

# Mayor's Council on African American Elders

c/o Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County  
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## MCAAE Meeting Summary

July 19, 2024

**Members:** Dr. Abe, Rita Howard, Paula Williams

**Members Absent:** Charlotte Antoine, Paul Mitchell, Claudette Thomas, Pamela Williams,

**ADS Staff:** Mary Mitchell, Eldad Mekuria, Dinah Stephens, Karen Winston

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### I. Discussion: MCAAE Priorities & Future Support

Karen Winston is planning to retire in September. A concern was expressed regarding staff capacity given her other duties, such as the area plan, and other tasks that do not fall under this commission. Rita asked if Karen's role would be replaced with another who will resume staffing duties. Mary said this could be a good opportunity to either do something different or set up the same structure as what we have now.

Dinah is the lead on the Age Friendly Seattle team, and Eldad is one of the strong members of that team along with Meg. This could be an opportunity for MCAAE to become part of that program, and still retain their presence as a council. Rita expressed her support for having the Age Friendly team support the MCAAE especially since we've partnered so much with them since 2018. Dinah said there are already many areas where Age Friendly is working in partnership with MCAAE, and she sees this as a natural evolution.

Michael asked if Karen's position was going away. Mary's response was that the position will remain. The opportunity to bring more visibility to the work of MCAAE by joining the Age Friendly team is what Mary wanted the group to consider.

Mary discussed the MCAAE supporting the African American Elders Program (AAEP). Karen provided some history about the ongoing collaboration. Mary indicated that there was support the AAEP could use from the MCAAE to help advocate for another nurse.

Dr. Abe discussed raising the property taxes and exemptions that allow seniors to stay in their homes. Karen responded the MCAAE has been a strong advocate for increasing the threshold for property tax exemptions, and the state has responded with two increases thus far.

Mary suggested having staff put together a survey to send to the absent members, providing information on discussions about the Age Friendly team supporting the MCAAE. Rita asked if the liaison with the Age Friendly team could be identified by the August meeting. Dinah believed it would most likely be Eldad to assume this role, as the lead for community facing groups.

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## **II. MCAAE Recruitment**

Rita observed the need to focus on recruitment as there are currently four openings on the Council, and all but one member's term is expiring at the end of 2024. She urged members to extend invitations to others to apply.

The process for prospective members is to submit a letter of interest with a resume to the City's Boards and Commissions portal; Karen will send the link to members. Karen also submitted an article to appear in the August issue of Age Wise, and she is waiting for a response on her request to host a table at the central area's Senior Appreciation Week event (the block party was cancelled). Pamela invited Karen to host a table at the August 4<sup>th</sup> Neighbor's Night Out. Karen will attend. Rita asked if people are needed to staff these events. The response was, yes. Mary reported that senior planner, Waing Waing is working on the division's outreach plan because the Department of Neighborhoods has community liaisons that HSD can hire to help support recruitment.

## **III. Mary's ADS Update**

Mary attended the US Aging Conference in Tampa this year. She hasn't had an opportunity to debrief this council, the advisory council, or the ADS leadership team. More information will be coming soon; there were also a few grant opportunities.

HSD was successful in receiving \$3 million dollars during the State legislative session for nutrition funding. Those funds are already planning to be disbursed to community providers soon.

Maria is asking for a lead person to do more advocacy to get the rules changed about the state recovering funds from deceased Medicaid recipients who have left property or other assets.

Mary completed a media campaign with articles and live interviews about the Long-Term Care benefit in Washington State; this is where people could access benefits after 3 years of contributing to the fund. Mary saw this as an opportunity to help shape the outcome of who would benefit from this, as people of color are harmed the most.

Michael reported the Case Management Act would be like last year's goal of reducing caseloads. He will be reaching out to the Health Committee and Senator Murray's office regarding the Older Americans Act. The House has released their initial proposal, which is about a 6.2% overall cut, but there will be increases in specific titles. He wants to make sure the Senate version doesn't have similar cuts.

Mary displayed the website for the WA Cares Fund, saying it's an excellent resource. Karen will send out links to Mary's interviews.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m. **Next meeting:** August 16, 2024.