

Agenda
Advisory Committee on Aging
Friday, November 22, 2024
11:00 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

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Times listed with each agenda item are approximate. It is requested that all cell phones be silenced during the Advisory Committee on Aging meeting. Persons in need of auxiliary aids or services, such as interpretation services or assisted listening devices, are asked to contact the Denver Regional Council of Governments at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

- 1 11:00 a.m. Call to Order and Introductions
- 2 11:05 a.m. Public comment
Up to 45 minutes is allocated now for public comment and each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes. If there are additional requests from the public to address the Committee, time will be allocated at the end of the meeting to complete public comment.
- 3 11:10 a.m. Report of the Chair – Bob Brocker
- 4 11:20 a.m. Report of the AAA Director – Jayla Sanchez-Warren

Consent agenda

- 5 11:35 a.m. Move to Approve Consent Agenda
Minutes from October 25, 2024, meeting.
(Attachment A)

Action item

- 6 11:40 p.m. Discussion on canceling the December ACA meeting
(Attachment B)

Informational briefings

- 7 11:45 a.m. Legislative Update – Rich Mauro and Jodi Waterhouse
(Attachment C)
- 8 12:15 p.m. DRCOG Transportation Presentation – Erika Dubray
(Attachment D)

- 9 12:45 p.m. DRCOG Board Report
- 10 12:55 p.m. County Reports

Administrative items

- 11 **Next meeting to be determined.**
- 12 1:05 p.m. Other Matters by Members
- 13 1:15 p.m. Adjourn

Calander of future meetings

December 27, 2024 – to be determined

January 24, 2025 – Virtual

February 28, 2025 – Virtual

March 28, 2025 – Virtual

April 25, 2025 – In person

May 23, 2025 – Virtual

June 27, 2025 – In person

July 25, 2025 – Virtual

August 22, 2025 – In person

September 26, 2025 – Virtual

October 24, 2025 – In person

November 28, 2025 – Virtual

December 26, 2024 – Virtual

ATTACH A

Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA) Meeting Summary

Friday, October 25, 2024

If you have difficulty using this document's content, please email mpatton@drcog.org or call 303-480-6723. Please expect a response within 72 hours (three business days).

Members Present

Ada Anderson	Douglas County
Andrea Suhaka	Arapahoe County
Barbara Boyer	Arapahoe County
David Appel	Jefferson County
Donna Mullins	Jefferson County
Greg Kahler	Adams County
Gretchen Lopez	Douglas County
Jim Dale	Jefferson County
Karie Erickson	Douglas County
Paul Haseman	DRCOG Board - Golden
Paula Hillman	Arapahoe County
Phil Cernanec	Arapahoe County
Shari Haidvogel	Clear Creek County
Val Robson	Jefferson County
Wynne Shaw	Douglas County

Guests Present

No guests present.

DRCOG Staff Present

AJ Diamontopoulos, Senior Management Analyst, Amber Leberman, Communications Manager, Jayla Sanchez- Warren, AAA Division Director, Jennifer Reeves, Veterans & Community Options Manager, Kelly Roberts, Community Resource Specialist, Kelsie Jurin, Community Resource Specialist, Keona Gardner, Web Communications Specialist, Liv Bergman, Sr. Community Resource Specialist, Lydia Dumam, Refugee Program Manager, Paul Belcher, Aging Services Counselor, Roseline Mugaruka, Options Counselor, Saman Aalipour, Case Manager, Sasha Story, State Health Insurance Program Lead.

Call to Order

Wynne Shaw Committee Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m.

Public Comment Period (Non-ACA Members)

There was no public comment.

Report of the Chair – Bob Brocker

There was no report of the Chair.

Report of the AAA Director – Jayla Sanchez-Warren

Erin Wester has been appointed as the next Director of the Office of Adult, Aging, and Disability Services (OAADS). Previously, she served as the Deputy Commissioner of Systems and Programs for the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA). With over a decade of experience in community mental health, Erin has managed contracting, quality compliance, and operations for a community mental health center. She began her career as a family therapist.

Sharon Day is transitioning to the role of Building Decarbonization Business Operations Manager for DRCOG, where she will oversee the \$200 million EPA Decarbonization grant. Concurrently, Travis Noon has been promoted to the position of Manager of Business Operations for the AAA.

