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Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Older Adults Committee, Tuesday, April 25, 2023

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[00:00:09] Go ahead and get started. Give people a couple of minutes to get seated. Great. And then we're starting this meeting 12 hours early, according to the agenda.

[00:00:30] But we're going to go ahead. I think this will be a relatively short meeting. When we set this up, we didn't realize or we didn't know whether we'd have a lot of things to discuss or a few things to discuss. But this is one of the steps in getting the SHAPE plan approved at the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 23rd.

[00:00:50] so this is kind of the last chance for board members to kind of weigh in and uh and comment on the plan you should have gotten the plan last week um and with that we've got thank you to our commission members for joining us today we just did introductions less than a month ago so i think we're going to skip going around like we uh like we have in the past but thank you for both your participation and your uh efforts in getting this plan moved forward and look forward to any comments that you have as well, and with that, I'm going to turn it over to Trina.

[00:01:26] TRINA MAHAN: Hi. Good morning. I'm Trina Mahan-Webb, Director of Adult and Aging Services under the Department of Family Services. It is such a pleasure to be in this spot right now with this Shape the Future of Aging plan.

[00:01:44] Really wanted to just thank Supervisor Herity and Supervisor Walkinshaw for their guidance on this plan, getting us through, and then really appreciate your feedback, you taking the opportunity to really think about aging and what that means for the Fairfax area. So I'm going to turn it over to Tara Turner, who will walk you through your feedback and what we did with that, and then to Kathy Cole, who will talk about next steps.

[00:02:09] So thank you so much. Tara? Good morning, everyone. Nice to see you again. I'm Tara Turner, Director of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, and Kathy Cole will be talking today as well, Chair of the Commission on Aging. We want to keep today's presentation short and sweet for you. I know you heard a lot from me the last couple times, but we'll start out with a reminder that the goal of the Shape the Future of Aging plan is to act as a North Star, not only internally as we evaluate the needs of our older adult population and their caregivers, but also for the community-based organizations that serve the same population. The plan has been intentionally

[00:02:47] designed to be in alignment with the countywide strategic plan in one fairfax and the purpose of today's meeting is really to gauge readiness of a may approval of the final draft of the shape the future of aging plan to include the design which has been posted in the materials to share with you how your feedback that you previously gave to us was considered and discussed where content is in alignment with that feedback and where that can be found in the plan and then to discuss next steps and expectations for the future. So we want you to know that we have considered all feedback in this plan and while you won't see every piece of

[00:03:26] feedback here, there were a few common themes that we thought would be important to pull out and let you see that they have been addressed in certain points of the plan. On the chart you'll see the feedback theme we heard, the section or sections where this theme is referenced or addressed, and the page number that that corresponds to the starting point of where that topic is addressed.

[00:03:49] To start, we heard from you that a table of contents would enhance ease of navigating the document, and so a table of contents has been added, and that can be located on page one of the plan. We also understand that this is a comprehensive document. There's a lot of information to sift through, and we're well aware that not everyone will want to dive that deep to understand the premise of the document itself.

[00:04:12] So for those reasons, we have added an executive summary, and that can be found on page two of the shape the future of aging plan. We heard you in our last meeting when you told us that you think it would be valuable to include the number of people who participated in community engagement events and so we've also added that information into the executive summary that's located on page two. We heard your input when you wanted to ensure that there was discussion about support for access to mental health services as well as ensuring that social isolation and loneliness are addressed.

[00:04:45] So you can find information about both of those topics in the personal well-being section starting on page 19. We also understand that supports for people struggling with food insecurity are important to you, and we have addressed this topic in the personal well-being section that starts on page 22. It was hard to hear that some older adults are having to seek additional employment to make ends meet, and we have addressed this issue on page 23 in the economic stability planning section of the Shape the Future of Aging plan. We heard you when you told us that you think dementia-friendly trainings are valuable to our community and that you would like to see

[00:05:23] them expanded. This has been addressed in the Services for Older Adults and Family Caregiver section on the plan of page 25. We also understand that you wanted to see information offered to people about home sharing, and this has been addressed on page 26 in the Housing and Neighborhood Support section of the plan. Expanding mobility options to include exploring ride sharing was discussed and included on page 27 in the Access to Mobility Options section.

