

**Oakland County Senior Advisory Council
Virtual Meeting
Monday, March 10, 2025
10:00 AM –12:00 PM**

WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rock Abboud called the meeting to order at 10:05. He welcomed all members to the SAC meeting.

Attendance Matrix:

Dist	RC	Name	Dist	RC	Name	Dist	RC	Name
1	P	Royetta Ealba	2	P	Mark Kelly	3	V	
4	V		5	V		6	V	
7	V		8	V		9	P	Ruth Jordan
10	P	Cameron McClure	11	p	Sylvia Whitmer	12	P	Christopher Peal
13	P	Norene Yuskowatz	14	P	Judy Smiley	15	P	Brenda Anderson
16	V		17	P	Barbara Seldon	18	P	Greg Keeler
19	V		AL	P	Rock Abboud	AL	P	Martha Schlesinger
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:

Jim Ellison, Older Adult Services – Oakland County
Danisha Weathersby, Older Adult Services – Oakland County
Melissa Ann Williams-Bowman, Oakland County Health Division
Stephanie Hall, AgeWays

Roll Call:

There is NOT a quorum (13 appointed members present)

Agenda Approval:

There were no meetings in January and February due to the insufficient number of signed SAC District Representative applications from the Board of Commissioners. Minutes can't be approved until there is a quorum. A message will be sent to the Board of Commissioners to get the appointment letters to the Oakland County Executive for signature.

Approval of Minutes:

Senior Advisory Council December minutes were distributed.

Health Division Update:

Melissa Ann Williams Bowman, Epidemiologist, Oakland County Health Division

See attached PowerPoint presentation

Oakland County Older Adult Services Update:**Jim Ellison**

Mr. Ellison has been very busy preparing for the State of the County.

- March 11 there will be a senior expo in the San Marino Club in Troy, Michigan at 10 AM.
- March 21 there will be coffee and conversation at Bowens Senior Citizens Center in Pontiac.
- April 22 Danisha and Jim will be presenting to a sub-committee of the Board of Commissioners. It will be an update on accomplishments of the Older Adult Services unit.
- May 26 will be Seniors Day at the Detroit Zoo.
- Jim will be meeting on Friday with 56th House District Representative Sharon MacDonell, who represents Royal Oak, Clawson, Troy and Birmingham. She has a program that she is trying to set up about ID bracelets for those with Alzheimer's, and dementia.
- The resource guide is updated and will be dropped off to all 38 Senior Centers.
- Danisha announced that the next Encore Magazine will not come out until May of 2025.
- Jim is looking into an idea where there could be some sort of theater work at the various centers, members involved in the shows. He will be looking to gauge any interest when he goes to the centers. This is especially important for those individuals who may experience social isolation and give seniors something to focus on and to have fun with.
- A question was asked about whether anyone can attend Oakland County Commissioners sub-committee meetings. All meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Legislative Update:

Stephanie Hall, Director of Planning and Advocacy, AgeWays

Budget

- Federal:
 - In the three months since SAC last met, a lot has been going on.
 - The Continuing Resolution (CR) was passed. It maintains the funding levels from the previous year to avoid a government shutdown and goes

until March 14, 2025; at that point either another CR must be passed or a full budget bill for CY 2025 must be passed, or there will be a government shutdown.

- A couple of weeks ago the House passed a budget resolution that outlines their goals for funding levels and allows for certain changes.
 - This budget resolution includes deep cuts to Medicaid. When deep cuts are called it is usually for Medicaid, Social Security, and Medicare as they are the biggest funding buckets, though so far there has been no mention of cutting Medicare and Social Security.
- Both chambers must agree to the budget resolution to pass. **There is a lot of space for advocacy. There is still time to talk to your legislators.**
- AgeWays continues to advocate for Medicaid funding. There has been no talk about cutting OAA funding, but AgeWays continues to advocate.
- State
 - At the State level there is a Republican-led House, and a Democrat-led Senate and a Democrat Governorship.
 - The budget should be made by July 1, 2025. It is clear that a full omnibus (all the budget items agreed upon and passed) will not occur. It is hoped the school budget will pass by July 1st, before school begins; the rest of the budget will take longer but the budget has to be passed by October 1st.
 - They cannot do a Continuing Resolution; they have to approve a budget or incur a state government shut down.
 - The House just agreed on Friday to close the books with a final supplemental on FY 2024. Now discussion can begin on FY 2025 supplemental and 2026 budget. AgeWays has a large home and community service continuing supplemental that was submitted at the end of last year.

