

**Oakland County Senior Advisory Council  
Meeting  
Monday, March 18, 2024  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Rock Abboud welcomed all members to SAC meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

**Attendance Matrix:**

Dist	RC	Name	Dist	RC	Name	Dist	RC	Name
1	P	Royetta Ealba	2	P	Mark Kelly	3	A	Suzanne Patton
4	P	Dianne Bubnar	5	V		6	E	Bridgette Giampa
7	V		8	P	Robert Whitcomb	9	P	Ruth Jordan
10	P	Cameron McClure	11	P	Sylvia Whitmer	12	P	Rusty Rosman
13	P	Norene Yuskowatz	14	P	Dean McCullough	15	P	Brenda Anderson
16	V		17	P	Barbara Seldon	18	P	Greg Keeler
19	P	Martha Schlesinger	AL	P	Rock Abboud	AL	P	Marcus Jackson
SR	P	Pat Zawadzki						

Key: District# (AL- Member-at-Large, SR – Staff Rep); RC=Attendance P-present; E - Excused; A – Absent; V – Vacant; Name = District Council Member

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Genessa Doolittle, Public Health Educator, Oakland County Health Division  
Dr. Russell Faust, Medical Director, Oakland County Health Division  
Jim Ellison, Chief of Older Adult Services, Oakland County  
Stephanie Hall, AgeWays  
Katie Wendel, Director of Planning and Advocacy, AgeWays  
Eli Cooper, Manager, Oakland County Economic Development Transit Division

**ROLL CALL:**

Roll call was accomplished. There was a quorum (15 members, 5 presenters).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Senior Advisory Council minutes for the meeting held February 26, 2024, were approved with two corrections.

- Correction by Greg Keeler: Angie Varga is not President for Southfield COSA she is with Parks and Recreation.
- Correction by Dianne Bubnar: relative to Jim Ellison's report, it was a group of thirty senior Center Programmers meeting and not program directors meeting.
- The minutes were approved with corrections.

#### **HEALTH DIVISION UPDATE: Dr. Russell Faust, Medical Director, Oakland County Health Department**

- Dr. Faust reminded everyone to - if eligible - get vaccinated for measles and flu. We now have the first childhood death from influenza.
- Those at greatest risk of flu complications are people 5 years old and under, and seniors with co-morbidities.
- Norovirus is making its rounds in various senior living facilities and long-term care facilities.
- Hand hygiene remains especially important; do not become lax. If you are vulnerable, also wear a mask.
- Bleach as a disinfectant is preferable to hydrogen peroxide.
- There are fifty-eight cases of measles nationally. Measles is coming from outside the U.S.
  - With measles, people are contagious four days before the rash appears and four days following.
  - Measles is the most transmittable disease known.
  - Measles tends to get into pockets of unvaccinated families.
  - 1963 -1967 vaccinations given in schools were un-cured and those people should be re-vaccinated.
  - If born before 1957, you have lifelong immunity.
- There is a MICR database record for everyone. If you want to know about your immunization history, check your MICR record. It is good to carry it with you when you travel.

#### **PRESENTATION: Eli Cooper, AICP- Manager, Oakland County Economic Development Transit Division**

In November 2022, Oakland County voters approved a county-wide transit ballot millage. Before the millage there were a handful of operators, but they did not cover the entire county. Most people are familiar with SMART, which covered the SE part of the county. The smaller operators (NOTA and WOTA) each serve a small number of communities and some of the rural areas. OPC was servicing Rochester and Rochester Hills area, and in the SW there were several municipalities with individual contracts with a non-profit provider (such as Peoples Express) between the community and the operator that operated just within those individual communities. The Novi area used local area operators that were very limited in equipment and staff.

Through the millage the Oakland County Economic Development Transit Authority has expanded the operating areas. NOTA has moved westerly, WOTA has moved more northerly into the Holly area, and Peoples Express is now equivalent to NOTA/WOTA in that it has greater boundary areas. SMART continues to have fixed routes and has introduced micro-transit (dial for service) between Troy, Pontiac, Farmington, and Farmington Hills. The service is similar to the service provided by the other operators.

WOTA (Highland, White Lake, Waterford areas) has been expanded to include the Lakes (Orchard Lake, Keego Harbor, Sylvan Lake) and the NW corner of Holly Township, Groveland, and Rose areas. A lot of the people living in the Holly communities are oriented to medical facilities up in the Grand Blanc, Flint area. OPC has SMART to the south, NOTA to the north, and WOTA to the west, so their footprint is relatively stable. The Senior Advisory Committee of OPC recognized the percentage of their population is exploding. And 30% - 40% of their communities are eligible for service. So, rider eligibility is based on demographic changes within their communities. With all of the smaller operators, about eighty percent of the rides are offered to people considered elderly. The elderly are considered age 55+. Thirty percent of the trips provided are door-to door for disabled or medically oriented trips. Ten percent of the trips are baseline general citizens' trips of any age receiving door-to-door service for any reason.

