

# Mayor's Council on African American Elders

C/O – Aging and Disability Services, Seattle-King County  
Mailing Address: PO Box 34215, Seattle WA 98124-4215  
Office Address: Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, 51<sup>st</sup> Floor  
(206)684-0706 \* TTY (206)684-0274 \* FAX (206)684-0689  
Website: [www.seattle.gov/MCAAE](http://www.seattle.gov/MCAAE)

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January 15, 2021  
Zoom Meeting

**Members Present** – Brenda Charles-Edwards, Dr. Benjamin Abe, Paul Mitchell, Claudette Thomas

**ADS Staff** – Brent Butler, Cathy Knight, Karen Winston

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## I. Vaccine Update

- The City and County are working on the COVID-19 vaccine distribution. As the AAA for King County, ADS should have a role in this massive effort. There is a flurry of activity as a lot of different players try to figure out their role for the distribution process.
- Washington State and King County are expecting a lot of vaccines, but when you consider the density of King County, and the priority of hospitals, nursing homes and first responders, it is not enough.
- What is working is that we have a strong partnership with Public Health, and former ADS director, Maureen Linehan, was hired by Public Health to help focus on the long-term care population.
- The Department of Health has also designated the City of Seattle as a vaccine distributor, and the Mayor is working with the Fire Chief to coordinate more distribution sites.
- ADS is working very hard to keep all information about vaccine availability flowing. The goal is to get as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible. By March or April many will be vaccinated with more coordination.

## Questions

1. Many seniors served by the African American Elders Program (AAEP) are homebound, how will they be reached?

Answer: Since the AAEP contracts with ADS, if homebound clients are identified, we will work to make sure they get vaccinated, but it will work best if people are able to go to a vaccination distribution site.

2. Is my healthcare provider responsible for making sure I get the vaccine or should I wait for City or Public Health to set it up?

Answer: Everyone should be proactive and contact their healthcare provider for information if you fit the criteria for getting the vaccine. To determine your eligibility, visit the WA State Department of Health Phase Finder website -

<https://form.findyourphasewa.org/210118771253954>

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3. I am concerned that so many seniors do not have access to get the necessary information and will be left out of the process.

Answer: We could see senior centers as possible vaccination sites, as well as other locations. One suggestion for distributions included: Meals on Wheels or, maybe church parking lots in partnership with the Fire Departments.

### **Federal**

- President-elect Biden's new \$1.9T package, unveiled January 14, will include \$20B for vaccine distribution, \$1400 stimulus checks, eviction/rental assistance funds, and unemployment protections. His goal is to get 100 million people vaccinated within his first 100 days.
- Washington State may get around \$3M for additional nutrition services. We expect to hear more about this possibility soon. If successful, King County could receive about \$750K.
- The last relief package included funding for pandemic mitigation and Medicaid/Medicare provisions like Money Follows Person, 3-year extension, spousal impoverishment protections, and funds for Medicare outreach for low-income beneficiary enrollment.
- The Biden administration will likely introduce a reconciliation bill (which requires a simple majority vote) in March to fund infrastructure, climate change, ACA, Medicaid.
- Repeal of Trump tax cuts are likely and should pass by September.

### **State**

- The State legislative session has started. Nothing new to report regarding the State budget. Long-term services and supports are looking okay for now.
- The ADS Advisory Council will be doing some advocacy with legislators on January 27. Everyone is welcome to join a webinar on January 25, to hear the message for legislators and to schedule appointments with them.

### **City of Seattle**

- The Human Services Department has a new interim director, Helen Howell, who started this week.
- HSD will also be adding a new Safe and Thriving Communities division that will include staff and funds transferred from the Seattle Police Department.

### **Age Friendly**

- Brent described the Age Friendly Summary Report on 2020 activities and accomplishments.
- The virtual Close to Home Program was a success in 2020, and the most viewed episode was the program that featured Dr. Abe and Paul Kimani ([Close To Home, Episode 18](#)).

- Moving forward, Brent's team will continue to advance the eight core areas (often referred to as "[The 8 Domains](#)" of livability).
- For 2021, the three priorities are: 1) Connectivity; 2) Inclusion; and 3) Access.
- The Age Friendly team will also examine hybrid models for future meetings/gatherings, and other partnerships.

## II. MCAAE Chair's Report

### AARP Updates

- The stimulus payments through VISA debit cards have been very confusing for many people. Some who received the cards thought it was junk mail and tossed it out. If you have not received it yet, you will be able to claim it when filing your tax refund.
- Vaccine scams are on the rise. Remember that:
  - Vaccines are **free**.
  - Never provide your credit card, Medicare, or Social Security number to unsolicited calls, in order to sign-up.
  - There are no legitimate shortcuts to allow you to access the vaccines early.
  - Only rely on trusted information from your healthcare providers and Public Health Department.
  - Report all scams to AARP Fraud Watch, the police department, or the Public Health Department.
- Brenda announced that Cathy will be the guest speaker on her radio show Seniors Matter, scheduled for Friday, January 22, at 12:30 p.m. (<https://bit.ly/3iVGO4z>)

### III. MCAAE Updates

- Brenda announced that the January 2021 meeting will be her last one. She will not be seeking re-appointment.
- Karen reported that all member's terms have expired. A few names were submitted in 2020 for re-appointed but, due to the pandemic, they are still pending.
- Karen is looking for new people who may be interested in serving on the MCAAE and asked everyone for assistance with identifying individuals. If you know someone, please forward their contact information to Karen or have them email her at [karen.winston@seattle.gov](mailto:karen.winston@seattle.gov).
- Paul Mitchell, Dr. Abe, and Claudette Thomas indicated they would like to be re-appointed.
- Dr. Abe agreed to serve as interim MCAAE chair and will work with Karen on planning future meetings.
- Members also discussed ways the [MCAAE website](#) could be updated and more attractive. Send ideas for content to [karen.winston@seattle.gov](mailto:karen.winston@seattle.gov).

#### **IV. Brenda's Closing Remarks**

- Brenda reflected on her time serving on the MCAAE.
- She acknowledged that the MCAAE is a powerful group.
- Future goals of the MCAAE should involve all members.
- She recommended recruiting individuals to the MCAAE who will show-up, be willing to share the work, and honor their commitment to serve.
- Members expressed appreciation for Brenda's leadership and wished her well.

#### **V. February Meeting**

- The guest speaker for February will be King County Councilman Girmay Zahilay.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.