The Decarbonization grant will enable DRCOG to hire several new staff members in the Transportation department, which will require some physical changes within the building to accommodate the new staff.

Program Updates

Last quarter, the Ombudsman investigated 763 complaints. The top issues included response to complaints, resident rights and preferences, access to information, dignity and respect, and discharge/eviction.

The AAA is launching a Caregiver Respite Voucher Program in early 2025. More details to follow.

Last month, the AAA Transportation program provided over 4,000 rides through contractors and is currently handling 761 live calls this month, with 531 individuals on the waitlist.

SHIP open enrollment has started, leading to a high volume of calls. On the first day, there were 54 calls waiting for a response. This year, there are several positive changes in Medicare coverage. The team has been active in Douglas, Arapahoe, and Jefferson counties, providing updates to new and existing Medicare beneficiaries. The outreach for open enrollment focuses on the new changes and teaching beneficiaries how to use the Medicare Plan Finder, with a particular emphasis on lower-income communities and marginalized populations.

Following staff reductions, the Older Refugee and Friends program has been revamped to highlight educational and resource navigation at more locations in the Denver metro area, in collaboration with other local providers. There has been an increase in attendance from different refugee communities, which has created a need for more in-person translation services, despite limited funds.

The In-Home Voucher program waitlist has grown to over 60 individuals. Due to budget cuts, the AAA has reduced the number of service hours provided to participants to serve as many individuals as possible. Currently, homemaker services are provided for 2 hours every other week, down from weekly 2-hour services, and personal care services

are provided for 2 hours each week. Staff are assisting individuals in applying for Long Term Care Medicaid as needed.

In November, the Transitions team launched the Group In-Reach program. These in-person presentations to small groups of nursing home residents provide information and resources to help them decide about moving out of the nursing home and into subsidized apartment units or returning to a loved one's home with Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services. The team aims to deliver Group In-Reach to all 72 of the region's Medicaid nursing homes by the end of June 2025.

The Veteran Directed Care (VDC) program recently concluded fiscal year 2024. VDC Case Managers successfully helped 94 percent of their enrolled veterans retain or increase their VA-provided budgets for in-home care, goods, and services. This achievement allows more veterans to remain in their homes rather than moving to assisted living or nursing homes. Case Managers also advocate for veterans when the VA recommends a budget decrease.

The Information and Assistance team is now answering calls live, handling about 400 calls per month.

Jayla mentioned the upcoming online seminar on November 13th titled "Surviving the Reality: More Demand for Fewer Services." Members have received a save-the-date notice and will be sent the Zoom link as the event approaches. This online seminar, aimed at aging professionals and information and assistance providers, will cover topics such as understanding the current situation, the reality of AAA services, the Senate Bill 040 report, and self-care strategies.

Move to approve consent agenda

Items on the consent agenda included: September 27, 2024, meeting summary.

Phil Cernanec motioned for approval. Barbara Boyer seconded the motion; the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

Informational Briefings

Centennial Center of Generations Presentation – Paula Hillman

Centennial Mayor Stephanie Piko collaborated with the YMCA to establish a new center at The Streets at SouthGlenn, which opened in the summer of 2023. This center provides a multi-generational space where youth and older adults can come together. It operates from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for older adults and from 4:00 p.m. to closing for teens. The center has been very successful and continues to grow.

DRCOG website presentation – Keona Gardner

Keona provided an overview of the newly redesigned DRCOG website, which now meets updated accessibility standards. Key changes include increasing the font size from 12-point to 19-point for better readability and rewriting the text in plain language to enhance user comprehension. Additionally, there is now an arrow under each division with a drop-down menu to select the program of interest. The new site is also optimized for mobile device accessibility.

DRCOG Board Report – Amber Leberman

Communications Manager Amber Leberman provided the update, she said there was a discussion about revising DRCOG’s “Committee Policy, Guidelines, and Descriptions” document to establish oversight for the building decarbonization program. Additionally, representatives were selected to serve on the Regional Decarbonization Oversight Committee.

An update was provided on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, which has now moved from the study period into the action phase. There was also an update on the Regional Bus Rapid Transit, which will accelerate the development of rapid transit projects.

County Reports

Adams County – Greg Kahler

Greg Kahler said Adams County recently held a well-attended political forum. On October 30th, they will host their Fall Resource Fair, featuring 50 vendors. Greg also mentioned their county council meetings regularly attract 30 to 40 attendees.

