

District of Columbia Commission on Aging
Minutes of April 22, 2015 Meeting

Commissioners Present:

Romaine Thomas, Chairperson; Brenda Atkinson-Willoughby; Jacqueline C. Arguelles; George Arnstein; Don Colodny; Barbara Hair; Janet Heisse; Robert Louis Jackson, II; Grace Lewis; Samuel McCoy; Carolyn Nicholas; Ron Swanda; Brenda Williams; Nathaniel Wilson; Constance Woody

Office on Aging Staff Present:

John Thompson; Darrell Jackson, Jr.; Antonette Dozier; Garret King; Tanya Reid; Deborah Royster

Guests Present: Mrs. Sue Barnes; Ms. Barbara Klein; Ms. Rita Ross; Mr. Joseph Harris; Ms. Lindsay Vajpyi

Review and Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Thomas called to order the regular meeting of the D.C. Commission on Aging (“the Commission”) at 10:10 a.m., on April 22, 2015, at the D.C. Office on Aging, 500 K Street, N.E.

Chairperson Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Commission on Aging. The members of the Commission on Aging reviewed and unanimously approved the minutes of the March 25, 2015 meeting of the Commission on Aging, with one minor change.

Office on Aging Update

Dr. Thompson provided an update on key DCOA activities. He stated that, due to separate procedures that have been developed by the Department of General Services to govern conduct at facilities owned by the Government of the District of Columbia, DCOA will not finalize the proposed code of conduct.

Dr. Thompson also reported on three intergenerational programs: (1) a mentoring program developed for seniors to help elementary school children with reading and writing; (2) a program with D.C. public charter schools where teenagers provide minor repairs for homes of older adults; and (3) an intergenerational housing development at 6025 Georgia Avenue, N.W., where older adults will mentor young mothers with children.

Dr. Thompson also reported on FY 2016 budget issues. He stated that DCOA's FY 2016 budget has been rightsized and reduced by \$2.4 million, and that he does not anticipate any adverse impact on the agency's operations. Dr. Thompson also discussed DCOA's May 13, 2015 Fourth Annual Senior Symposium, and encouraged the member of the Commission on Aging to attend this event.

Committee Reports

Education and Employment

Commissioner Atkinson-Willoughby discussed the recommendations of the Education and Employment Committee, and stated that the committee will present recommendations for action to the Commission on Aging.

Elder Abuse and Financial Exploitation

Commissioner Nicholas reported the Elder Abuse and Financial Exploitation Committee met following the March 25, 2015 meeting, and that an additional meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

Governance

Commissioner McCoy reported that he recently attended the State of the District address. He also emphasized the importance of fully understanding the needs of older adults in connection with programs and services in the FY 2016 budget process.

Health and Wellness

Commissioner Swanda reported that he recently attended the American Society of Aging meeting, and that it was a very worthwhile experience. He also stated that the Health and Wellness Committee is focusing on a study on DCOA senior wellness centers to determine how they are used by older adults in the District of Columbia, and that the committee will ask DCOA for technical support in connection with this effort.

Housing

Commissioner Lewis emphasized the need for more moderate and low income housing for older adults in the District of Columbia, and stated that there is a need for more advocacy on this important issue. Commissioner Thomas agreed and stated that it would be helpful for the Commission on Aging to focus more attention on this important issue by appointing a vice-chair to the Housing Committee.

Ward Reports

- **Ward 3**

Commissioner Heisse commended IONA Senior Services for disseminating information on consumer fraud issues affecting older adults, and she stated that the Office of Attorney General also has a consumer fraud hotline. Commissioner Thomas stated that she will invite Attorney General Karl Racine to speak to the members of the Commission on Aging on this important topic.

- **Ward 4**

Commissioner Wilson reported that he is volunteering to serve for tax preparation, and he is also participating in early voting for the April 28, 2015 special election for the Council of the District of Columbia.

- **Ward 5**

Chairperson Thomas acknowledged the presence of Mrs. Sue Barnes and Mr. Joseph Harris of the Ward 5 mini-commission.

- **Ward 6**

Commissioner Swanda reported on the IRS scam, where persons falsely purporting to represent the Internal Revenue Service demand immediate payment of funds allegedly owed to the federal government in telephone calls placed to consumers.

- **Ward 8**

Commissioner Hair reported that the Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center will celebrate its 14th or 15th anniversary in the near future, and that more information will be forthcoming on this event.

Public Comments

Mr. Joseph Harris reported that low participation in senior wellness centers is a citywide problem, and that Seabury Aging Resources will intensify its community outreach to older adults to make them aware of available programs and services. Chairperson Thomas commended Mr. Harris for his effective coordination and leadership on this issue.

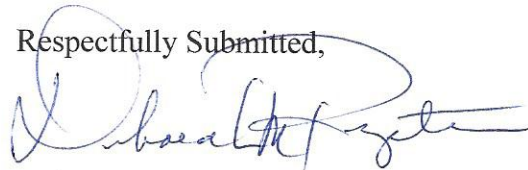
Ms. Lindsay Vajpyi, with the D.C. Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, reported that the D.C. Chapter is collaborating with DCOA in connection with "Brain Health Month" during the month of June to provide greater visibility to this important issue.

Adjournment

Upon motion and unanimous approval by the members of the Commission on Aging, the April 22, 2015 meeting of the Commission on Aging was adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

These minutes were recorded by Deborah M. Royster, General Counsel, D.C. Office on Aging, and were formally approved by the Commission on Aging on May 27, 2015.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Deborah M. Royster", written over a circular stamp or mark.

Deborah M. Royster
General Counsel
District of Columbia Office on Aging