Legislative

- Federal
 - OAA Reauthorization
 - The Older Americans Act must be reauthorized every few years. Reauthorization only updates the language. As long as funding is approved, there is no need for it to be re-authorized.
 - The OAA passed at the federal level both chambers. At the last minute it was taken out because some members were concerned about how long the CR was. It has to be re-introduced and hopefully it will be moved forward and passed.
- State
 - Guardianship Bills would change various things related to Guardianship appointments, including implementing a caseload cap, adjusting the frequency of guardianship visits, improving communications between the

ward and guardian, and increasing the number of family members serving as guardians.

- The bills passed through the House and the Senate. There was bipartisan support, however the bill was not brought up for a final vote and died on the floor. The Bills must be introduced. More information will come at the next meeting.
- Earn Paid Sick Time - due to a Supreme Court decision, the ballot initiative was amended, adopted, and put into legislation. It was then in court for years.
 - You cannot take something that was a ballot initiative amended and then adopt it; it became unconstitutional. Both sides agreed.
 - The outcome: one hour of paid sick time will be provided for thirty hours worked, for employers with eleven or more employees; and 72 hours of paid sick time annually. Employers with ten or fewer employees must provide forty hours of paid leave. This slowly scales up over the next few years.
- Respite Vouchers Program are vouchers given to caregivers for respite care. There are some vouchers remaining. They require a professional referral. If anyone is interested or knows of anyone interested reach out to AgeWays.
- Older Michigania Day is in Lansing on May 7, 2025. More information will be brought to SAC at the next meeting. If anyone wants to attend, contact Stephanie Hall..

Presentation: Social Security and Medicare

Stephanie Hall, Director of Planning and Advocacy, AgeWays

See attached PowerPoint presentation

SAC Coordinator Update:

Pat Zawadzki

- Officers schedule a series of meeting dates in advance, taking into consideration holidays and noteworthy events that occur such as Jewish holidays, national holidays, Easter, Thanksgiving, and others similar dates.
- Officer Elections
 - It is time for the election of SAC officers. The positions are:
 - Chairperson
 - 1st.Vice Chairperson
 - 2nd Vice Chairperson
 - Recording Secretary.
 - Attached to your minutes are the elements of running for office positions, including responsibilities and timelines.

- Pat will create a SAC Officers nominations list. Members can self-nominate. If you know of someone you think will be a strong candidate, consider nominating them.
- Officers cover items that occur during the regular year. During the summer, there could be sub-committee meetings. The subcommittee meetings are held for special purposes such as By-laws reviews or to work on an identified SAC concern.
- If you are considering a position, it is suggested that you talk with the current officers and ask them about how demanding the time will be for the position.
- The officers typically meet for one hour one week prior to the general meeting, to formulate the agenda for each meeting, schedule the meeting dates, act as the resource for the SAC Coordinator, and in certain cases the SAC liaison with the community.
- In the future the officers will be more involved in the community to respond to people's requests for presentations and attendance events. At-Large members work closely with our SAC Coordinator on special assignments and may be asked to cover Senior Centers in the absence of an appointed district representative.
- Pat will be contacting nominated individuals to confirm their interest in running for an Officers position. Please feel free to call Pat if you have any questions.

SAC Community Updates:

Judy Smiley, District 14

Judy is a graduate of the University of Detroit Mercy as a therapist and is retired. She requested more information about seniors to get information for her 4-districts area. She volunteers at two hospitals. SAC will be helpful to her and her hospitals and county. She asked if there are e-mail addresses where she can reach contacts. It was suggested that she reach out to the coordinator. She wants to be informed. She wants to get out there to get to know her districts.

Rock Abboud, At-Large

The Food Policy Council for Oakland County, on which Rock sits, will be meeting soon and Rock will bring back information. Birmingham NEXT is currently renting Midvale from Birmingham Public Schools and will be allowed to continue for the next three years until the new center is built. The City of Birmingham has already purchased the YMCA in Birmingham on Lincoln Road.