Arapahoe County – Barbara Boyer and Phil Cernanec

Barbara Boyer informed the group the Arapahoe County Commission on Aging now meets every other month.

Phil Cernanec said Littleton is organizing a new event called “Longer Table,” where people from diverse backgrounds can gather, share a meal, and connect with each other.

Clear Creek County – Shari Haidvogl

Shari Haidvogl is gaining a deeper understanding of the County and has arranged meetings to address senior issues. She organized and hosted the first senior resource fair at the Idaho Recreation Center. Despite encountering some challenges, the fair was well received by the 30 individuals that attended.

Douglas County – Karie Erickson and Gretchen Lopez

Aging Resources of Douglas County is collaborating with a new low-income housing developer, the housing partnership, and Douglas County to fund a shuttle service to shopping centers, the library, and the hospital. The pilot program will start in Castle Rock, with the shuttle running on a circular loop and making four pickups daily.

The Douglas County Seniors Council recently hosted a workshop called “Aging Well, Finishing Strong,” which focused on personal well-being and creating a legacy binder. The workshop was attended by 50 participants, all of whom found it valuable and plan to attend again.

Jefferson County – Donna Mullins, Jim Dale, and Dave Appel

Donna Mullens reported Jefferson County had their legislative forum with 21 candidates. It was well balanced with republicans and democrats.

Jim Dale said Jefferson County has a ballot issue that would keep all the property tax over the TABOR limit and help contribute to helping with mental health issues.

Dave Appel mentioned that Jefferson County has a new mental health service provider which is needed in Jefferson County.

Other Matters by Members

There were no other matters to discuss.

Next meeting – November 22, 2024.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

ATTACH B

Advisory Committee on Aging Meeting

Name of Committee: Advisory Committee on Aging

Meeting date: November 22, 2024

Agenda Item #: 6

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Discussion on canceling the December ACA meeting

Agenda item type: Action item

Summary

Vote to cancel the December 27th meeting.

Background

Historically the ACA has voted to cancel this meeting due to many vacationing members during the holidays. This agenda item will be seeking member approval to cancel the December 27th meeting.

Action by others

None

Previous discussions/actions

None

Recommendation

Move to cancel the December 27, 2024, meeting.

Attachment

None

For more information

If you need additional information, please contact Mindy Patton, Division Assistant, (303) 480-6723 or mpatton@drcog.org.

ATTACH C

Advisory Committee on Aging Meeting

Name of Committee: Advisory Committee on Aging

Meeting date: November 22, 2024

Agenda Item #: 7

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Legislative Update

Agenda item type: Informational item

Summary

Rich Mauro will provide an overview of the legislative session, including the governor's budget request, changes in the legislature, and issues expected to be of most concern.

Guest presenter, Jodi Waterhouse, will discuss purpose and efforts of a group of older adult advocates (informally dubbed the Advocacy Huddle) that have been collaborating on legislative issues the last several years.

Background

The Advisory Committee on Aging has expressed an interest in engaging in more direct advocacy, including participating in the Advocacy Huddle.

Action by others

None

Previous discussions/actions

Discussion at the ACA meeting on October 25, 2024.

Recommendation

None

Attachment

None or a numbered list of attachments

For more information

If you need additional information, please contact Rich Mauro, Director of Legislative Affairs, at (303) 480-6778 or rjmauro@drcog.org.

ATTACH D

Advisory Committee on Aging Meeting

Name of Committee: Advisory Committee on Aging

Meeting date: November 22, 2024

Agenda Item #: 8

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Choice Services Program-Transportation update

Agenda item type: Informational item

Summary

AAA staff will provide an update on the current status of AAA transportation services, including details on contractors, the call center, team staffing, the waitlist, enrollments, and future plans for the program.

Background

Over the past year, the AAA Transportation team has had to adjust the transportation program due to a reduced budget. In February 2023, staff informed the Advisory Committee on Aging (ACA) about the changes they intended to implement and provided data on the program.

Action by others

None

Previous discussions/actions

ACA update February of 2023.

Recommendation

None

Attachment

None

For more information

If you need additional information, please contact Erika Dubray, Aging and Disability Resource Center Manager, at 303-480-5652, email edubray@drcog.org or Taylor Honeysette, Transportation Program Manager, 720-668-0213, email thoneysette@drcog.org.