

FCAG Meeting, Monday November 20th at 6 pm

Virtual Meeting; open to the public.

FCAG members present: Rabbi Abbi Sharofsky, Richa Agarwala, Daisy Thompson, Abdul Qadar Chaudhry, Amy Costello, Chris Mathews, Kenneth Nelson, Aman Shergill, Rev Charlene Belsom Zellmer

Unappointed individuals present: Kate Chance, Gerry Lui (Mental Health Director of a Rockville non-profit), David Engel (Chair of MoCo Commission on Aging)

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Considerations for MoCo Exec 2024 budget proposal – request for open dialogue
 - a. FY23:
 - i. Increase in security funds for congregations. This funding was included in the budget and then increased during the year
 - ii. RLWG – encouraged creation of funds to support/increase low-income housing
 - iii. Welcome services for newcomers
 - iv. Missed your 4th point; sorry, Kate!
 - b. Budget recommendations will be implemented Jan -Feb time period
3. David – the Commission on Aging advocates for programmatic funding, and would like to see more communication/outreach support. This conversation continues at every meeting – first, County services are not well-known, especially within certain segments in MoCo. The Public Information Office has no officer assigned to aging and disability services. Would like a team, or at least a person, to get the word out about relevant programs. Also, his office has an ambassador program, and they would be happy to meet with any group to identify concerns that can be brought back to the County offices.
4. Chris – what programs is the County funding to support early childhood literacy?
Kate – not sure what the MCPS budget or focus is. The County does have youth support budget goals, but not sure how they're being met. There are some youth support programs where dads go to provide support on campuses; these seem to be effective. Not sure how widespread or systematic these efforts are.

5. Aman – more funds for teachers and medical staff. EMTs and firefighters are continually short-staffed. Also, it seems like the recent increase in crime is associated with kids from MCPS. Kate: the recent property tax increase has caused some frustration, and we aren't privy to the MCPS budget. The Executive determines how much funding goes to MCPS, but can't direct how it is spent.

6. David – what is the support for non-profits offering multi-generational programming within the schools? Non-profit funding doesn't go through MCPS but does directly impact the students. Abbi – from JCRC's work with school districts, and as a parent of MCPS students, I have no idea about intergenerational programs that are available? That would be a really cool thing, and it points to a larger frustration, that there are so many resources that could be shared with the schools but even though the top of MCPS might support, it's difficult to get resources into individual schools. David – school principals can reach out to several resources, to get high-quality programs in their schools.

7. Ken – need to encourage the superintendent and administration to be responsive to our interests, which are similar to theirs. Can also approach by going through the board leadership, and letting them know what is available. Recommend continued funding for programs to eliminate health disparities across the board. Also streamline operations so people in need can get services.

8. Abbi – do we have a sense of where funding stands on Narcan training? Is there research on how effective it was, or what the plan is going forward? What funding is needed? Kate: it seems like there's enough resources to continue providing training. From a data standpoint, it comes from high schools and is widely not available. Abbi – high schools are one thing. What needs to be done to ensure training is also happening in youth groups, etc.? Kate – I think the DHHS people who are doing the training have a good strategy, but not sure – this is a good question.

9. Chris – re: multi-generational programming in schools, it might be more effective to reach into the schools from the bottom up, rather than the top down.

10. Gerry – would like to find out more about existing grants for mental health programming, perhaps through faith communities or ethnic groups. Kate – I get grant information as it comes out. The Asian-American health coalition usually pushes grants out. We can touch base and I can try to find that information for you.

11. David – at the American Muslim Senior Society – brought up that assisted living communities in MoCo have very few people of color, number-wise. Trying to break through that barrier and discover why that is – cost, stigma, etc? Could be an item for the County council to look into, as well as the community at large.

12. Chris – was the security grant sufficient? Kate – they just closed the applications; last year there were many applicants; nobody got how much they wanted. There were more applicants this year. It's not enough to cover in-person security services, if you

consider the lowest rate for a security officer is about \$60/hour. We gave emergency funding to some mosques and synagogues recently, but even that is hard to come by and not enough. Abbi – security is going to continue to be a major funding priority for synagogues, schools, mosques, etc. The Jewish community has rallied for increased security funding in some shopping centers with businesses that serve heavily Jewish populations. Kate: The county just put out funding for security cameras in areas with higher crime. Need to ensure that everyone has support – Sikh, Hindu. So maybe more security support for more minority businesses.

13. Daisy – I feel that the County needs to put more money into aging and disability services & agencies. I know the wait list for services is very long; people are on the list as long as 2 years. David – the problem is the list for Medicaid-funded home & community -based services. The state just passed a law to reduce the wait by 50%. The County needs to fill vacancies in HHS, in order to reduce the wait times – there is a huge gap.

14. Kate – feel free to reach out, if you have other ideas for the budget. Will reach out for more information on Narcan training.

15. Abdul – there is an interfaith Thanksgiving service tomorrow at the Islamic Center **missed the details; can't find them on line!**

16. The Sikh community will celebrate Guru Nanak's birthday on 27 Nov from 7:00 – 9:30 pm at the Guru Gobind Singh Foundation in Rockville on Travilah Rd. There will be another celebration on 13 Dec at the County govt building, from 6 – 8 pm; will be in the FCAG newsletter.