

**D.C. Commission on Aging
Draft¹ Meeting Minutes
Wednesday September 22, 2021
10:00 a.m.**

Commissioners Present

Guleford Bobo, Chairperson; Carolyn Matthews Vice Chairperson; Gloria Whitfield; Maria Wilson; Barbara Hair; Barbara Lee; Nancy Miranda; Mary Taylor

DACL Staff Present

Laura Newland, Director; Jessica Smith, Chief Operating Officer; Tanya Reid, Administrative Support Manager, Antonette Dozier, Staff Assistant, Mark Bjorge, Community Outreach Specialist

Ex-Officio Members Present

Cesar Barreto, DDOT; Dr. Sheila Jones, DHS; Aimellia Siemson, Councilmember Bonds Office; Nana Bailey-Thomas, DDOT; Mary Terrell, DOES; David Quick, DCPL; Marion Speight, DPR

Community Members Present

Nicholas Weil, OpenGov; Heather Foote, Ward 2 Resident; Zachary Smith, DDOT

- I. **Call to Order**
Chairperson Bobo called the meeting to order at 10:06 am. He began the meeting with a moment of silence.
- II. **Review and Approval of Minutes**
Minutes were approved with correction.
- III. **Presentation(s)**
 - a. **DACL:** Director Laura Newland introduced DACL's new Chief Operating Officer Jessica Smith and took questions from the Commission.
 - i. Commissioner Lee asked about medical alert/id bracelets. Director Newland stated that it depends on the person's insurance company and offered to follow up if there was specific senior.
 - ii. Chairman Bobo asked about changes to the hearing support system and requested to have someone address the commission.

¹ The final (approved) meeting minutes will be posted on Wednesday, October 27, 2021, which is the Commission's next meeting date.

- iii. Vice Chairwoman Matthews had concerns about the Seabury Connect Card. Director Newland was aware that Seabury was dealing with some administrative challenges and is giving Seabury a few weeks to sort things out. She also encouraged seniors to continue to report about any issues they hear.
 - iv. Chairman Bobo asked about Safe-at-Home. He knows of senior who has issues filling out the forms. He also pointed out that some seniors may think the application is junk mail because it comes from Virginia. Director Newland asked him to email her the seniors information.
 - v. Vice Chairwoman Matthews discussed, at length, some of her frustrations with seniors getting housing. Director Newland stated that DACL will be working in FY22 to redesign the agency's systems to hopefully address some of Vice Chair Matthews issues. Director Newland also pointed out that some of the paperwork is a federal requirement. She also acknowledged that it can be challenging.
 - vi. Chair Bobo asked if Home Delivered Meals (HDMs) were scaling back. Director Newland responded that the agency is currently scaling back on HDMs. DACL has been communicating with seniors who receive HDMs, asking if they still need meal delivery or can they make to a site. Getting to a site is healthier because the seniors can interact with others. The goal of the HDM program is to service seniors who are homebound.
- b. Tanya Reid informed the Commission that Director Newland and DACL staff made deliveries to Centenarians and that the oldest centenarian was 114.
 - c. Mark Bjorge stated that Hayes Senior Wellness Center won Brain Games for the 2nd time.

IV. Ex-Officio Updates

- a. **DCPL:** David Quick informed the Commission that all DCPL branches were open, including eight sites with Sunday hours. Also, the MLK library is having an event on Saturday, September 25th. Chairman Bobo asked if meeting rooms were open. The answer is yes.
- b. **DPR:** Marion Speight, the new senior service division manager, stated she will be making rounds to welcome seniors back to DPR spaces. Fitness classes for seniors 55+ are open. Seniors can register through Rectrac. Also, DPR will be hosting a free "Harvest Excursion" to the Dutch Market in Delaware on October 20th. The bus will leave from Theodore Hagan Cultural Arts Center. Vice Chair Matthews asked about increased access to the pools for seniors. Ms. Speight stated she would speak with the aquatics team.

- c. **DC Council:** Aimelia Siemson informed the Commission that Council will return from recess on October 1st. Commissioner Wilson thanked Aimelia for responding to her email
- d. **DDOT:** Nana Bailey-Thomas introduced Zachary Smith, the new equity and accessibility program analyst. Chairman Bobo asked for an update on the island near his. Mr. Smith will follow up with him. Commissioner Wilson asked about getting speed bumps at 13th and Arkansas NW. Mr. Barreto suggested calling 311 to submit a Vision Zero Traffic Assessment. Vice Chairwoman Matthews stated people were blocking the crosswalks near Bernice Fonteneau Senior Wellness Center. Mr. Barreto will reach out to safe school coordinator.
- e. **DHS:** Dr. Jones stated Pep-V sties were in demobilization phase. DHS is doing exits into support housing, rapid rehousing, or target affordable housing.
- f. **DOES:** Chairman Bobo asked Judge Terrell about a news report he heard, stating that the federal government was giving money for home health aides and there were over 800,000 seniors in need of an aide. He asked if there have issues with hiring aides in DC. Judge Terrell informed the Commission that DOES worked Trinity College on a pilot program over the summer that trained Community Healthcare workers. The program targeted residents of wards 7 and 8.

V. **Public Comment**

Heather Foote informed the Commission that at the Department for Hired Vehicles, if a person had Metro Access the fare would go up \$2 and rides would be limited to 10 one-way trips to any destination the District. The trip limit did apply to dialysis appointments. Also, Ward 7 has a new Circulator route scheduled to launch in 2023.

VI. **Old Business**

- a. Chairman Bobo readdressed issues with the Department of Housing and Community Development. He stated it has taken a senior 4 years (2 to get accepted and 2 to get the help) to get help from DHCD's Single Family Rehab program. While the senior waited his house continued to deteriorate. Chairman Bobo reached out to Danilo Pelletiere for help but wanted to point out that there could be many other seniors facing the same issues. The commissioners suggested the Eleanor Holmes Norton, Councilmember Bonds, and others should visit some these homes to get first-hand knowledge of the conditions.
- b. The Commissioners will meet separately to determine nominees for the Chair position.

VII. **Old Business**

- a. Chairman told the commissioners about his experience getting a copy of his vaccination card. The process was online, which may be a challenge for seniors.

- b. Chairman Bobo also invited the Commissioners and the Ex-Officio members to join the Ward 8 Mini Commission as they visit IONA's Washington Home Center at 3303 Stanton Rd. SE on September 29th at 11am.
- c. Chairman Bobo also recommends that every ward have a mini commission.
- d. Tanya Reid informed the Commission that once MOTA sends out a notice to two Commissioners who exceeded their terms, there will be seven vacancies on the Commission.
- e. The Commission would like to invite someone from Housing and Urban Development to their meeting.

VIII. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:45am

These minutes were recorded by Tanya Reid, Administrative Support Manager, DC Department of Aging and Community Living, and were formally approved by the Commission on Aging on XXXX.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tanya Reid
Administrative Support Manager
DC Department of Aging and Community Living