

Mayor's Commission on African American Elders

c/o Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County
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July 17, 2026. 2:00–3:30pm
Grace United Methodist Church, 722 30th Ave

Attending

Members: Chair - Pamela Williams, Vice Chair - Tiffany Toms, Claudette Thomas, Calvin Lassiter, Debroah O'Neal, Deborah Hughes, Paul Mitchel, Dr. Benjamin Abe, Cole Kiser, Cindy Herndon

Members Absent: Brady Rainy

Staff: Eldad Mekuria, Dinah Stephens, Emily Zinter, Sonali Agarwal, Michael Adusha

Guests: Steve Wilson, Peggy Pahl, Paula Williams

Welcome

Council Chair welcome attendees and introduces guest presenter.

PRESENTATION

Nolia Health & the CMS Guide Model, by Steve Wilson

MCAAE Business

Minutes: Claudette moved to approve the minutes from May 2026 meeting, Debroah Hughes seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Website Update: Staff shared the new updated MCAAE website edits.

Task Force Updates:

Housing Task Force

- Focus: Helping African American elders remain housed; identifying resources for homeowners and renters; exploring issues like mortgage burdens, property taxes, utility support, displacement after medical incidents, and foreclosure prevention.
- Reviewed sample resources and draft flyers; planning to update council website with additional materials.
- Recognized outreach challenges and discussed expanding communication channels.
- Continued work will include gathering more resources and exploring informational presentations.

Nutrition Task Force & Social Connectivity Task Force

- Members plan to coordinate separately to establish meeting dates.

- Social connectivity members requested name badges for meetings and asked whether non council members can join task forces.

Caregiving Task Force

- No formal report this meeting but noted interest in future collaboration.

ADS Staff Update:

SNAP: Senior nutrition programs are under pressure; ADS is gathering data on provider capacity and unmet need.

African American Elders Program (AAEP) Update: Transition of African American Elders Program to Tubman Health is underway; now known as the Black Elders Wellness Program (BE WELL). ADS is supporting the transition and triaging client needs.

Older Americans Act Reauthorization: The Senate passed a strong reauthorization bill including increased funding for caregiver support, nutrition services, and Native American programs.

Advisory Council will send letters thanking senators and urging House support.

Legislative Advocacy Planning: The Advisory Council is developing policy priorities for the next session, with senior nutrition funding as a major focus. Joint advocacy trips to Olympia in February are being discussed.

Federal Policy Changes: Major Medicaid disenrollments for individuals without qualifying immigration status will begin October 1. ADS is working on mitigation, appeals support, and alternative funding strategies. Many affected clients may have incorrect immigration status tagging, and legal assistance will be essential.

Senior Resource Guide Exploration: Interest expressed in creating a Seattle senior resource guide. The council may consider an online directory with printable PDF options due to cost and frequency of updates. Age Friendly Seattle's existing online resource directory may serve as a starting point.

Website & Outreach: Members asked to submit bios and headshots. Website analytics can be tracked to monitor engagement. Council will increase social media activity with support from interns. Community members may join task forces. Listserv available for individuals wanting updates.

Closing

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was approved.

Next Meeting; August 21, 2026