



**TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION**

**AGING TEXAS WELL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (ATWAC)**

**FIRST DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 3, 2023**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Hybrid: TEAMS Meeting**

**Physical location: Health and Human Services Commission**

**John H. Winters Building Public Hearing Room 125**

**701 W. 51<sup>st</sup> Street**

**Austin, TX 78751**

Table 1: ATWAC member attendance at the Wednesday, May 3, 2023, meeting.

<b>MEMBER NAME</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>MEMBER NAME</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Mr. Quincy Dunlap		X	Ms. Tammy Mermelstein	X	
Ms. Anna Gray	X		VACANT		
Ms. Mallory Freitag-Hejja	X		VACANT		
Ms. Demetress Harrell	X				
Mr. Patrick Jackson	X		<b>EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS</b>		
Mr. Larry Johnson		X	Ms. Angela Medina		X
Ms. Shakita Johnson	X		Ms. Crystal Stark	X	
Dr. Gladys Maestre		X	Ms. Lynda Taylor	X	

Yes: Indicates attended the meeting

No: Indicates did not attend the meeting

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome, logistical announcements, roll call, and opening remarks**

Ms. Tammy Mermelstein, Chair, convened the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee (ATWAC) meeting at 9:02 a.m. and welcomed attendees. Ms. Francesca Kupper, Project Manager, Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO), Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), provided logistical announcements, conducted the roll call, and noted a quorum of the members were not present.

**Agenda Item 2: Consideration of February 8, 2023, meeting minutes**

Ms. Mermelstein asked called for any edits and/or changes to the draft; receiving none, Ms. Mermelstein called for a motion.

## **MOTION:**

- Ms. Demetress Harrell has a motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting.
- Patrick Johnson second the motion to approve the minutes.
- The meeting was turned over to Ms. Kupper for roll call and approval of the minutes.
- All members present voted yes to approve the minutes. Motion carries and meeting was turned over to Ms. Mermelstein.

## **Agenda Item 4 (Part 1): Division Updates: a. Policy and Strategy, Community Services Division**

Ms. Lana Estevilla, Associate Commissioner, Community Services Division provided an introduction of herself and highlight of the Policy and Strategy department:

- three Coordination offices - aging services, disability services, and veteran services – are tasked with being innovative, thinking creatively, and driving strategic priorities for the populations they represent
- a Special Projects office that primarily focuses on special initiatives for individuals with disabilities, and
- legislative and rules coordination

## **Agenda Item 3: Special topic: Presentation on Reducing Health Disparities in Alzheimer's Disease**

Dr. Alexandra Clark, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Texas at Austin, provided a PowerPoint presentation, "Drivers of Disparities in Alzheimer's Disease."

## **Agenda Item 4 (Part 2): Division updates:**

**a. Quality Monitoring Program, Quality and Program Improvement, Medicaid and CHIP Services.** Ms. Sheri Mead, R.N., QMP Development, provided an update on the Quality Monitoring Program:

- Long-Term Care services and support two-day conference, is held on August 22-23 in Austin at the Renaissance.
- The event will provide continuing education for several disciplines that include certified nurse aids, ALF managers, day activity and health service managers, home health and hospice, RNs, LVNs, and social work, guardianship, and LTC Ombudsmen.
- A wide variety of CEs are offered. Registration for the conference will open in June. There is no fee for registration or continuing education.

**b. Office of Aging and Disability Resource Centers, Local Access and Support, Community Services Division.** Ms. Melanie Wright, Grant Specialist, provided an update on the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC).

Ms. Wright has been working with national and state respite networks/programs to learn best practices and innovative program ideas and understand Texas' role in the national network. HHSC contracted with Texas A&M Public Policy Research Institute

to conduct a needs assessment of the states respite services. The final report, March 2023, provides methods for coordinating family caregiving policy and action in the coming years.

- c. Office of Aging Services Coordination, Policy and Strategy, Community Services Division.** Ms. Holly Riley, Director, Office of Aging Services Coordination (OASC), provided an OASC update. Key points included:
- Two campaigns launched in February:
    1. Vision Loss in Older Adults website contains tools, information and marketing awareness.
    2. *Strengthen the Care You Give* caregiver campaign has three primary sub-areas: self-care, resources and trainings, and available social supports and services
  - No Wrong Door (NWD) grant project is assessing challenges clients have accessing long term services and supports.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Committee Operations**

- a. Welcome and introduction of new members.** Ms. Mermelstein welcomed and encouraged new members to have discussions regarding joining one of the ATWAC subcommittee workgroups.
- b. Updates regarding activities to develop committee priorities.** Ms. Mermelstein shared that due to members transitioning off, there were not any new updates to share on the development of committee priorities.
- c. Updates from members on external activities as they relate to committee's focus.** Ms. Mermelstein requested members share updates from their organizations:
- Anna Gray – April 1, Texas Medicaid redetermination restarted, and they are encouraging seniors to update their contact information in Your Texas Benefits/calling.
  - Mallory Freitag-Hejja – Also highlighting unwinding of PHE messaging that clients ensure accurate contact information is with HHSC.
  - Demetress Harrell – No updates.
  - Patrick Jackson – No updates.
  - Shakita Johnson – Tarrant County priorities are working on their Area Plan, and broadband access and digital literacy for their older adults.
  - Crystal Stark – In the process of expanding the Older Individuals in the Blind program.
  - Lynda Taylor – DSHS applied for a 5-year CDC grant to address Alzheimer's disease/related dementias. NOFA is expected in September 2023. The Alzheimer's Disease Program is revising the Alzheimer's Disease State Plan to be released September 1, 2024. [www.dshs.texas.gov/alzheimers](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/alzheimers).
  - Tammy Mermelstein – Finishing third year of Adopt A Grandparent program with college student's understanding that life does not end at 60, and older adults finding new connections to the younger generations.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Public Comment**

No public comment was received.

**Agenda Item 7: Action/ agenda items for next meeting, wrap-up, and adjourn**

Ms. Mermelstein announced that the next meeting will be August 2, 2023. and noted that members interested in the ATWAC Vice Chair position should reach out to Ms. Burns. Ms. Mermelstein adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

***Please click on the link to the archived HHSC video to view, and listen to, the entirety of the May 3, 2023, Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee (ATWAC) meeting; this video will be available for approximately two years from the date the meeting video is posted in accordance with the HHSC records retention schedule:***

[Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee](#)

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