[00:05:55] We also heard you tell us that lifelong learning options increase community engagement, and this was included on page 29 in the Personal Wellbeing section. Technology has been a critical way to communicate and stay connected over the past few years, and addressing technology assistance for older adults was discussed both in the Personal Wellbeing section of the plan on page 28 and in the Economic Stability and Planning section on page 30.

[00:06:21] We also heard you tell us that when someone loses a spouse, they need additional help, and they may have additional end-of-life planning as well as other needs. We addressed part of this in the Economic Stability and Planning section on page 30. And in addition to the feedback themes that you see on the screen, we got a lot of additional great feedback from you.

[00:06:42] And some of that feedback would likely be better categorized as specific initiatives to discuss in the committees that will be formed under each of the SHAPE domains moving forward. we've heard you say things like include the use of translation devices in senior centers to increase inclusion develop a public awareness campaign and although we addressed economic needs of older adults who have lost a spouse we also recognize that the needs of spouses also make sense to address within the initiatives that will exist that are tied to personal well-being we also heard you when you express the value you see in making sure that older adults are at the

[00:07:19] table as initiatives move forward it's important to us as well and please know that older adults including those representing represented on our commission on aging will be involved in the next phases of developing initiatives additionally following your approval of the plan on may 23rd dfs will have a plan posted on the website and we are currently working on an awareness plan to engage stakeholders and the community in operationalizing the plan whether that be joining one of the committees or learning more about the plan or even more about our services in general.

[00:07:55] We'll plan to use social media, the Golden Gazette, faith-based communities, and senior centers to engage our aging community. We know that it's going to be important to include relevant county departments in development and ownership of initiatives.

[00:08:12] Multiple departments will be invited to assist in developing and supporting initiatives. And next phases will include identification of appropriate departments to pull in on discussions on making headway on approved recommendations. We know that it's important to you to know what departments will be involved in different spaces of the SHAPE domain, and our report outs about SHAPE initiatives and future older adult committee meetings will include updates on all that has happened in the coming phases of this work to include which county departments are at the table in the process.

[00:08:46] I'm going to pass the mic to Kathy, who's going to tell you a little bit more about next steps. Oh, well, I'll continue on. I was just saying I had the good part.

[00:09:02] Okay, as Tara said, in partnership with the Department of Family Services, the Commission on Aging will establish six committees to which we'll be responsible for developing and shaping each of the

shape domains.

[00:09:19] So that's five with the five letters of shape, plus an additional committee dedicated to data reporting and plan alignment strategy. The committees will be led by one to two commissioners and will be made up of at least one subject matter expert, a community partner, and at least one community member with a staff liaison. The committee members will be vetted by the commission and will bring in additional people to inform the work of the committee as needed. We also think that members should reflect the diversity found in the community. The committee members will review

[00:09:57] the recommendations within their identified shape domain and will solidify the initiatives that align with those recommendations. The initiatives in each shape domain will be categorized as short, medium, or longer-term goal to address prioritization and identification of low-hanging fruit versus those that may be more of a marathon to achieve. The committees will also identify a COA advocate, a commission advocate, a community champion, and a staff liaison who will take ownership of moving the work forward for each identified initiative.

[00:10:35] We know that you are all interested to know the status of the operator, I was doing so well, that, what Trina said, and how it continues to align with the county strategic plan and one Fairfax, and what departments are involved. We will also aim to identify where and what might be having a big impact on the community and what isn't. As Tara mentioned, we plan to report out annually at the future Older Adult Committee meetings, and the initiatives

[00:11:12] could be scored similarly to the way they were done in the previous 50-plus action plans, with an easy way to understand whether the initiatives have been achieved or whether they are in progress or making just some progress. We'll also try to identify whether the initiatives have fell flat or are inactive, and hopefully we can identify why so that we can resolve that.

[00:11:39] That's the plan going forward. The commissioners have already spoken up as to which shaped domain they want to take responsibility for. As I said in our last meeting, we are raring to go. So our thinking caps are on as to who we would like to invite to be part of these committees and we're waiting for the awareness campaign to kick off so that we could see who else might be interested in working with us. So that's what I've got to say about next steps. I'm not going to get that word ever.

