

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
June 11, 2019  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Rockville City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member	Laurie Gira, Caregiver Member
Ciriaco Gonzales, At-large Member, Chair	Leon Suskin, At-large Member
Jen Lafferty, At-large Member	Mark Pascu, At-large Member
Deborah Moore, Consumer Member	

**Members Absent:**

Andrew Buchholz, At-large Member  
Krishna Kumar, At-large Member  
Emily Pearce, At-large Member  
Stacey Erd, Caregiver Member

**Mayor and Council Liaison Present:**

**Staff Present:** Carlos Aparicio, Community Service Manager

**RE: Call Meeting to Order**

Ciriaco Gonzales, At-large Member, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm

**RE: Community Forum**

No discussion

**RE: Approve April 09, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Debbie Moore, Consumer Representative, moved that the minutes be approved as drafted, and, Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Representative, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**RE: Community Services Division Report**

Carlos Aparicio, Community Service Manager, provided the following announcements:

- The Community Services Program Analyst position has been filled; Allison Hoy will be starting her employment with the City of Rockville on June 17, 2019.
- The Montgomery County Youth Service Bureaus (the City of Rockville, Family Services Inc., and the YMCA Youth and Family Services) proposals for mental health counseling were not approved for funding for FY 20 by the Governor’s Office for Children. Traditionally, a portion of these services were funded by way of pass-through dollars through the Montgomery County Collaboration Council. Carlos informed the members of the commission that the four agencies worked together on the response to the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). The City of Rockville and YMCA’s proposal was based

on maintaining existing services while focusing on the governor's priority of working with children and families affected by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Carlos also informed the commission members that the funded amounts to about \$15,000 in funding, but, after some increases from Montgomery County, could be as low as \$8,500. From a staffing perspective, this amounts to less than an hour-a-week of four staff members time.

Councilmember Beryl Feinberg asked if the City would have to absorb the cut? Carlos informed the group of the planned advocacy from the involved agencies, but, ultimately, it may mean the City would not receive the funding from outside sources. He also stated his concern that this would lead to a reduction in the amount of dollars available for existing programs, thus harming programs that already operate on limited funding. Carlos noted how these programs' operation budgets have received limited increases for the last ten years; except for increases due to inflation adjustments from the outside grants that support the City operated programs. By contrast, the Caregiver outside agency budget has increased by about 40% during the same timeframe. Carlos will provide an update at the next meeting.

Councilmember Feinberg asked Carlos if he had an update from Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless regarding the methane issue at the Homebuilders Men's Emergency Shelter. Carlos provided information about how the administrative offices were evacuated due to vibrations caused by the motor operating the methane plant across from the shelter. From his last conversations with MCCH, the shelter was not affected. Councilmember Feinberg stated how she had heard that the shelter would need to be evacuated and asked Carlos to reach out to the agency for an update. Carlos will provide an update at the next meeting.

Councilmember Feinberg also added that there will be an announcement forthcoming from the County regarding the new Director of Health and Human Services. An update will be provided at the next commission meeting.

### **RE: Caregiver Funding Task Force Report**

Mark Pascu, At-large Member of the Human Services Advisory Commission and Chair of the Caregiver Funding Task Force, informed the group that a near final version of the report has been drafted. Final edits are underway, with some attachments being edited for content and formatting. He further added how the report will be presented to the Mayor and Council on July 15<sup>th</sup>. Councilmember Feinberg expressed concern regarding the time of the presentation based on the agenda review packet she received prior to her attendance at the agenda review meeting with the Mayor and City Clerk/Director of Council Operations. Carlos added how he believed the item would likely be early in the meeting but would double check with the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations.

**RE: Site Visit Report: Mansfield Kaseman Health Clinic (Community Reach of Montgomery County)**

Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member, began by stating how impressed she was by the clinic, including the program plans, reports, services, health record system, and overall operations. She added her belief that the clinic seems to be very well organized and seems to provide a respectful environment for clients. Ciriaco Gonzales, At-large Member, Chair, inquired about the staffing as he believed this has been a challenge for the clinic in the past. Nancy added how the site visit team did learn about current vacancies, but it appeared the clinic was actively attempting to fill those positions. She also noted she did not have her notes, so she could not provide more specific information. Nancy did add how her review of the satisfaction surveys showed how most people were satisfied with the services they were being provided. Ciriaco then inquired about Medicaid funded services, to which Laurie Gira, Caregiver Member and Community Reach's Grants Manager, responded that the clinic became a provider in October of 2016. When discussing performance reports, Carlos stated that the Kaseman Clinic has not traditionally met the proposed outputs stated in the grant proposal. In the past, clinic staff have stated this has been in part due to a high no-show rate at community clinics. Leon Suskin, At-large Member, asked about the clinic's no-show reduction plan, and Carlos provided information about the various strategies used by the clinic to mitigate the issue. Carlos also added that the outcomes for clients at the clinic are positive and well regarded.

**RE: Site Visit Report: Rockville Primary Women's Primary Medical Home and Women's Health Clinic (MobileMed)**

Deborah (Debbie) Moore, Consumer Member, began by stating how impressed she was with the program and the medical services they provide to under-and-uninsured patients. She also noted how the clinic's approach to clients seemed to be a factor in a comparatively low no-show rate. Debbie further added that the clinic does a nice job of aiding with prescription medicine, to help clients to meet their medical goals. She also spoke about the agency's use of motivational interviewing techniques to help improve the client's outcomes. Per Debbie, the clients of the clinic are nurtured to recognize small behavioral changes as successes, in order to help them achieve larger, long-term, changes to their overall health status.