Mark Kelly, District 2

Mark has three senior centers (Clawson, Royal Oak, and Troy). They are each doing an excellent job with their internal activities. They are putting up signs that say "Seniors

Entrance.” There will also be an electronic sign going up on Livernois. Royal Oak is doing a fantastic job implementing their grant money. He plans to go out to the different programs and try out their meals Troy has Meals on Wheels, and Royal Oak and Clawson have their own Chefs. Looking at what are the food differences and how the food tastes.

Ruth Jordan, District 9

Both of Ruth’s centers are highly active, At Ruth Petersons there is a *Matter of Balance* class, which meets for 2 hours every Monday for 8-weeks, and Meals on Wheels is there every day. There are two hustle classes, one at Bowens and the other at Ruth Peterson. During Black History Month the League had a concert.

Cam McClure, District 10

Met with the Chaldean foundation with Sylvia Whitmer. Sylvia will provide the details.

Sylvia Whitmer, District 11

Sylvia attended the Chaldean Community Foundation with Cam and received a lot of information from the foundation. The headquarters is in Sterling Height of Macomb County. They have a huge membership and a good budget and an incredible program. They offer courses on how to start a business and maintain a business to immigrants who are businesspeople. They have a marvelous gym where police practice. They will be building a new center right in West Bloomfield on Walnut Lake Road, taking over an old school. Cam and Sylvia will be looking forward to meeting with them when the new place is opened, to see how they can be a part of the West Bloomfield Senior Center.

Christopher Peal, District 12

Has been doing a lot of research about social isolation. He will speak more about it at the next meeting.

Norene Yuskowatz, District 13

Highland is going to the DIA – it’s free. They are also having a therapy dog come in on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Milford underwent refurbishment. South Lyons Senior center lost their director, so there will be no tax services for seniors this year. Norene will send the name of the new temporary replacement to Cam for the purpose of updating the directory.

Brenda Anderson, District 15

Covering Farmington Hills Costick Activity Center in District 16, and the big question continues to be: where will the senior center be? Will it be at the HAWK or will it stay where it is (The Costick Activities Center)? Where will the money go? The city wants to leave things as they are. Programming and activities continue. Northville Adult Services is doing well with their building and their activities, and they want Jim Ellison to come in

with the coffee and donut program. They have a lot of volunteers, probably more than members.

Barbara Seldon, District 17

Bids have been submitted, and an architectural company has been approved by the City Council for the Pavilion redesign. The company met with significant people within city administration to talk about how the design may look from their perspective. They wanted to get ideas from the stakeholders before they called for a special community meeting to include their ideas. The layout will consider ‘best use’ space for seniors and user-friendly ideas that will work best for the \$500,000 matching grant. Considerations include a place for light refreshments, computer use and dedicated space for the seniors. The second meeting was cancelled, for administrative reasons. It is anticipated that after getting preliminary information from stakeholders the full senior community will make the final decisions. The Southfield Veterans Commission provided food, benefits, and information to approximately 400 veterans during a Veterans Resource Fair held on March 13. More than 25 vendors were in attendance. Each Oakland County Veteran who brought their DD214 form received a \$500.00 gift card from Meijer Grocer. Barbara worked with Oak Park Senior Center to invite veterans in that community as well.

Gregory Keeler, District 18:

The Township of Royal Oak has two new bikes and two new tread mills in their Senior Center. The CHORE program now includes snow removal. A luncheon was held to observe Black History Month. Seniors are now going to museums, lunch, and community activities now that they have a new bus driver. Southfield recently had a meeting regarding the Pavilion re-design with no input by seniors. The seniors have produced a proposal enabling them to play cards, exercise, have movies without noise, have meetings without interference, and stay until 7pm (the Pavilion employees currently leave at 4pm) The senior social group meets twice a month. They do not want curtains; they want brick for sound proofing, and they want to have their games without having to pay. Greg has been asking to get a reduction in the cost of playing cards. AARP wants the same. The seniors are asking that the DIA be free, and that the senior center provide more and better transportation.

Adjournment:

Rock Abboud called for adjournment and announced the next meeting date and time.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 AM.

**NEXT MEETING
VIRTUAL**

**Monday, April 14, 2025
10 AM – 12 PM**