[00:12:14] It's okay. And I'll just add, you know, we really thank you for your time today, and we really hope that you feel confident moving forward in an approval in May of this plan. All right.

[00:12:29] With that, time for board comment and discussion, either on the next steps, which I'm really excited about, and a lot of this is very similar to what we did with the 50-plus community action plan and made a lot of progress with that. on either the plan or next steps, Chairman?

[00:12:48] Yeah. Thank you, Supervisor Herdy. A couple questions. One, what do you envision the timeline on the next steps to be? Because obviously this is a plan for 2023 to 2028, and we're already in 2023, and so I don't know what the goal is in terms of the committees to meet, to refine, and come up with action plans.

[00:13:15] I can take that if you want. So I think over the summer, these initiatives and committees need to meet and kind of identify next steps. And part of that will be a timeline. But at least annually, we're going to be reporting out to you on the progress that has happened. And so because part of the next steps are identifying, you know, what are the things that can happen sooner? And what are the things like Kathy

mentioned are more of a marathon? Those are going to be identified and timelines will be put into place. So we're going to identify them as short, medium, and long-term goals. And so those will be, we'll report out annually, but the timeline on that is really

[00:13:55] going to be dependent upon kind of committee designating those initiatives specifically and building the timeline for those. Okay. And is a part of that also going to be to specifically identify kind of the stakeholders who will carry out these action plans? Because obviously um you know i i'm going back to kind of the first sentence of the executive summary and this talks about the plan being you know 2023 to 2028 as a guide fairfax county and community-based organizations and meeting the needs of older adults and i think it's it's even broader than

[00:14:31] that i mean it's businesses it's all stakeholders that you know this reminds me of uh ccap in a way our environmental plan where we can write the best plan in the world but if we don't have all the right people promoting it, taking leadership roles in each of these categories.

[00:14:49] The county is going to do a lot, just like we do with CCAP, but we also acknowledge that without the whole community working on these things and understanding the importance of them, it's hard to accomplish all of the goals that are in here. And so I just want to make sure that we're working to identify kind of the leads on each of these and that some will be county government, but some will likely be entities outside of county government?

[00:15:16] If I could just add, we're trying to get ahead of this. So our next COA meeting is going to be a working meeting where we have already thought about and have gotten in our heads organizations, stakeholders to propose to be part of these committees.

[00:15:37] And then once the whole group agrees that we're all going in the right direction, we will contact those people and invite them. The awareness campaign will really help a lot in bringing other community members in. In fact, just at our last meeting, we had a member of the public hear us discussing it initially and has already volunteered.

[00:16:00] So fingers crossed that we're going to get good community support. We also have a list of people that we wanted to have invited to the town halls for the targeted interviews. So we still have that list of people that we can go back to and say, okay, now's the time to step forward again.

[00:16:23] Good. I think that's great because I just, in closing, I think it's important that this be an action document. we all realize that. It's not an analysis that sits on a shelf as we want to put this document into action. And to do that, we're going to need a lot of people helping us do that and have those people identified. It kind of goes back to one of the original themes I know that came up in the survey, which is we do have a lot of programs and opportunities. We just don't have a lot of people who know about them. And so this is one of these where, you know, a great opportunity not only to put in place the right policies and procedures and engage the right people in the community

[00:17:01] on this, but also a huge opportunity to broaden awareness about the things that exist in the county and things that need to be improved and improve upon that survey finding that really pointed to, hey, a lot of people don't know about a lot of the things that are available to them, and we can really, I think, make major headway in that.

[00:17:20] But really happy with this, really happy with the changes that were made. And I kind of share the same desire to get going. So well done. Yeah, and I'll just add to that. The goal is to do much like we did

with the 50-plus community action plan, have community champions as well as because the government can't do everything, so we don't want it to.

[00:17:43] And, of course, we keep the affordable, actionable, and achievable in mind as we move forward and identify things that we're going to do. Vice Chair James Walkinshaw. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations, Tara and Trina, Jackie, and the Commission on almost reaching the finish line and Supervisor Herity.

[00:18:06] I can remember a meeting that Supervisor Herity and I had with staff in 2020 as we were talking about this. Yvette was pregnant at the time, so I vividly remember it. I have aged since then. I don't know about others, but a lot of work and time.

