

**District of Columbia Commission on Aging**  
**Minutes of October 23, 2013 Meeting**

**Commissioners Present:**

Don Colodny; Barbara Hair; Charles Hicks; Grace Lewis; Samuel McCoy; Ronald Swanda; Brenda Williams; Nathaniel Wilson; Constance Woody

**DCOA Staff Present:**

John Thompson; Veronica Butler; Antonette Dozier; Darryl Jackson; Maya Moroto; Deborah Royster; Eden Teklebrhane

**Guests Present:**

Jan May, Executive Director, Legal Counsel for the Elderly; Mr. Ernest Postell

**Approval of Agenda**

The Commission voted unanimously to approve the agenda for the October 23, 2013 meeting of the Commission on Aging (see attached).

**Call to Order**

Vice-Chairperson Ronald Swanda determined the presence of a quorum and called to order the regular meeting of the D.C. Commission on Aging (“the Commission”) at 10:15 a.m., October 23, 2013 at 500 K St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. Commissioner Swanda reported that Chairperson Thomas would not be present at this meeting due to a schedule conflict.

Commissioner Swanda requested a moment of silence of honor of seniors represented by the Commission on Aging. Commissioner Swanda welcomed Commissioner Grace Lewis, who was recently appointed by Mayor Vincent C. Gray to the Commission on Aging.

Commissioner Swanda requested, and the members of the Commission on Aging agreed, to modify the agenda to allow Mr. Jan May, Executive Director, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, to give his presentation as the first item on the agenda.

**Presentation by Jan May, Executive Director, Legal Counsel for the Elderly**

Jan May, Executive Director, Legal Counsel for the Elderly, reported on the efforts of Legal Counsel for the Elderly (“LCE”), a DCOA grantee, to address the issue of seniors losing their homes in foreclosure due to unpaid property taxes. He reported that this issue has escalated in recent years due to rising real property values, shortened redemption periods, lack of notice, and certain predatory practices by companies engaged in the business of purchasing real property tax liens in the foreclosure process. He reported that the cumulative impact of these factors has

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resulted in certain cases of long-term property owners -- many of them seniors -- losing their homes and all of the accumulated equity in their property due to foreclosure. Mr. May reported that, in response to this issue LCE, working in collaboration with other community partners, including The Alliance to Help Owners Maintain Equity ("AT HOME") coalition and the D.C. Office on Aging ("DCOA"), developed legislation that is currently pending before the Council of the District of Columbia ("D.C. Council") to curb the identified abuses. He stated that the D.C. Council recently enacted emergency legislation, and noted that more extensive permanent legislation needs to be enacted as soon as possible. He discussed the pending legislation before the D.C. Council, including the bill proposed by Mayor Vincent Gray, and noted that Councilmember Jack Evans expressed a desire to pass permanent legislation by the end of 2013.

**Office on Aging Update**

Dr. Thompson introduced new DCOA staff members and discussed the expansion of DCOA programs and services. He introduced Ms. Maria Copeland, Transition Care Specialist, who will work with the DCOA/Aging and Disability Resources Center ("ADRC") nursing home transition team to continue to transition nursing home residents to community living, and to enable seniors and persons with disabilities to live independently in their own homes and/or neighborhoods for as long as possible. He noted the accomplishments of this team and emphasized the importance of continuing these efforts to enhance the quality of life for residents of the District of Columbia, while also reducing long-term care costs for the Government of the District of Columbia.

Dr. Thompson introduced Dr. Maya Moroto, who recently joined DCOA as a Public Health Nutritionist. He noted Dr. Moroto's professional credentials and experience, and stated that her professional background will be very valuable as DCOA significantly expands food service programs for seniors. He stated that approximately \$3.7 million in additional funds have been approved for DCOA meal programs in fiscal years 2013 and 2014, and that these funds will be used to add new congregate meal sites for seniors throughout the city.

Dr. Thompson also introduced Darryl Jackson, Jr., who recently joined DCOA as a Community Outreach Specialist, and stated that Mr. Jackson will work to increase public exposure of DCOA's mission, programs, and services. Dr. Thompson also introduced Eden Teklebrhane, DCOA's Resource Allocation Officer, who will supervise grants management and financial issues.

