAPA is supposed to be completed and whether the plan is a priority of the administration or the department. Additional questions were asked about the department's role in the SAPA and the approval of the State Plan on Aging. Ashley provided background and responded that the work of the SAPA should conclude in the next couple months. It was asked that a future meeting focus on the components of the SAPA.
- Background and historic context of the role and influence of the Advisory Council was provided.
- It was asked what is the general role of the advisory council outside of a pandemic. Ashley added that advisory council leadership, in coordination with the department, will help determine structure and role of the council moving forward.
- It was recommended that the advisory council be more engaged and be of help to the department.
- It was asked how the council can be of assistance to the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Task Force.
- Questions and comments related to the upcoming general election were raised and how the pandemic will impact the process. It was encouraged that older adults vote absentee. It was also suggested that the council support ways to help older adults with mobility challenges to vote at the polls if that is their preference. Alex will speak with the Secretary of State's office.
- It was requested that the Chair and Vice Chair coordinate a conversation with members to address the role of the advisory council with assistance from department staff, and that a poll be established to gauge members' interest in subcommittees. Council leadership and Ashley and Alex will work together and address next steps.

- It was requested that a roster of advisory council members' contact information be provided to all members.

Senator Craig moved that the meeting of the Advisory Council for Aging be adjourned. Louis Borowicz seconded the motion. Without objection, the meeting of the Advisory Council for Aging adjourned at 12:13pm.

DRAFT