[00:18:23] gone into this. Appreciate you all coming back with the description of how we're going to operationalize it. I think that's great. You know, just one thing that I'll add, I came across it, and I think it was mailed to all of our offices. I saw it yesterday on my desk. The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia issued a report, Growing Old Together in Northern Virginia, and they hit on a lot of the same themes that we have here. One area that they really highlighted was the challenge of folks in single family detached homes aging in place and making the

[00:19:02] necessary modifications or renovations to their homes. And we have that in the plan. And it struck me that it's a particular challenge in Northern Virginia and Fairfax County because so much of our single family detached housing stock is in the colonial style, I guess it will be called, where there isn't really main floor or one floor living, right? So the bedrooms and the showers and the bathtubs are on the upper level and the laundry room is in the basement. And so much of our

[00:19:36] housing stock is designed that way. So there's a challenge of making those renovations. But I also wonder, the committee who's looking at the housing issue, can we look at, is there more we can do in the building code while working with Richmond in the comprehensive plan to encourage future proofing of new homes that are built, right? So if you're going to install a chairlift to get up and down the stairs, you need to have power, right? So why would we be allowing a new home today to

[00:20:14] be built where there isn't power close to the stairs so a chairlift can be installed? Is there the plumbing to have the laundry room on on the main floor are there things that we can do to encourage that so that a new home that's built today 30 years from now when those folks are hoping to age in place it's easier easier to do so that's my you all have given me so many opportunities to give feedback so i'm just going to slip that one in under the wire here just Thank you.

[00:20:49] I thought I saw Supervisor Faust earlier, and then anybody else? Thank you, Supervisor Herdy. This is a really good document, obviously. You've heard that before. I'll just jump on that bandwagon. There are so many recommendations, and they are all good.

[00:21:11] I think just from an implementation standpoint, I'll throw this out. You can take it or leave it. I don't care. But I think you need to list these, and you need to say who's responsible for making sure the work gets done.

[00:21:30] We did it with the police report, I think 202 recommendations or something like that. Every single one of them had a home, and somebody was responsible for making sure that work was done in a timely manner. So I would just suggest, you know, this is overwhelming until you start breaking it down into pieces and responsibilities, and that would be my suggestion.

[00:21:58] I would say with regard to just a timely issue, the helping people stay in their homes, that we as a board are considering as part of our budget deliberations funding for nonprofits to help and assist seniors and people with disabilities have homes that make them livable but also accessible and safe.

[00:22:29] So that's something this board, I think, is really concerned about. Supervisor Faust, if I can just address that we absolutely will be breaking down the recommendations and providing ownership in our next phase of the project.

[00:22:46] That's part of what's going to happen. And so you will definitely see that when we come back to you next. And then, you know, thank you for your point about the nonprofits. I, you know, I think it's so important that we equip these people to be able to renovate the homes that need to be renovated so that people can stay in their homes.

[00:23:06] So, you know, I just want to say thank you for that. Yeah. And I'll add that as part of the operationalization of the plan, I shouldn't have tried anyway um as we did in the the 50 plus community action plan there will be community champion there'll be champions and people assigned to each of these uh i think i saw supervisor stork next well thank you mr chairman and um i it's really is it's a unique plan for a unique

[00:23:45] community which is i think has the challenges of how do we make it all happen in a time frame that I think we all would feel like meets the needs, because we know the needs are great right now. But to do that, you're going to have to step it, because obviously resources are going to have to be balanced.

[00:24:02] I really like the next steps you have in here in terms of the committees themselves and looking at that and how to, in the one year, the two years, five years, et cetera. Any sense of what that is in terms of time frame that you're looking to get to kind of at least have the big picture of what this might mean time-wise?

[00:24:22] I think, if I can speak, it would depend upon the types of initiatives and the depth and breadth of those initiatives. Some things are going to be fairly easy to at least get going, like in services where we could pull in cultural groups to find out how they best get information.

[00:24:47] So one of the recommendations is to figure out how to convey the information about the services that already exist. So that seems to me to be a low-hanging fruit, to pull together a coalition of people who can tell us how they best receive and then how do they best disseminate information.

