

**District of Columbia Commission on Aging
Minutes of June 24, 2015 Retreat**

Commissioners Present:

Romaine Thomas, Chairperson; Ronald Swanda, Vice Chairperson; Don Colodny; Barbara Hair; Janet Heisse ; Grace Lewis; Samuel McCoy; Carolyn Nicholas; Brenda Williams; Nathaniel Wilson; Charles Hicks; Robert Louis Jackson, II; George Arnstein

DCOA Staff Present:

Dr. John M. Thompson; Antonette Dozier; Darrell Jackson; Garret King; Tanya Reid; Camile Williams; Brian Footer; Deborah Royster; Nigel John, Samuel Taylor, Jr.

Guests Present: Sheila Poole; Lillie C. Speed; Glenda Richmond; Nadine S. Evans, Esq.; Vivian Grayton, Seabury Aging Resources; Joe Resch, Seabury Aging Resources; Charlie Daniel; Betty Florence; Joe Harris; Viola Daniels; Councilmember Todd; LaRoya A. Huff, Community Outreach Liaison from Councilmember Todd's Office; Councilmember Charles Allen; Naomi Mitchell, Community Liaison from Councilmember Allen's Office; Jerry Clark; Robert N. Vanzant; Tracie L. Hughes, BEGA Director; Robert White, OAG's Community Outreach Director; Shomayah Shropshire; Sterlin Johnson; Sadaf Ahmad, Alzheimer's Association; Councilmember At-Large Anita Bonds; Councilmember LaRuby May; Councilmember Brianne Nadeau; Rev. Joseph K. Williams, CEO of Emmaus Services for the Aging and AARP District of Columbia State President; Marla Lahat, Executive Director of Home Care Partners; Jessica Hall, Esq., Assistant State Attorney General for Montgomery County; Kelly Davis, Special Investigator for State's Attorney's Office of Montgomery County; and Detective Sergeant J. Satinsky, Supervisor of the Sex Assault and Domestic Violence Unit of the Montgomery County Police Department

Call to Order

Chairperson Thomas called to order the annual retreat of the D.C. Commission on Aging ("the Commission") at 9:40 a.m., on June 24, 2015, at Ross Auditorium, 1160 Varnum Street, N.E. Washington, D.C.

Inspiration and Introductions

Chairperson Thomas thanked all of the commissioners and participants for attending the Commission on Aging's annual retreat, and she thanked the staff of the Office on Aging for their efforts in support of this event. Commissioner Lewis provided words of inspiration. Deborah Royster reviewed the agenda, and thanked Amy Freeman, President and CEO of Providence Hospital, for her gracious hospitality in making Ross Auditorium available for the Commission's use again this year for its annual retreat. Ms. Freeman then extended words of welcome to the Commission and their guests, and noted that Providence Hospital has recently completed the renovation of its emergency care center, which will be formally designated as the "Pope Francis Emergency Care Center."

Remarks from Distinguished Guests

The following members of the Council of the District of Columbia provided greetings to the Commission and their assembled guests: Councilmember At-Large Anita Bonds, Ward 8 Councilmember LaRuby May, Ward 1 Councilmember Brianne Nadeau, Ward 4 Councilmember Brandon Todd, and Ward 6 Councilmember Charles Allen. In addition, greetings were provided by Mr. Robert White on behalf of D.C. Attorney General Karl Racine; Ms. Traci Hughes, Director of the Office of Open Government; and Mr. Joseph Resch, Chief Executive Officer of Seabury Resources for Aging.

State of the District of Columbia Office on Aging

Dr. John Thompson spoke on his impending departure from the Office on Aging and, thanked the commissioners for their hard work, and encouraged everyone to continue to strive for excellence in service to older adults and persons with disabilities in the District of Columbia.

Operational Framework

Commissioner McCoy reviewed the Commission's 'Operational Framework,' including its statutory mission and rules of procedure.

Breakout Sessions

There were three (3) breakout sessions: (1) Housing; (2) Health and Wellness; and (3) and Elder Abuse and Neglect Prevention. Before the sessions began, subject matter experts gave a topic overview. Reverend Joseph K. Williams spoke on housing. Marla Lahat spoke on Health and Wellness. Jessica Hall, Esq., Assistant State's Attorney for Montgomery County, Crimes Against Seniors and Vulnerable Adults; Kelly Davis, Program Manager/Investigator, Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office, Crimes Against Seniors and Vulnerable Adults; and Detective Sergeant J. Satinsky spoke on Elder Abuse, Sex Assault Unit, Domestic Violence Unit, Elder/Vulnerable Adult Abuse Unit, Montgomery County Police Department Family Justice Center. After the presenters, attendees split up into the three sessions and answered the following questions as related to their topic:

- How does this particular area impact the lives and living conditions of seniors?
- How can the City improve?
- How can we develop and establish a better relationship with seniors and improve human relationships and understanding of issues and programs related to senior citizens?
- How can we reach seniors who are living in isolation?
- Recommendations to consider

Housing Breakout

In the housing breakout session, participants focused on two (2) specific areas related to senior housing: (1) resources available to seniors who desire to remain in their homes, and (2) considering the new housing development and redevelopment in the District, what is DC doing to ensure that seniors, currently living in senior housing, will be able to remain and get those

locations permanently designated as “senior housing”? They discussed requiring senior housing to be ADA compliant and the various affordability programs offered to District seniors. They also stated that seniors must become advocates for senior housing issues, hold politicians accountable, and seek information about the developers’ plans.

Health and Wellness Breakout

In the health and wellness breakout session participants expressed the importance of the ‘No Wrong Door Approach.’ Participants also recommended improvements in licensing, training, sensitivity training, and attracting the best candidates to serve residents.

Elder Abuse

Participants in the Elder Abuse breakout session looked at the practices currently in place in Montgomery County and compared them to the District’s current practices. Based on this comparison it was recommended that the District use an interdisciplinary approach between MPD, APS, DCOA, and the U.S. & D.C. Attorney General’s offices; encourage the D.C. Council to introduce legislation to criminalize “undue influence” consistent with similar legislation that has been enacted in Maryland; have MPD develop an elder abuse unit specific to each ward; coordinate with MPD on developing written guidelines for handling elder abuse issues; and stay in contact with older neighbors via phone trees, village concepts, Meals on Wheels, and knocking on doors.

Adjournment

DCOA team handed out Retreat evaluations. Chairperson Thomas gave final remarks, thanked everyone for their participation, including Deborah Royster, Tanya Reid, Antonette Dozier, and Alice Thompson. The retreat adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

These minutes were recorded by Tanya Reid, Executive Assistant, D.C. Office on Aging, and were formally approved by the Commission on Aging on October 28, 2015

Respectfully Submitted,

Tanya Reid



Executive Assistant
D.C. Office on Aging