

**Oakland County Senior Advisory Council  
Meeting  
Monday, April 15, 2024  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice-Chair Cameron McClure called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.

**Attendance Matrix:**

Dist	RC	Name	Dist	RC	Name	Dist	RC	Name
1	E	Royetta Ealba	2	A	Mark Kelly	3	P	Suzanne Patton
4	E	Dianne Bubnar	5		V	6	P	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	SR	P	Genessa Doolittle			

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:**

Dr. Russell Faust, Director of Health and Human Services, Oakland County  
Jim Ellison, Chief of Older Adult Services, Oakland County  
Katie Wendel, Director of Planning and Advocacy, Age Ways  
Amanda Palmer, Oakland County Community Health Network

**ROLL CALL:**

Roll call was accomplished. There was a quorum (17 members, 4 presenters).  
Mr. McClure congratulated Genessa Doolittle as she was mentioned on the PowerPoint during the State of the County's address as receiving the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness Advocacy Champion for 2023 award.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Senior Advisory Council minutes for the meeting held March 18, 2024, were approved with two corrections.

- Correction by Greg Keeler: the sentence about federal funds for Southfield should be removed from the minutes as it was a misunderstanding.
- Ruth Jordan requested the last sentence of her update removed; Deborah was pursuing an interest in vaccination, but it was never set up.
- The minutes were approved with corrections.

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

- Dr. Faust encouraged everyone to PLEASE get vaccinated for measles. According to the CDC - as of April 5<sup>th</sup> there are 113 cases of measles in the U.S. from seven outbreaks.
  - For those 7 outbreaks, there is a projected number of about 300 cases.
- The measles numbers for the months of January, February, and March of this year are 17 times higher than the average of the last three years.
- The majority of cases are Americans that are unvaccinated who traveled outside the U.S. to the Middle East and to Africa.
- Measles virus is incredibly easy to transmit.
  - Measles as a virus has a "R" (how easy it is to be transmitted) rating of 95% meaning to keep our country safe we need about a 95% vaccination rate.

## **PRESENTATION: Amanda Palmer, Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN): Senior Suicide (Safe Talk Trainer for Suicide).**

- OCHN is a publicly funded providing services of psychiatry counseling, case management, autism, Intellectual developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services.
- Service is provided to individuals with Medicaid.
- According to the CDC, during the years 2021-2022 there was an overall 5% increase in suicide deaths.
- 49,449 suicide deaths throughout the U.S. 20% were 65 years or older. Suicide is considered the leading cause of deaths among residents 65 years or older.
- The pattern mirrored the same for Oakland County for 2021-2022, with 153 suicide deaths in Oakland County for 2021-2022.
- Seniors tend to use more lethal means such as firearms. 50% of suicide deaths in Oakland County residents 55 to 64 years is attributable to firearms. From 65 and older the percentage jumps to 70 percent. White men 55 and older are the highest risk.
- One needs to know the signs and symptoms which may include changes in mood, behavior, not caring for themselves physically, wearing the same clothing

over and over, neglecting their self-care, not taking their medications, or using other substances, giving away belongings dealing with feelings of isolation, multiple losses, dealing with grief, financial difficulties, pain or health conditions,

- Retirement can be a factor in a sense of loss. It can be a risk factor as adult age.
- Talk and ask directly are you thinking about suicide, it's a difficult but needed question to ask. Even health professionals have difficulty.
- Call 988, the crisis help line. It is available 24/7. It is free of charge and confidential. You can call by text or Chat.
- Free training by OCHN are available called Mental Health first aid, which is Safe Talk training (4-hour training session).

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

Katie Wendell announced this will be her last meeting with SAC. She has accepted a new position at the Michigan Health and Endowment Fund as the Healthy Aging and Program Officer and starts the new position in May. She expressed gratitude for being with SAC as a community partner. Stephanie Hall from AgeWays will be her replacement.

- There have been no changes in the state budget since last month. AgeWays continues to advocate for Ombudsman and has heard good things.
- The 2023-2024 federal budget has been passed, there is flat funding for aging services.
- There are a couple of upcoming events for advocacy:
  - Monday April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2 PM there will be Senior services Legislative conversations on Zoom. Legislators have been invited to talk about the Older Michiganians Day Platform. The legislators come from the six counties served by AgeWays.
  - Older Michiganians Day is coming up on Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Ombudsman for your area can be looked up by County. Call and you will get routed to the proper one.
  - There are no openings for paid ombudsman but there are opportunities for volunteers.

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

- Encore newsletter has been distributed.
  - There was no mention of SAC in the Encore. SAC is 28 years old and a bit disappointing that there was no mention of the group that is well recognized in the County.
- Upcoming events:
  - October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Royal Oak Farmer's Market.
  - June 5<sup>th</sup> Senior Day at the Zoo. There will be a vendor booth with information to distribute about things going on in the County.

- The resource guide is being updated, changing names and addresses. Visit to Birmingham NEXT.
- Started round two of senior center visits.
- Asking the language specifics for the actual grant. People want to read it themselves. Jim will get that for Greg Keeler.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: Everyone**

**Bridgette Giampa** - Malissa Alto is new to the center. The meeting consisted of the questions, what can you do to help me and what can I do to help you.

**Martha Schlesinger** - Met with half of her centers to discuss Goals and Objectives. Her centers were most interested in discussing the education of seniors by providing training and meetings. They were most specific about our topics and knowing who spoke about the SAC resources. Is there a list of speakers that SAC had, or can we build such a list on our site for the centers? The centers were also interested in having joint programs. Instead of a meeting with 10 or 12 participants the numbers would be much higher if groups of centers got together for the resource meetings.

## **SAC UPDATES: Patricia Zawadzki, SAC Coordinator**

- Be sure to take yourself off camera when you are up and moving around during the meetings.
- May 20<sup>th</sup> will be the first in-person meeting. We will meet at the health department Building #34.
- For one hour after the meeting, officers, new members, and anyone who desires may remain to have open conversation. It will be an opportunity to ask questions about how things are accomplished.
- If you know of speakers for the fall, who can address some of the things relating to our goals and objectives. Bring your suggestions to the May meeting.
- Getting the form for the badges is taking time; will send them out when they are available.
- Rock Abboud will bring coffee and donuts to the May meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT: Cam McClure**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM

**NEXT MEETING  
IN PERSON  
MONDAY May 20, 2024  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**