
Commissioners: Robert “Bob” Scott (Chair, PRESENT), Blake Spears (Vice-Chair, PRESENT), Asha BeeneClarke (PRESENT), Lenore Gunst (EXCUSED ABSENT), Jennifer Seibert (EXCUSED LATE), Suzi Kalmus (PRESENT), Jacqueline Johnson (PRESENT), Lisa Malul (EXCUSED LATE), Brandon Hemphill (EXCUSED ABSENT)

Human Services Department (HSD) Commission Staff: Ana Bagtas, Aging and Adult Services Manager; Marshay Boyd, Commission Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING

MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON AGING

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

North Oakland Senior Center – 5714 Martin Luther King Jr. Way

Meeting Minutes

1. Call To Order

Chair Scott called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM.

2. Roll Call/Determination of Quorum Quorum was established.

3. Adoption of Agenda

ACTION ITEM: Blake Spears/Suzi Kalmus/Carried

4. Approval of March 5, 2025, Meeting Minutes

ACTION ITEM: Jacqueline Johnson/Asha Beene-Clarke/Carried

5. Public Comment (Specific Agenda Items, limit of two minutes) No speakers at this time.

6. Presentation: Aging Well in Oakland: A 5-Year Strategic Action Plan - Listening Sessions Preliminary Results – Ana Bagtas, Human Services Manager, City of Oakland Human Services Department, Aging and Adult Services Division

Chair Scott opened this agenda item by welcoming Ana Bagtas to present her information. Ana Bagtas, Human Services Manager with the City of Oakland's Human Services Department, presented preliminary results from the “Aging Well in Oakland” Listening Sessions, which are part of the development of a 5-Year Strategic Action Plan focused on improving services and quality of life for Oakland's aging population. The plan, scheduled for completion by July 1, 2025, is a collaborative

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effort between the Aging and Adult Services Division and the Mayor's Commission on Aging (MCOA). Ana outlined key focus areas that emerged from community input, including Senior Hubs, Funding Resiliency, Service Navigation, Self & Community Capacity Building, Transportation, Safety & Security, and Communication Outreach & Promotion. Commissioners were invited to participate in stakeholder groups aligned with these themes to help guide the planning process. Ana emphasized the importance of community engagement, noting that ongoing listening sessions will continue to shape the plan's priorities. The next steps include assessing needs, prioritizing, setting goals, and developing smart objectives. Ana opened the floor for comments/questions from commissioners and the public. Both engaged in very in-depth conversations about plans to move forward.

7. Advocacy Updates

Chair Scott opened the Advocacy Updates by welcoming Wendy Peterson, Director of the Senior Services Coalition, along with Priscilla Banks. He invited Wendy to share the advocacy work currently underway to support Oakland's older adult community and how it aligns with the commission's efforts. Wendy spoke about her collaboration with Chair Gunst to communicate with city leadership on the importance of prioritizing older adults and maintaining critical funding for senior services. She highlighted their initiative to support seniors in advocacy by providing sample letters, clear instructions, and space for individuals to personalize their messages. The coalition is also taking care of mailing the letters on behalf of seniors, submitting them directly to leadership with the goal of improving support and ensuring older adults in Oakland are not overlooked.

8. Budget Advisory Commission Report

Chair Scott inadvertently moved the agenda items out of order at this point but noted that Fiscal Budget Manager Kurry Foley was not present to provide an update. As a result, this item was skipped. However, Ana Bagtas offered a brief budget update during her Human Services Department report.

9. Human Services Department/Aging & Adult Services Report – Ana Bagtas, Aging and Adult

Services Manager, HSD Chair Scott introduced this item by inviting Ana Bagtas to provide an update on the City's budget process and its impact on senior services. Ana shared that the Human Services Department was invited to present at the City's budget hearing, where she will be speaking on behalf of Oakland's senior centers in front of the Mayor, Interim Mayor, and administrative leadership, including the City Administrator. Her message will focus on the importance of keeping senior centers open and the funding needed to do so. While the administration has expressed a commitment to keeping the centers operational, the current budget only allows for one staff member per site, which is not sustainable for full-time operations. Ana is actively pursuing additional funding sources but emphasized that it will take time. She stressed the need for adequate staffing to maintain full-time programming and services. Ana also asked the Commission, how can MCOA better coordinate with each senior center? She suggested hosting a Zoom or in-person orientation to connect MCOA commissioners with each center's advisory council and begin planning collaborative efforts. She invited commissioners to participate in the upcoming Steering Committee meeting scheduled for Monday, April 14, 2025, which will include representatives from community-based organizations, city departments, and the Commission to develop a plan before the new fiscal year begins on July 1. During discussion, Vice-Chair Spears noted that commissioners were previously assigned to individual senior centers. In

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response, Chair Scott proposed a formal motion: that MCOA commissioners and senior center advisory councils begin working together to strengthen leadership, align on community-wide issues, and ensure all voices are heard in the planning and problem-solving process. Blake Spears/Jennifer Seibert/Carried

10. Open Forum (Limit of two minutes)

We received three public comment cards. These public members had two minutes each to express their comments/questions. The commissioners/staff had time to respond to their comments.

11. Closing Remarks & Adjournment Meeting Adjourned 12:06 PM.

ACTION ITEM: Blake Spears/Jacqueline Johnson/Jennifer Seibert/Motion Carried

Next MCOA meeting will be May 7TH, 2025.

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