



**TEXAS HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION**

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

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 4, 2022**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Hybrid: TEAMS Meeting**

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

**Winters Public Hearing Room**

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

**Austin, TX 78751**

Table 1: Aging Texas Well AC member attendance on Wednesday, May 04, 2022 meeting.

<b>MEMBER NAME</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>MEMBER NAME</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Bordie, Patricia (joined late)	X				
Crocker, Andrew	X				
Ghesani, Aftab		X			
Gray, Anna	X				
Jackson, Patrick	X		Ms. Medina, Angela (ex-Officio)	X	
Johnson, Larry	X		Ms. Stark, Crystal(ex-Officio)		X
Leo, Lucia		X	Ms. Taylor, Lynda (ex-Officio)	x	
Mermelstein, Tammy	X				
Pittman, Greg	X				

Yes: Indicates attended the meeting

No: Indicates did not attend the meeting

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome and opening remarks**

The Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Ms. Tammy Mermelstein, Vice Chair, who presided over the meeting.

Mr. John Chacon, Facilitator, with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), Advisory Committee Coordination Office (ACCO), announced that the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, conducted roll call, and noted that a quorum was present for the meeting.

## **Agenda Item 2: Consideration of February 2, 2022 meeting minutes**

Ms. Mermelstein, Vice Chair, called for a motion to approve the February 2, 2022 meeting minutes.

**Motion:** Mr. Greg Pittman moved to approve the minutes as presented and Mr. Larry Johnson seconded the motion. Mr. Chacon conducted a roll call vote of the members and the motion passed with six approves (Crocker, Gray, Jackson, Johnson, Leo, Mermelstein, Pittman), no disapproves, and no abstentions.

## **Agenda Item 3: Special Topic: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services – More than a century of outreach and education**

Ms. Mermelstein introduced Mr. Andy Crocker, who provided members with a presentation on Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services.

## **Agenda Item 4: HHSC Medicaid Managed Care Contacts and Oversight request for feedback from ATWAC members and stakeholders on the Medicaid Managed Care Denial and Appeals Process (Article II, HHSC, Rider 36)**

Ms. Mermelstein introduced Ms. Desi Wady, Ms. JoAnn Roznovack and Ms. Latoya King-Escalante, HHSC, who requested members feedback regarding prepared questions to the Medicaid Managed Care Denial and Appeals process. Ms. Wady presented an overview of the questions and shared that written comments could be sent via email to the agency at [MCCO\\_special\\_projects@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:MCCO_special_projects@hhsc.state.tx.us). Mr. Pittman shared some feedback in response to the questions. Ms. Mermelstein also provided feedback and stated she would also send her comments in writing to the email provided. No other committee members provided comments.

Ms. Mermelstein requested Mr. Chacon call for public comment. No public comment was offered.

## **Agenda Item 5: HHSC Division Updates**

- a. **Aging Services Coordination (ASC)** - Holly Riley, Director, provided members with an update from the HHSC ASC. She shared that the Innovators in Aging award winners for 2021 had been announced. This award program highlights unique efforts to serve older adults across the state and advisory committee members serve as award judges. The winners are Carissa Nair, Austin Speech Labs, and Alamo Area Council of Governments. Ms. Riley also shared updates on the caregiver awareness campaign that ASC is developing. She shared that a work order request for the project is routing through internal procurement processes, while ASC staff are meeting with audiences that could be impacted by the campaign rollout to obtain their feedback or concerns regarding campaign implementation. She also

shared that the Texas Silver Haired Legislature gavelled into session on Monday, May 2, 2022 to vote on their resolutions for the 88<sup>th</sup> state legislative session. Ms. Riley shared information about three upcoming aging-related conferences: the USAging Conference on July 9-13, 2022 in Austin, the Aging in Texas Conference on August 17-19, 2022 in El Paso, and the state Adult Protective Services Conference on December 2-5, 2022 in Galveston. In closing, she shared the launch of Texercise Nourish, a new 12-week nutrition education program that brings groups together to learn about healthy eating for healthy aging. Group facilitators can request a comprehensive kit that includes educational resources (e.g., handbook) and reinforcement items (e.g., portion plates, reusable grocery bags, etc.) for participants. To request a Nourish kit and to learn more about other Texercise resources, please email [Texercise@hhs.texas.gov](mailto:Texercise@hhs.texas.gov).