Debbie also discussed how a significant number of the clinic's patients are served through the Montgomery Cares program, and the clinic is looking to expand the number of underinsured clients who they serve through different medical insurance providers. She also praised the staff of the clinic, in particular the clinic director, as she believes they do a great job of understanding the complexities of the community they serve.

**RE: Site Visit Report: Rockville Emergency Assistance Program (REAP)**

Carlos Aparicio provided the group with a description of the program. Of note is how this program operates differently than the other programs funded through the Caregiver grant program. Specifically, Carlos noted how the Community Services Division staff are in charge of the case management work and application completion associated with most of the program's clients. Community Reach of Montgomery County (CMR) is responsible for sending out the

payments once they receive authorization from City staff. Carlos went on to note that CMR's REAP receives additional funding from other sources to help people who reside in "Rockville" zip codes but reside outside the City of Rockville. Through these funds, they are also able to provide Rockville residents with funds when they meet or exceed the amount of funding available through the program.

Upon review of the satisfaction surveys, Carlos noted how all of the clients expressed being satisfied with the program. CMR's REAP program utilizes volunteers to help program staff with processing payments and providing information and referral services.

**RE: Site Visit Report: Hope Housing**

Carlos Aparicio recommended this item be tabled until next time since Emily Pearce, At-large Member, was not present for this meeting. Commission members agreed to table this item and add it to the next meeting's agenda.

**RE: Human Services Advisory Commission Procedures**

Carlos Aparicio began the discussion by stating that members of the Commission have expressed some concern with the discussion of caregiver programs in the presence of the Caregiver representatives on the Commission. This concern is mainly based on the possible perception of an unfair advantage being granted to the City funded programs due to the presence of agency staff at the Commission meeting, and the possibility that other members of the Commission would be uncomfortable in discussing performance issues of the programs in the presence of agency representatives. Carlos further noted how this issue has been brought up in the past, but, in those instances, the members who expressed concern for the possible conflicts of interests untimely decided to not pursue it further. Based on his conversation with Commission members, Carlos decided to have a discussion with the Deputy City Attorney, Cynthia Walters.

Based on his understanding of the conversation with Ms. Walters, Carlos stated that one tool to solve this possible conflict of interest is to agree to rules and procedures that are specific to this type of conflict of interest. Based on Ms. Walter's response, there appear to be several Mayor and Council appointed boards and commissions that have procedures in place due to the scope of work they perform. One that was mentioned in their conversation was the Planning Board. Due to the recommendations they make to the Mayor and Council, members of the Planning Board are required to disclose possible conflicts of interest and, when necessary, recuse themselves from the discussion.

Mark Pascu, At-large Member, added that he raised the concern partly based on his experience with the rules and procedures that are followed by his employer. He noted how Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member and Executive Director of Rainbow Place, offered to excuse herself at the most recent Commission meeting due to the discussion of her agency, but was waived off. From his perspective, it may be easier and more efficient if these practices are in place to remove the possible conflict of interest perception. Based on the discussion, members were agreeable to reviewing the possibility of adopting procedures to help the Commissions

processes. Leon cautioned that there is value in having the agencies present for the feedback but did understand the concern. Jen asked if members from the programs could be present for the site visit discussions? Carlos responded how this was discussed in the past, but the added burden for many of the agencies, especially when you consider the amount of funding provided by Rockville, was found to be inefficient by past members of the Commission. Debbie then added that she agrees that equity is important, but the Commission should be careful to balance equity with participation. It was ultimately decided that Carlos would look into procedures followed by other Mayor and Council appointed boards and commissions and provide an update at the next meeting.

### **RE: Old Business**

- FY 2020 City of Rockville Budget

Carlos Aparicio provided the members of the Commission with an update regarding the City of Rockville budget. The budget was adopted on May 6, 2019. The City's Caregiver funding will receive a 1.3% increase and the Community Services Division budget will receive an increase due to increases in staffing costs. No program operating increases are currently in the budget, and increases will only occur if there are increases to the grants that Rockville receives in support of the City operated programs.

- Montgomery Cares Advocacy

Laurie Gira, Caregiver Member and Community Reach of Montgomery County's Grants Manager, provided an update to the group. Per Laurie, the Health Centers Leadership Council (HCLC) received a reply to their concerns from Dr. Travis Gayle, Chief of Montgomery County Public Health Services. Laurie noted that the HCLC is concerned about a discrepancy between the information his office is providing, and the agreements made with the Montgomery County Executive, Mark Elrich. Specifically, there is concern that the information and directives provided by Dr. Gayle's office may create an undue burden on patients and may cause residents who can't afford the premiums charged by Qualified Health Plans to lose health care. Per the HCLC, they were under the impression that the County would institute a six-month moratorium.

Members of the commission asked what the status of this item was from a City perspective. Carlos informed the group the Mayor and Council has directed staff to monitor the situation and report back with information. Per the information the Mayor and Council received from both sides of the conversation, it is their understanding the HCLC and the County are in talks to help improve the communication between the stakeholders. Laurie then stated that she would check in with Agnez Saenz, Executive Director of Community Reach of Montgomery County, for updates and provide them to the Commission.

### **RE: Other Items**

Carlos discussed how the Commission would often cancel one of the meetings during the summer. Based on the discussion, the August meeting will be canceled so the group can review the Caregiver Funding Task Force's Report.

**RE: Adjourn**

Leon Suskin, At-large member, moved that the meeting be adjourned and Deborah Moore, Consumer Representative, seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.