Dr. Thompson's presentation was followed by questions and answers from the members of the Commission on Aging. Commissioner Swanda thanked Dr. Thompson for his presentation. The members of the Commission on Aging welcomed all of the DCOA staff members, and encouraged them to act with empathy and compassion in serving seniors in the District of

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Columbia. Dr. Thompson responded that it is the objective of DCOA to provide excellent customer service to the residents of the District of Columbia at all times.

**DC Health Link**

Commissioner Swanda reported that DC Health Link, the healthcare exchange of the Government of the District of Columbia, is operating effectively with no delays in accessing the website, and that health care premium costs are frequently lower. He reported that 450 people have been and qualified to provide consumer education in all 8 wards of the District of Columbia.

**Committee Reports**

**Housing**

Commissioner Williams reported that she has successfully recruited five members to serve on the Housing Committee. Dr. Thompson congratulated her on these efforts and stated that DCOA looks forward to working with the Housing Committee to identify new housing opportunities for seniors, including a potential new senior housing community on the campus of the Washington Center for Aging Services.

**Health and Wellness**

Commissioner Swanda reported that he continues to recruit members to serve on the Health and Wellness Committee. He also reported that community consultations are continuing under the D.C. Age Friendly City initiative and encouraged members of the Commission on Aging to contact Gail Cohn, Age Friendly City Coordinator, to schedule informational briefings in their respective communities.

**Transportation**

Commissioner Hicks reported that he continues to recruit members to serve on the Transportation Committee.

**Education and Employment**

Commissioner Swanda noted that this Committee does not currently have a chairperson.

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**Governance**

Commissioner McCoy reported that he continues to monitor the real property tax sale issue discussed previously on today's agenda by Mr. May. He reported that more than 30 persons testified at the public hearings before the D.C. Council, and he urged the Commission on Aging to submit a letter in support of pending real property tax sale reform legislation.

**Ward Reports**

**Ward 3**

Commissioner Wilson thanked DCOA for providing a referral to the D.C. tax office related to a tax issue involving a senior to whom Commissioner Wilson provided tax preparation assistance.

**Ward 4**

Commissioner McCoy reported that a senior village to serve the residents of Ward 4 who live in communities east of Rock Creek Park has been incorporated and will be known as "East Rock Creek Village." Commissioner McCoy thanked Ms. Royster for her efforts in connection with the launch of this community initiative.

**Ward 5**

Commissioner Lewis reported that, on Saturday, October 26, 2013, a community event will be held in Ward 5, where unused prescription drugs can be dropped off for disposal that is environmentally appropriate.

**Ward 6**

Commissioner Colodny reported that user and environmentally friendly sidewalks are being installed in his neighborhood. Commissioner Hicks thanked DCOA for providing assistance in connection with a recent community seminar on HIV awareness. He noted that more than 50 percent of D.C. residents with HIV are 50 years of age and older. Commissioner Swanda noted that a Feast of Sharing, free of charge to participants, will be sponsored by Safeway on November 27, 2013, and he also noted that a Family Caregivers forum will be sponsored in the near future at Providence Hospital.

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**Ward 8**

Commissioner Woody reported that a community consultation on the D.C. Age Friendly City initiative will be held on October 24, 2013 at 11:30 a.m. at the Congress Heights Wellness Center.

The October 23, 2013 meeting of the Commission on Aging was adjourned at 12:10 p.m. Minutes recorded by Antonette Dozier and Deborah Royster, D.C. Office on Aging. These minutes were formally approved by the Commission on Aging on November 27, 2013.



Wednesday, October 23, 2013  
10:00 am-12:00 pm

## Commission on Aging October 2013 Meeting

500 K Streets, NE  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room

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**Meeting called by:** Commission on Aging      **Type of meeting:** Monthly Meeting

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**Attendees:** Commission on Aging Commissioners, Mini Commission members

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### Agenda Items/Topics

### Presenter

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Call to Order	Vice Chairperson
Inspiration	Vice Chairperson
Commissioners Introduction	Vice Chairperson
Review & Approve Agenda	Commissioners
Office on Aging Update	John M. Thompson, Ph.D. FAAMA, Executive Director
Tax Legislation Property	
DC Health Link	

#### Reports of Committee Chairs:

- Housing – Commissioner Brenda T. Williams
- Health and Wellness – Vice Chair Ron Swanda
- Transportation – Commissioner Charles Hicks
- Education and Employment –
- Governance – Commissioner Samuel McCoy

**Ward Reports of Commissioners**      All

**New Business**

**Public Comment**

**Announcements**

**Adjournment**