

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON AGING
Virtual
Tuesday, June 14, 2022

Present: Fran Bond, Don Gabriel, Nastasha Iheme, Jim Lightner, Lou Marino, Al Muehlberger, Fred Murphy, Mabel Murray, Sheila Roman, Marlene Siegel, Sherita Thomas

Absent: Lisa Budlow, Roy Moreland, Mindy Morrell

Staff: Dayna Brown, Lynn McCamie, Michelle Mills, Phyllis Myers, Laura Riley, Alison Vogrin

I. Start Time – 9:05 a.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda and the Minutes

- Agenda and Minutes were approved as submitted

III. Announcements

- September COA will be virtual. COA will discuss and evaluate returning to in-person meetings at the September meeting
- Birthdays – Sherita has a June birthday and Fred has a July birthday

IV. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day – Lynn McCamie, Michelle Mills

- This year’s committee includes staff from the Department of Social Services, Legal Services, Baltimore County Public Libraries, private case managers, a few local concerned citizens and long term care staff.
- 1 of 2 events has been held so far. It was geared toward professionals and it highlighted trauma-informed care.
- Second event being held on June 15 is a panel discussion being held at the Victory Villa Senior Center. Included in the panel will be law enforcement, a representative from CHANA and BCDA Ombudsmen staff.
- Michelle asked the COA to take the 6-1-5 challenge - six signs or symptoms of elder abuse; 1 thing you can do about it; tell five friends. She also asked the COA to help spread the word about elder abuse to help keep older adults safe in our communities.
- The Commission was asked to become advocates and join future events.

V. Employee Spotlight

Alison Vogrin – Manager, RSVP (Retired & Seniors Volunteer Program)

- Alison has been in her current role for six years. She has 15 years of experience in volunteer management. Alison is also a volunteer. She serves on the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism Commission for the State, is an Associate Chair for a non-profit, works with animal rescues and participates in fundraising for a Tanzania Hospice program.
- RSVP is a federally funded program through AmeriCorps, a nationwide service program.
- RSVP is specific to individuals 55 and over. The mission of the program is to connect them with meaningful volunteer work and match their talents and skills with opportunities to serve in the community.
- RSVP started back in the early 1970s as a pilot program and it has grown to thousands of volunteers nationwide and their sub programs all across the country.
- The RSVP of Baltimore County is sponsored by BCDA. We have been a sponsor for more than 40 years. It is one of the largest programs in the Maryland-Delaware region, with nearly 1,900 registered volunteers.
- There are well over 1,200 volunteers in the county under BCDA. The RSVP office matches volunteers with partner agencies and BCDA has more than 30 partner agencies. These agencies are diverse in the types of volunteers needed and range from outdoor work to indoor work, working with youth and/or older adults, administrative work or hands-on work.
- A few examples of volunteer service: 65 volunteers prepared over 2300 tax returns at senior centers and libraries for this year's tax season; volunteers with the Hereford food pantry have distributed more than 15,000 pounds of food to those in need in the area; nearly 2900 hours have been reported by the volunteers at the Glen L. Martin Aviation Museum; BCDA Home Team volunteers provided companionship to 175 isolated clients and they delivered to more than 160 food insecure clients and their families; volunteers play a critical role in the day to day functions of senior centers; some are planting trees and cleaning streams with the Gunpowder Valley Conservancy; they are bringing cultural activities and events for free or reduced rates to seniors through Senior Box Office; and, they are assisting in Baltimore County Public School classrooms.
- RSVP has an Advisory Council, with Jim Lightner as the Chair. The Council helps recruit volunteers. RSVP also recruits through BCDA's Facebook page, the *Time of Your Life Digest* and an occasional appearance on BCDA's Comcast show. When someone is interested in becoming part of the RSVP program, they are interviewed to find out what their interests are so they can be matched with the appropriate partner agency.

- Volunteer hours are reported to the Federal government for grant purposes. This year, there were 14 volunteers who reached 4,000 volunteer hours and 10 who reached 1,000 hours.
- COA members were invited to become part of the RSVP program and help spread the word about it.

VI. Old Business

Senior Center Visits

- Senior center visits are a way for COA members to engage in a senior center and provide feedback in a way that Laura and Dayna can use the information provided and make changes based on what is wanted and needed at each center respectively.
- Sherita will take a look at the feedback from visits and find common threads or trends to see if there's anything that Laura and Dayna can look into.
- Fran attended the Prom Night event at Parkville.

VII. New Business

- COA members were asked to send agenda topics to Phyllis.

VIII. Director's Updates

- Ethics Training – COA members will be receiving a link to take the mandatory Ethics Training course.
- “Cultivating a Brighter Tomorrow” event held on June 10 was very successful; over 100 individuals attended. Jim, Al and Marlene were in attendance as well.
- Dementia Friendly Leadership Action teams have been implemented. Fred and Sheila have been participating. Groups have broken into different topic areas to create action steps to find ways to help make Baltimore County more dementia friendly and age friendly. BCDA will be offering mini grants to organizations to try to come up with programs and work with those who have Dementia.
- Vacancies – lots of vacancies to be filled in BCDA. BCDA's new HR Analyst is thinking of creative ways to recruit individuals.
- Senior Centers – each senior center has a newsletter that informs readers what is happening each month at their centers. Attendance in the centers is slowly starting to increase since reopening due to the pandemic. Jill Hall, BCDA's Division Chief of Senior Centers, was named Chair of the National Institute of Senior Centers.

IX. Meeting Adjourned at 10:27 a.m.