The communities are provided door-to-door service, ADA compliant wheelchair assessable, provide service for seniors, people with disabilities, veterans, open to the public and appointments are required. All providers provide weekend and service in the evening. The fares are discounted \$2.00 for eligible trips and \$4.00 for the general population.

#### **COUNTY UPDATE: Jim Ellison, Chief of Older Adult Services**

The second Senior Expo was recently held in Troy. There was a massive turnout - upwards of four hundred people were in attendance. There are three more in the planning stages:

- August 9<sup>th</sup> at the JCC
- September 11<sup>th</sup> at the Southfield Pavilion
- October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market

Ms. Lisa Ball has been hired to assist Jim effective April 1<sup>st</sup>. She will be in the Public Communications Department. She comes from the City of Clawson.

George Kullis, Township Supervisor of Holly, is interested in forming a senior center.

#### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: Martha Schlesinger, SAC Vice-Chair**

After conferring with the SAC officers, it was decided what would be most beneficial to the senior centers is to make them actionable on a center-by-center basis. It is

suggested that each SAC member should schedule a time to meet with the key people of each center - not just to review the goals and objectives document, but to discuss with them the following parameters:

- Do they have any specific action suggestions or suggested operation priorities for activating these goals? Of the document's three goals (Areas of Emphasis, Strategies for Achieving the Goal, and Steps for Consideration) the discussion would be primarily about strategies and steps for consideration.
- We should go past reading the documents with them and begin gathering information from each of the centers about each of these topics and all of the steps in considerations and strategies.
- The timelines for these meetings would be as follows:
  - **Between now and the April 15th meeting** schedule a time to go to each of your centers, meet with key people at the center, and discuss this document and the ideas in it and get the senior center's feedback.
    - **At the May meeting** (there will be no guest speaker) the SAC members will be able to report, have conversation on, and discuss the priorities, projects, and action. SAC will be the main focus of the agenda. Hopefully, this will provide information about everybody's area and what their thoughts and suggestions are. To keep our reports consistent, there are two parts that we should all focus on when speaking with our senior centers: priorities and actions suggestions. **How do you feel about the priorities for the areas of emphasis? How do you feel about the priorities for the strategies? What do you see as the priorities for the steps for consideration? Do you have any action suggestions?**
  - **In summary**, take the document back to your senior centers, make sure they have the document in advance.

#### **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: Katie Wendell, Director, Planning and Advocacy, AgeWays**

- The legislature is aware of AgeWays advocacy for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program. Now is a suitable time to write letters to the MDHHS appropriations committees in the House and the Senate regarding the \$3000,000.00 request to expand the long-Term Care Ombudsman Program for the licensed long-term care facilities to meet minimum standards.
  - Legislators are about to go on spring break. It is expected that after spring break they will start to move their budgets along.
  - Go to the AgeWays website to find a template letter for advocacy.
- Older Michiganian day is May 1<sup>st</sup>. It is free to the public. You may also join by live stream.
- Katie Wendel attended the National Federal Conference in Washington D.C. There is no final budget for FY2024. The federal budget is stagnant for now.
- The Older American Reauthorizations Act is coming. It is the act that created the Area Agency on Aging and comes up every 3 to 5 years for reauthorization.

Reauthorization is a way for congress to modernize the Act and add new programs. It signals the importance of services for older adults. Advocates are asking congress to look at nutrition funding. Right now, AgeWays covers congregate and home delivered meals; they are asking for more flexibility in meal options such as grab and go. Flexibility allows AgeWays to better work with local partners.

- There is a new regulation: AAA-1b must get permission from the state if they are to enter into any contracts.

## **ROUND TABLE DISTRICT ACTIVITIES: Everyone**

**For the roundtable discussion each district will give their name, Commissioner, and District.**

### **Rusty Rosman #12 (Christine Long)**

*The Richardson Senior Center and the Dublin Community Senior Center.*

This is her second SAC General Meeting. She is enjoying them, learning a lot, Will have a meeting with Cam who is educating her. Is there anything that tells you in writing the transit lines beginnings and ends? Rock will address this for her.

### **Robert Whitcomb #8 (Karen Joliat)**

*The Independence Township Senior Center and the Lifelong Recreation Center.*

Met with the senior advisory board. Just learning from the center what is going on. Met with Cam. The conversation was very enlightening. just getting acclimated.

### **Martha Schlesinger #19 (Charlie Cavell)**

*Pleasant Ridge Community Center, Huntington Woods Cares Senior Center, Gerry Kulick Community Center, and the City of Berkley Senior Center.*

Cam and she will be working together with JCC. Nothing specific to report.