## **Agenda Item 6: Committee Operations**

- a. Ms. Mermelstein thanked members whose terms were expiring for their service on the committee – Mr. Andy Crocker, Ms. Patricia Bordie, Mr. Aftab Ghesani, and Mr. Richard Flores.
- b. Ms. Mermelstein opened the floor for member discussion on committee priorities for the 2022-2023 biennium. She stated she reviewed the ATWAC priorities and next steps based on the survey that was sent out to members. The results revealed three top priorities of focus:
  - Improve access to assistive technology and home modifications to improve safety and accessibility.
  - Increase awareness, access, and utilization of existing systems to support older adults and unpaid caregivers.
  - Expand ability and scope of current programs to support aging in place gracefully.

Ms. Mermelstein shared that the committee will break up into three groups focusing on these priorities and that the groups will be determined based on their responses to the survey. She stated she would email these committee assignments to everyone in the next week. She also shared she wanted to work on developing a vision statement for the committee and updating previous materials created by the committee. She encouraged any member who wished to assist with these efforts to reach out to her.

- c. Ms. Mermelstein requested members provide updates on external activities as they relate to the committee's focus and charge:
  - **Patricia Bordie** shared her organization, Capital Area Agency on Aging, was serving as the host agency for the USAging Conference. Ms. Bordie also shared that overall, many of the area agencies on aging are starting to reopen their congregate meal programs. She explained that lessons from the pandemic have

- revealed that older adults want more flexibility in participating in congregate meals (e.g., picking up “drive-thru” meals and taking home during). The AAAs are looking at how they can continue that flexibility.
- **Anna Gray** shared that the United Healthcare STAR+PLUS waiver program provides individuals at risk of being placed into nursing home with a service coordinator who designs a service plan with them that helps determine the most appropriate services that person may need to continue living in the community, including like home-delivered meals, dental benefits up to \$5,000, accessibility home-modifications and respite care.
  - **Larry Johnson** shared that he was recently appointed as member of Bexar Senior Advisory Committee, an advisory committee of the Bexar County Area Agency on Aging, which is launching an open house project. The project will include four open houses at county organizations to connect residents with services and resources within the community. He shared he will be assisting with targeted outreach to residents with vision impairment and the deaf community, as traditional marketing efforts often do not reach them.
  - **Angela Medina** shared that the Adult Protective Services (APS) Conference will be December 2-5, 2022 in Galveston and that conference planners are currently accepting presentation proposals. Please email [Angela.Medina@dfps.texas.gov](mailto:Angela.Medina@dfps.texas.gov) for more information.
  - **Greg Pittman** shared that the 2022 Meals on Wheels Texas Conference will be May 9-11, 2022 in San Antonio and will be in-person this year. He also shared that all Meals on Wheels programs are doing some kind of activity for Older Americans Month. For more information, visit [www.mealsonwheelstexas.org](http://www.mealsonwheelstexas.org).
  - **Lynda Taylor** shared that the next meeting of the Alzheimer’s Disease Partnership is June 29, 2022.
  - **Tammy Mermelstein** shared that the Collaboratory for Aging Research and Education (CARE) is wrapping up its fifth cohort of the Adopt a Grandparent program, which matches college students with and older adults. She also shared that she invited Olivia Burns, ATWAC liaison, to present to the Harris County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Committee on the Aging Texas Well Strategic Plan later this week. She also shared that the Region 6 Adult Protective Services Advisory Board is partnering with CARE on a resource guide for the 13-county region, with the hope it can replicated throughout the state.

### **Agenda Item 7: Public Comment**

No written public comment was submitted, and no one registered to provide oral comment in the virtual setting. No one in the public hearing room requested to provide public comment.

### **Agenda Item 8: Review of action and agenda items for next meeting and wrap-up**

Ms. Mermelstein thanked member and announced the next committee meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2022. Due to the Chair resignation, officer elections will occur at the August or

November meetings. If you are interested in running for Chair, please contact the committee liaison, Olivia Burns. The membership solicitation process has begun for the expiring member terms. Ms. Mermelstein adjourned the meeting at 10:46 a.m. CST.

Below is the link to the archived video of the May 4, 2022 Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee meeting that will be available for viewing approximately two years from date of meeting.

[Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee](#)

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