

# Mayor's Commission on African American Elders

c/o Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County  
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**June 20<sup>th</sup> 2025 – 2:00–3:30pm**  
**Grace United Methodist Church, 722 30<sup>th</sup> Ave**

**Members:** Tiffany Toms, Pamela Williams, Charlotte Antoine, Paul Mitchel, Calvin Lassiter, Deborah O'Neill

**Members Absent:** Benjamin Abe, Nathan Yemane, Claudette Thomas, Hiwot Zewdie,

**ADS Staff:** Michael Adusah, Eldad Mekuria, Dinah Stephens, Stevie Elliott

**Guests:** Melba Ayco, Sharon Hargraves

## 1. Welcome/Introductions

Juneteenth recognition and celebration

## 2. MCAAE Business

- Approval of May Minutes
- Tiffanie Toms is announced as the new liaison for the Advisors Council.
- Next meeting July 18, 2025

## 3. Guest Speaker: Melba Ayco Founder and Artistic Director of Northwest Tap Connection

Melba gave the back story of her life and talked about the importance of the arts and the direct link to the relationships between our youth and older adults. inclusive of history and future.

Word of the day was "Sankofa", a word from the Akan language of Ghana, translates to "go back and get it" or "learn from the past."

## 4. Members identified Advocacy Priorities for the Year (Approved by Consensus):

- Housing
- Social Connectivity
- Senior Nutrition
- Caregiving
- Medicare & Social Security

## Next Steps

- Staff will draft tangible actions under each priority area, with support from Michael and input from the Advisory Council.
- A draft will be shared ahead of the next meeting to allow members to review and provide additional ideas.
- Potential formation of committees/task forces to tackle each issue.

## 5. Member had Discussion on Seattle Housing Authority Application Barriers:

- Concerns raised about the complexity and length of SHA housing applications.

**Issues noted:**

- Need to call in monthly to stay on the waitlist.
- Redundant information in the forms.
- Lack of follow-up and intimidating process for applicants.

**Suggestions:**

- Consider drafting a letter to SHA Board (possibly through former MCAAE chair Rita Howard, who is now on the SHA Board).
- Staff to investigate federal requirements and explore simplification opportunities.

**Next meeting July 18, 2025**