

**District of Columbia Commission on Aging  
Meeting Minutes for  
Wednesday, September 25, 2019**

**Attendance**

**Commissioners:** Guleford Bobo, Chairman; Carolyn Matthews, Vice Chairwoman; Barbara Lee; Grace Lewis; Mary Taylor; Charles Hicks; Jo Anne Hersh

**Ex-Officio Members:** Hector Rodriguez (DC Council); Veronica Longstreth (DOH); Vivian Guerra (DDOT)

**Members of the Public:** Jeffery Toney (OTR); Matt Ramos (OTR); Anna Scarlett (DHCD); Tim Wilson (OTR); Melissa Bird (Census); Heather Foote (Age-Friendly City), William Duvall

**D.C. Office on Aging (DCOA) Staff Present:** Laura Newland, Director; Tanya Reid, Administrative Support Manager

**I. Call to Order**

Guleford Bobo (Chairman) called the meeting to order at 10:10 am.

**II. Review and Approval of Minutes**

The meeting minutes from the Commission's June 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved with one correction regarding grant review panel.

**III. Presentation(s)**

**a. D.C. Department of Aging and Community Living (DACL) Update**

Director Laura Newland told the Commissioners that the Mayor's Annual Senior Holiday party will be December 19<sup>th</sup>, a week later than usual.

Director Newland informed the Commission that the agency's logo rebranding push will begin October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The agency will use the rebranding to expand the reach of the agency.

The agency is also revising the Grants Policy Manual to make it clearer thereby allowing the agency to hold grantees accountable in a more equitable way. No substantive changes will be made. It will be provided to the grantees and posted to the agency's website once everything is finalized.

Vice Chair Matthews asked the Director if she'd talk to Senior Wellness Center Directors about caretakers/home health aides leaving seniors in the center without care or supervision. Director Newland stated she's talked the wellness center directors several times. DACL provides general guidance and

it is up the wellness center directors to enforce it. The centers are for people who can act independently, if not then, the caretakers should be with that person who always needs assistance.

Commissioner Pierce asked if DACL controlled the aides. Director Newland stated that the organizations who provide home health are regulated by DC Health. If you qualify for Medicaid, they are paid for and regulated by the Department of Health Care Finance. If you do not qualify for Medicaid, then that would be private pay, but the aides are still regulated by DC Health.

Chairman Bobo had concerns with recreation center usage. Vice Chairwoman suggested having Chairman Bobo mentioned the he spoke with Mr. Rankin at AARP regarding the Elder Abuse Response Team bill. Director Newland stated the administration's position is that this is an unnecessary additional committee; the "players" are already at the table at the monthly Elder Abuse Prevention Committee meetings. There are other ways to achieve what people want to see, which is more transparency, what happens with the cases, etc. These things will happen, a lot of positive changes will be happening.

**b. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)**

Project Manager Anna Scarlett gave a PowerPoint presentation on DHCD senior housing programs. Approximately \$1 billion was set aside in FY18 & FY19 through various housing programs to help with housing cost, that includes at least \$100 million annually for the Housing Production Trust Fund which is the largest trust fund per capita in the country. With these funds, seven thousand units of affordable housing have been created, with an additional forty-nine hundred in construction. The objective is to produce and preserve the quality of affordable housing, revitalize neighborhoods and economic opportunities. Mayor Bowser has challenged the region to produce two hundred and twenty thousand units.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Anna agreed to provide responses to several of the questions after the meeting.

**c. Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR)**

Unit Manager Jeffery Toney works for the Assessment Services division within the Real Property Tax Administration. Jeff talked about the several programs in OTR.

Homestead – is for DC residents who lives in and owns their property and the property is their primary residence. The Homestead takes a certain amount off the assessed value of the home. The amount changes annually, for 2019 the amount is \$74,850. If a resident meets the criteria, they can get the Homestead

exemption, but it will not be done retroactively. It will begin once OTR receives the application.

Senior Homestead – DC residents over the age of 65 with a household income for 2019 of \$133,100 qualify and name is on the deed. The senior homestead cuts property tax in half. Seniors must apply for the program. Mr. Toney warned the Commissioners about allowing family members to use their address when filing taxes, because when OTR does audits they look at the combined income of the house of everyone using that address to file taxes.

**d. DC 2020 Census**

Melissa Bird informed the Commissioners about the 2020 Census. The biggest change is that 2020 Census will be online for the first time. DC residents will receive an invitation in the mail to complete the census online. Residents can complete online or complete over the phone. Residents will receive several reminders via mail. If at a certain point the census is not completed, census takers will knock on the door to. It is best to complete the form during the self-response phase. The US Census has limited funding this year. The Census can be completed in several languages.

Everyone in the household should be on one form, relatives and non-relatives.

The Census is confidential. It cannot be shared with courts, ICE, local law enforcement, etc.

Ms. Bird warned the Commissioners to never give out your Social Security number, bank account information, etc. Scammers are already putting out false information.

**IV. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22pm.

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 October 23, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,



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