

## Maryland Commission on Caregiving

September 05, 2024

10:30 AM -12:00 PM

### Virtual Meeting Minute

#### AGENDA:

- Welcome and Introduction of members/partners
- August meeting minutes approval
- Commission Appointments Update
- Marilyn Massey, Alzheimer's Association
- Longevity Ready Maryland Update
- SB202 Update
- National Family Caregiver Month
- Commission Holiday Party December 6th at noon?
- Questions/Concerns/Suggestions/Announcements
- Meeting Adjourned

Commission Member Present: Yetunde Olobatuyi, Shalini Arora, Jennifer Eastman, Trina Townsend, Patricia Morris, Theresa Robertson, Ann Squire, Chalarra Sessom, Anastasia Edmonston, Kathy Wehr, Mary Kane-Breschi, Larry Bram, Terri Johnson

Guests: Estelle Brooks, Senator Joanne Benson (PG County), Dorinda Adams, Morgan Mills, Jennifer Crosbie, Hilary Wiseman, Maryln Masse, Leslie Smith-Ray, Ruth Keshner, Theresa Jeter-Cutting

Welcome & Introduction: Theresa Robertson, Commission Chair

Review and approval of August's minutes: Yetunde Olobatuyi

Motion to approve August's meeting Minutes: Yes

**Commission Appointments Update by Shalini Arora:** Shalini reported that Greg Sesek, OAS Director at DHS, is coordinating with the Governor's Office to address expired appointments. A follow up meeting is scheduled at 3:00 p.m. to discuss this matter further between Greg and the appointments office.

**Longevity Ready Maryland Update by Leslie Ray MDDOA:** Leslie reported that Longevity Ready Maryland, made possible by Governor Moore's executive order, is crucial as Maryland's aging population grows. The mission of MD DOA is to ensure they are prepared to address the rising needs of older Marylanders. She discussed four epic goals:

- Longevity: Focuses on housing, healthcare etc.

- Health Promotions: Emphasizes healthy living with a strong focus on social connections to combat social isolation
- Ecosystem: Prepares Maryland's diverse regions, from Allegany to Montgomery and Somerset counties, for external and internal challenges.
- Economic Growth: Deals with direct caregiving workforce such as paid caregivers in long-term care and home health agencies, and supporting family caregivers. Leslie reported that this is her area of focus. Family caregivers play a vital role in our commission's work.

Senator Benson inquired about the level of collaboration between the Maryland Department of Aging (MDDOA) and Prince George's Department of Aging (PG DOA) and whether there is a disconnect between MD DOA and PG DOA. Leslie responded that she has a focus group meeting scheduled in Prince George's County later that day. Leslie acknowledged potential disconnects due to the COVID-19 pandemic but welcomed further discussion with Senator Benson offline. Theresa suggested a sub-group be formed to further discuss the disconnection of MD DOA and other agencies and will work with Leslie to get a day and time for this discussion. Leslie further explained that MD DOA serves as an intermediary between state and federal funds, allocating resources to various counties. They work closely with Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), which cater to specific counties. Senator Benson asked the difference between family services and the Department of Aging. Patricia, having previously directed family services, offered to clarify and answer that question. While MD DOA focuses on aging, family services encompass border assistance, including support for families and caregivers. She gave an example of her foundation called "Hands of Hope."

**SB202 Update by Morgan Mills:** Morgan explained that, regrettably, funding for the Caregiver Grant Program will not be allocated at this time due to budgetary constraints and the bill's passive language.

**SB202 Update by Senator Benson:** Senator Benson expressed her disappointment and frustration regarding the lack of funding of SB 202, which aims to support caregivers. Despite the governor's initial enthusiasm for the bill, funding has been postponed until 2025. Senator Benson is concerned that the governor may not fully understand the impact of this delay on caregivers who bear significant financial burdens. The senator's primary goal is to secure \$5 million in funding for the program this year, as originally intended. To achieve this, she is engaging in discussions with the governor's office to reconsider their position and allocate the necessary funds. She wants to have the meeting as soon as possible. Theresa, commission chair, informed Senator Benson that the commission would work around her availability for the meeting to occur. She welcomes any commission members/guests that may want to be a part of this discussion. Patricia suggested that the meeting should include the actual caregivers, as they are direct caregivers. Morgan suggested a meeting outside this to strategize before meeting with the Governor.

Dorinda, a volunteer from the AARP, also shared that they plan to meet with MD DOA next week to ensure that the same energy that was placed on getting the bill passed is also there to get the funding. More information regarding this from Dorinda later.

**Marilyn Massey from Alzheimer's Association:** Representing the Alzheimer's Association, Greater Maryland Chapter, located in Towson, Maryland, their mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all dementia by accelerating research, risk reduction and early detection and maximizing quality care and support. Their programs and services across Maryland are provided free of charge. She mentioned that when she met with Yetunde and Shalini a week before, she had announced an upcoming event titled "unforgettable weekend." which was going to be held at Coppin State University but has been canceled. She mentioned a free jazz concert for caregivers. She promised to send the information about their

upcoming events to us when it is ready. She also mentioned that their organization is willing to attend any educational programs in the community, and interested individuals can reach out to her directly.

Shalini thanked Maryln for her presentation. She mentioned that she and Yetunde met with Maryln and Ilene a week before and talked about their upcoming conference and discussed how the state and federal respite resources could be used for their upcoming conference by the caregivers. Shalini asked Maryln to share the information about their upcoming conference with this group and to send the flier to us (Yetunde, Shalini and Theresa) as soon as possible, which Maryln agreed to do. Shalini also suggested that the upcoming Alzheimer's conference could be part of National Family Caregivers Month (NFCM) activity if attendees desire. Maryln reported the conference date as November 9 at 8:30am at Morgan State University. Shalini shared that the Local Department of Human Services ( DHS) is willing to support the Alzheimer association by providing respite care to caregivers attending the conference.

National Family Caregivers Month: Dorinda announced that AARP has allocated funds to support (NFCM) initiatives. She proposed leveraging existing community resources, rather than duplicating efforts by identifying successful local programs and collaborating with AARP to support the commission's objectives. Ruth sought clarification on the funding, and Kathy specified that AARP has dedicated approximately \$20,000. Kathy suggested utilizing these funds to promote Maryland's caregiving events

December Holiday Luncheon: Commission chair Theresa asked about keeping the initial meeting date for the holiday luncheon. Since some members were unavailable on Thursday, Friday December 6 , 2024, was chosen as the new date, along with a new location.

Announcements:

Theresa reported she re-sent the governor's appointment commission website and advised members to fill out the application if necessary.

Shalini reported that Yetunde updated members' information in the Google form received from the Governor's office. Thanking Yetunde for her efforts.

Theresa reported setting up a Google group for better communication and promised to share a video at the next meeting.

**The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 3, 2024, from 10:30am-12 pm.**