[00:25:07] And we can start down that path almost immediately, I would think. But some of the other ones that are a little more difficult, like the personal well-being, I mean, that category is enormous. We'll break it down into subcommittees and subinitiatives, most likely.

[00:25:22] But that one is going to be a hard one to tackle, and that's going to take a little bit more time. I think the chairman's analogy to CCAP is very apt. I mean, the county has a role, for sure, but it's without the community engaging and having champions for different areas and even community not-for-profits and for-profits that are part of that process and to help engage and shape that, truly shape that plan, I think is an essential part of that.

[00:25:53] But just some higher level sense, and we're looking at, you know, two or three years to get the kind of the core plan or, I mean, just some sense of kind of a... Yeah, I can give you a sense. So on the next

step slide, the third bullet down talks about how we're going to categorize these initiatives. And so we're going to categorize them as short, medium, or long-term recommendations. And so, for example, short-term things are things we could potentially achieve within the next year. Looking at medium-term things, we're looking to achieve these things in the next two to three years. And then longer-term things four years out.

[00:26:33] I understand that. I'm trying to go even higher than that. Do you have a sense that just to put this package together of these different goals, short, medium, and long, that you'll have that within a year or two years or three years? We'll definitely have that within a year. That's going to be worked on in very next steps in the development of the committees. And one of the first things that's going to be done is identifying those things. So that will all be ironed out.

[00:27:02] I don't, absolutely within the next year, but maybe even sooner. So basically a year from now, The Board would have, no later than a year from now, the Board would have some sort of how they would go forward and go forward? Yes. Okay. That's really what I was trying to get a sense of. Yes. Supervisor Stark totally agree that you want a little more specifics on the initiatives and kind of a goal timeframe for that.

[00:27:25] A lot of it also depends on funding and what we already have in place with many of the partners, our community partners that are already out there. So some of these things that are listed, we already have in place, but we do want to enhance them and we will enhance them with additional partners so some of these things are going to be done within three months really because we are they're already in place some things will happen in six months in the year time frame you'll get a full report on where we are based on the dots one to four so i think just based on funding based on staffing based on the community partners we already have many of these things will move a little faster than than talking about for a full four or five-year plan.

[00:28:05] Excellent. I would, given the journey that Lisa's environmental chair, I've been very involved with the Office of Energy and Environmental Coordination and the efforts to, if you will, shape that CCAP plan and really the challenges of how to put all those together, I would strongly urge you to have a mechanism where you open that up to others, for-profit, not-profits, and have them engage and identify who is willing to champion certain areas here, because it is so big

[00:28:40] and it will take so much effort, and the county cannot possibly really support it in every way that we would ideally want. So we're looking for that. So that, I think, is your challenge, at least as staff leaders of this process. I just want to acknowledge that and let you know, you know, our whole premise on this is that we know we and the county cannot expand this work alone. This is not just our work. It's community work. And so we're with you. It's part of why community outreach is such a big part of our plan moving forward to build awareness and make sure

[00:29:15] that we're reaching out to organizations or committees like the Long-Term Care Coordinating Council who has very far reach with different organizations that touch older adults in the community. But yes, we hear you. I want you to know that we hear that. We agree with that. And it is definitely in the premise of our plan and if i can echo that the commission can't do it either and we know that so we may have two people assigned to each committee committee who's willing to work on it but we're going to need a tremendous amount of help and that's why we've already

[00:29:49] started thinking about this so that our next meeting will be a constructive meeting where we come up with some solid stakeholders that we're going to invite to start participating and you're You have something that I think almost every other area of our community and economy, you have a pool of folks who are deeply committed and involved and have more time than may otherwise be available for a lot of this.

[00:30:18] And you have, obviously, in our area, particularly of the technology and the knowledge, the skill set of folks who have had all the different experiences in all these different areas. So, I mean, this is really a phenomenal opportunity, and Fairfax clearly can be a huge leader in how to do this and do this very, very well.

[00:30:34] I had just one other comment, and it's kind of a question, too, is on the executive summary, page two, you identify about two-thirds of the way down the page. The survey also identified domains where Fairfax County residents experienced the most challenges, housing, information, access, and physical health care.