### **Rock Abboud, Member at Large**

*Birmingham NEXT.*

Birmingham's Big Night Out event; April 4<sup>th</sup>. All are invited to attend.

### **Greg Keeler #18 and part of #17 (Yolanda Smith-Charles and Linnie Taylor)**

*The Pearl Wright Senior Center and The Southfield Adult Recreation Center.*

Will have a meeting with Mr. Ellison on Thursday at Pearl Wright. End of month going to the DIA; computer classes for seniors and other trips and activities

### **Barbara Seldon #17 (Yolanda Smith-Charles)**

*The Southfield Adult Recreation Center and the Oak Park Senior Center.*

Conferenced with Angie Varga, Fred Zorn, and Ken Siver. Meeting with COSA on Thursday at 4 PM in room 111; three new COSA members have been appointed; Sandy Dory of Oakland County Parks and Rec will be collaborating with COSA on programs;

They have dedicated space in room 115 Monday thru Thursday from 9AM to 3PM.  
Nothing to report for Oak Park.

**Brenda Anderson #15 (Gwen Markham; also assisting #16 Bill Miller)**

*Farmington Hills Costick Activities Center and Northville Adult Services.*

There have been three different directors in 3 years; watch parties and Tiger game activities; the new director worked at Costick. On April 4th, the State of the County Address will be held at the HAWK.

**Dean McCullough #14 (Ajay Raman)**

*The Wixom Senior Center and Novi Older Adult Services.*

Nothing to report.

**Noreen Yuskowatz #13 (Phil Weipert)**

*The South Lyon Center for Active Adults, the Highland Senior Center and the Milford Senior Center.*

The commission is coming to South Lyons to talk about things that affect seniors; Noreen is wearing a cast and will be going to centers soon as she is mobile.

**Marcus Jackson, Member at Large**

Nothing to report.

**Sylvia Whitmer #11 (Marcia Gershenson)**

*West Bloomfield Connect and Bloomfield Township Senior Services.*

Continued construction toward future senior center: Board meeting with Kelley Hire, head of P&R presented long range building plans; very positive feelings in West Bloomfield; Milage is coming in August.

**Cam McClure #10 (Kristen Nelson)**

*The J and the Waterford Senior Center.*

West Bloomfield Connect is down for floor repair in bathroom; Shares Bowling with Ruth Jordan; the J has updated its website; waiting for the senior center grant; working with the two new SAC reps. Both are very excited.

**Ruth Jordan #9 (Angela Powell)**

*The Bowens Senior Center and the Ruth Peterson Community Center.*

City has a new website; the one site represents activities at both centers; established a partnership with Secretary of State where seniors can come in and take care of needed business.

**Dianne Bubnar #4 (Brendan Johnson, also assisting #5 Michael Spisz)**

*The Auburn Hills Community Center and the OPC Social and Activities Center.*

Both are flourishing; Pickle Ball is growing; OPC will have a spring show called Friendship, May 6<sup>th</sup> lunch and show, \$20.00 to attend; OPC had a puzzle challenge where teams will compete to see who can finish first; The senior center has a special yoga where it combines meditation and tribal dancing.

**Mark Kelly #2 (Penny Luebs)**

*The Clawson Senior Center and the Troy Parks and Recreation Center.*

Coordinated with Jim Ellison and Cam on eight senior center contacts utilizing three senior centers in the district, three outside of the district, two with Bill Rhodes.

**Royetta Ealba #1 (David Woodward)**

*The Jack & Patti Salter Community Center.*

No report.

**SAC Updates: Patricia Zawadzki, SAC Coordinator**

- SAC should appreciate what is done behind the scenes. The officers are doing a phenomenal job. They are working hours, not 5 minutes.
- Deliverables are being achieved and together we are all phenomenal volunteers.
- Mr. Hoffman's district has recommended to Mr. Coulter a SAC council member.
- May 20<sup>th</sup> will be the first in-person meeting. We will meet at the North Oakland Health Center (Building #34E on the county campus off Telegraph).
- For one hour after the meeting, officers, new members, and anyone who desires may remain to have open conversation. It will be a fantastic opportunity to ask questions about how things are accomplished.
- If you know of speakers for the fall that can address some of the things relating to our goals and objectives, Pat can reach out to them. Bring your suggestions to the May meeting.
- Rock Abboud will bring coffee and donuts to the May meeting.

**April's meetings will be in virtual format.**

**ADJOURNMENT: Rock Abboud**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM

**NEXT MEETING**

**VIRTUAL**

**Monday April 15, 2024**

**Microsoft Teams link will be shared prior to the meeting.**

**10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**