[00:30:53] And I was struck by the term physical health care because I think we all recognize that it's far more than that. And frankly, physical health care ties into mental health care. And I think we all have had experiences with others who through the physical health care was part of the issue, but ultimately that became mental health care issues.

[00:31:14] And so I thought that's fairly limiting and was going to just ask if there was a specific reason that terminology was used versus a broader language, because the actual plan itself covers far more than that. Yeah, thank you for addressing that. So the language is used that way because it's directly tied to the community assessment survey for older adults. And so mental health was asked about, but physical health was asked about as well. And that specifically was named as the challenge. So we agree with you that we know physical health leads to other challenges as well. And so you'll see in the plan, even though it's listed here as physical health, you'll see in the plan that our personal well-being section really

[00:31:53] amps up, you know, on all types of health. So I just, you know, I hear what you're saying there. I absolutely saw that, too, and that obviously gave me a little bit more comfort, but since it's an executive summary, I would encourage the language in here to be more inclusive.

[00:32:12] Okay, we'll consider that. Thank you. Any other supervisors? Start with Rodney and then Dahlia. Okay, I'll say I appreciate the work that's been done and really thank you for the way that you described the feedback from the board and then what section of the plan that's now covered.

[00:32:34] So that's really helpful. And I'll say to me personally, the ones that you kind of identified here, mental health is really important. The food insecurity is one that's also important to me. But I'm really intrigued on the employment, the folks who are saying that they need to go back and work.

[00:32:53] Ideally, they wouldn't have to, but acknowledging that some of them might and also acknowledging the points that you raised in your document, that there is ageism and that people in their 70s find it extremely hard to find people who are willing to employ them.

[00:33:10] And then when they get employed in some of the jobs, the physical exertion of the position makes it hard for them to stay. I've learned something here, and I'm going to say that I will try to do my part to try to help in some way, and that is to say, In my area, we do have a center.

[00:33:31] We have a WISH center, and it provides employment for residents in the Hyba Valley area. So I want to offer for those who have interest in seeking employment in that area that they should contact the WISH.

[00:33:47] I will reach out to them as well and make the point that when we do cohorts, what we typically have done is we'll have a group of participants who will come into a specific training. We just finished a training that was done with Inova Health where they trained folks on how to become patient navigators.

[00:34:07] And the beauty here is that's not necessarily a strenuous job in terms of you work inside the hospital system and you help direct people who come who have questions about which specialty they go to or what forms they need to fill out and what other services they may need to access.

[00:34:25] And I would say that maybe this is something that we could think about for some of the older residents who might be interested in maybe joining that cohort. So I'll try to see if that's something that we can consider. And then I'll also commit that we'll think about this as we think about future cohorts as well.

[00:34:42] If there are ways to incorporate opportunities for those who might be above 60 or older seeking employment, how we might support that. So thank you for the work that you're doing. I look forward to seeing, you know, your next steps.

[00:35:00] And you can feel free if there's someone who wants to reach out to me specifically on employment issues or training issues, if I can help in any way, I'll be happy to do that. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Pulchik.

[00:35:15] Thank you, Mr. Herity, and thanks to all of you for your work. So good to see you here, Joe, our representative, and to Kathy for moving this along. My comments are pretty similar. First of all, I want to thank you for including dementia-friendly training.

[00:35:32] I think it's very critical. And across all the cultures, we know that it's across the community. I think a little bit of where I was going was brought up as I look through this. Definitely things like transportation and housing, We know our issues across the board and we know are very critical in addition to our older adults as both of those are becoming harder, more challenging for us to have in the county.

[00:36:03] So I think kind of where Supervisor Vassel is going, especially those two for me stand out as ones that we absolutely need to ensure that our Department of Transportation and our Housing Department are at the forefront of helping lead that with the input and advice and being at the table and out in the community with our older diverse communities.

[00:36:27] Because I think that is absolutely something that we need to help address and tackle sooner rather than later. So I appreciate that. And then I think something else that really stood out to me in the report, I think starts in the executive summary on page three, is really seeing that our Asian and Hispanic community and respondents are seeing more needs than overall respondents in the area.

[00:36:53] As we know and I've seen personally and across the community that we need to ensure that we are addressing everything, but it actually shows up twice, the idea of equity, diversity, inclusion, and at a recent training from DFS, belonging as well. I think that's a big one that sometimes we overlook. Not only are we addressing needs of members of our community, but we do want to ensure that we are a community of everyone, whether we've lived here 40, 50,

[00:37:29] 60 years or more, or whether we are newer residents or newer families from diverse backgrounds. I think being able to ensure and understand how the different components in here are felt and lived by different members of our community, and some of that is up to us in ensuring that, but another one I'm really looking forward to ensuring that as you move forward through the socializing and the various committees and outreach and continued input, anything we can do, but also on our agencies and for you to help us ensure that we are understanding

[00:38:09] a little bit more granularly how that impacts or how we are including or not including our very diverse communities, and that I think is really important as we move forward. So, again, I want to commend you all, really Yeoman's work on this, to our volunteer committee.

[00:38:28] And really, I think you've done an excellent job and an example of how we want to address all issues in the county. Thank you. All right. Any other comments? Penny? Supervisor Palchuk mentioned something about diversity, equity, and inclusion.

[00:38:50] And I know this is a little hard to bring up, but in my recent experience with my husband in various medical situations and rehab situations and even just general discussions, many of our older residents grew up at a time when there was not diversity, equity, and inclusion.

[00:39:15] and we need to do some extra outreach I think to those that part of our community to help them understand why things have changed and diversity equity inclusion are the values that we treasure now it may not be the way they grew up I actually saw a situation where there was um I believe an African-American um aide who was trying to help somebody who and the and the patient the elder elderly person said, I don't want them touching me. Now that's an issue that the institution has

[00:39:54] to deal with, but it's also an example of some of the things we're seeing today that are sometimes spoken and sometimes unspoken. So how we get there, you know, eventually we may outgrow this as people grow up in more diverse communities, but right now I think we have a setup sometimes for animosity and friction. If we don't recognize there's a way we need to get across to folks who

[00:40:29] don't necessarily agree that this is the way we're doing it now. I'm not sure how we want to do that. It's sort of, but I do want to plant that seed because I think it's something that we can avoid future problems and frictions if we, even if it means taking somebody aside and having that quiet conversation with them.

[00:40:54] Thank you. All right. If there are no further questions, any comments? I just was going to say I agree with you, Penny, and I think the crisis happens often when older adults are in a crisis, they're needing care, and in our world right now, I don't know, I don't have good data, But the majority of hands-on caregivers are many from Africa.

[00:41:30] And it's a crisis happening. And people like Joe and I, who are those older people, have to realize that, you know, these are the people we have to look out for because they are the ones that are going to be caring for us.

[00:41:49] And, you know, our personal experience, I worked in Ethiopia for a year, a long time ago, and when I was needing help with caring for my husband, the minute someone from Ethiopia walked in the door, Stan told them all about it.

[00:42:08] And I still have a network of Ethiopian friends at Greenspring who, but it is, it is a real honest and true crisis. And for older people in a crisis to deal with all of that is, it's a real challenge.

[00:42:29] But it may also, if I may, and thank you because I figured I was the only one on the board who might be able to bring this up. But it was, if we don't look at the diversity of our community and the diversity of the programs we're offering, I mean, people may not want to be in a program because it's those people, some of those people are in the program.

[00:42:50] They don't, it doesn't have to be a care situation. It can be a participation situation where, you know, well, I'm not really comfortable being with those people. Well, we need to get folks over that, or we need to find a way to navigate that. So, yeah, we don't want to be siloed.

[00:43:09] And I'm really concerned that sometimes people silo themselves without realizing it. Very good points. My mom's health care worker also was from Ethiopia. Very important to my mom.

[00:43:26] And anyway, great relationship. With that, any closing comments you want to make before I make a couple of real quick ones? We're just ready to go. So tell us to go and we'll go.

[00:43:41] I'm just going to say a couple of quick words of thanks again, and thanks to the Commission on Aging for being ready to go, certainly Trina, Tara, and Jackie for all their hard work in the community for the input. This will come back to the board on May 23rd for our approval as we recognize Older Adults Month, and then they're already getting on with the work, but then the real work starts, And we will be bringing things back to the Older Adults Committee as they run into issues and challenges where they need our guidance from.

[00:44:17] And with that, I think we are adjourned 45 minutes early.