



TRI-COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 14, 2025, 1:00 PM

Members Present*	Members Absent*	Staff Present
Kathy Bouchard-Wyant, President		Carl Buonodono, Nutrition Director
Robyn Ford		Casey Cooper, Assistant Director
Susan Hoffman		Kate Long, Planning and Program Development Manager
LaSandra Jones		Andrea Radel, Executive Director
Nancy Kapp		
Gloria Kovnot		
Susanne Mannino	Members Excused*	Members of the Public
Raheema Muhammad	Judith Gardi	
Pat Munshaw	Zeenat Kotval-Karamchandani	
Ruth Pearson	Lucy Maillette	
Raul Presas	Larry Meyer	
Tonya Randall	Kelly Neve	
Cristi Setzer	Doreen Patino	
Deb Wiese		

* Please see Attachment 1 for the TCOA Advisory Council 2025 Membership List with member affiliations.

1. **Call to Order: K. Bouchard-Wyant** called the meeting to order at 1:00PM.
2. **Welcome and Introductions**
3. **Approval of the Agenda for August 14, 2025:** Agenda and minutes will be revisited later in the meeting due to lack of quorum.
4. **Limited Public Comment and Correspondence:** No public comment or correspondence.
5. **Executive Director’s Report: A. Radel** shared information on a statewide advocacy campaign to educate on and preserve MI Choice Home and Community-Based Services, as well as a planning update.

Protect MI Choice / Preserve Home and Community-Based Services in Michigan

The Threat

- On July 4, 2025, the Budget Reconciliation Act (H.R. 1) became law.
- It restricts state Medicaid funding mechanisms, forcing states to cut “optional” services.

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- Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS)—including MI Choice—are the largest “optional” expense and now at risk.
- Cuts will lead to longer waiting lists, reduced access, and increased institutionalization, which is more expensive for the state.

Why MI Choice Matters

Cost Savings

- HCBS costs less than half of nursing home care.
- Based on recently updated data, saves \$900M+ annually for Michigan Medicaid.
- Serves 16,000+ people each year statewide.

Human Impact

- Keeps older adults & people with disabilities living independently.
- Preserves community connections.
- Prevents trauma and loss of autonomy.

Legal & Moral Obligation

- Olmstead v. L.C. mandates care in the least restrictive setting.
- Cutting MI Choice would violate this principle and force institutionalization.

Our Response: Statewide AAA Network Campaign

- Social Media Blitz – shareable stories & facts.
- Legislative Outreach – town halls, coffee hours, direct visits.
- Letter-Writing Campaign – public & stakeholder engagement.

How You Can Help

- Watch for our campaign email – includes talking points, contacts, and shareable posts.
- Engage on social media – like, share, and comment to amplify the message.
- Join outreach efforts – help ensure legislators understand MI Choice is essential.

MI Choice is not “optional.” It is essential for Michigan’s future.
Protect independence. Preserve dignity. Save taxpayer dollars.

A. Radel also shared that TCOA staff will be presenting the 2026 Annual Implementation Plan for approval to the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging on Friday, August 15.

Discussion followed.

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- 6. Presentation: KC Austern, LMSW, TCOA Options Counseling Team Lead- TCOA Caregiver Supports: K. Austern** provided a reminder of why caregiver supports are important and needed, and expanded on the supports available through TCOA. Materials and brochures were made available, including a statewide Caregiver Resource Center (CRC) website to connect individuals with their local Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Trualta, evidence-based programs, Options Counseling, Dementia consultations, Information and Assistance, Respite, and MI Virtual Support Groups (statewide).

K. Austern also announced a September 16th Lunch & Learn on Caregiver Physical Safety with tips provided by an Occupational Therapist.

Discussion followed.

7. Council Reports

- a. Social Security Administration: R. Ford** shared that call sharing continues. There is a focus to move processes online (direct deposit changes in-person or online, no longer over the phone). The Social Security Administration is also partnering with Post Offices to verify identity.

Discussion followed.

- b. Michigan Senior Advocates Council (MSAC):** No meeting, no report.

- c. State Advisory Council (SAC): R. Ford** explained that discussion included the federal and state budgets. Due to flat funding, the Commission will be drafting a letter to discuss inflation and population growth and how that impacts level funding. SAC research projects include Housing Options and Respite Care.

- d. Nutrition Council: C. Buonodono** shared current stats on the Nutrition programs:

Home Delivered Meals: 1169 participants enrolled

Carry Out Meals: 653 participants enrolled

Congregate Dining: 713 participants enrolled

Senior Project Fresh continues with 300 markets and over 5000 recipients statewide.

Discussion followed.

- e. Transportation Advisory Boards**

D. Wiese shared on CATA and Eattran.

CATA Spartan services restart 8/18/25. CATA has also completed a Comprehensive Operational Analysis of services. The CATA Board

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approved a budget for the year including expansion of services with a connector to Dewitt. Community Events continue. Grants for additional special services are ongoing.

Eatran has increased ridership on the Charlotte connector. They are looking for improvements through a recent analysis.

Discussion followed, including discussion on Delta Township transportation millage.

8. Approval of the Agenda for August 14, 2025: S. Hoffman motioned for approval of the August 14, 2025 agenda. **P. Munshaw** seconded. **Motion carried.**

9. Approval of the Minutes from July 10, 2025: G. Kovnot motioned for approval of the July 10, 2025 minutes. **D. Wiese** seconded. **Motion carried.**

10. Member's Time and/or Announcements:

R. Ford shared the Michigan Commission on Services to the Aging is looking at improving attendance to Commission meetings and public hearings.

G. Kovnot provided an air quality tool to be shared.

C. Cooper announced an upcoming Friends for Independence fundraising council (FFI) allocation meeting. The hybrid FFI meeting will take place Thursday, August 21 at 1:30 PM to discuss TCOA fundraising activities and allocate the dollars raised to the various programs.

The next Advisory Council Meeting is scheduled for September 11, 2025 at 1:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 2:19PM.

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Attachment 1: TCOA Advisory Council 2025 Membership List

*13 Senior Representatives Appointed by local units of government and
Up to 13 Agency Representatives Appointed by Tri-County Aging Consortium Administrative Board*

Clinton County (2 Total)

Judith Gardi
Larry Meyer

Eaton County (3 Total)

Susan Hoffman
Ruth Pearson, *Corresponding Secretary*
VACANT

Ingham County (3 Total)

Gloria Kovnot
Lucy Maillette
Pat Munshaw

City of East Lansing (1 Total)

Kathy Bouchard-Wyant, *President*

City of Lansing (4 Total)

LaSandra Jones, *Second Vice President*
Susanne Mannino
Raheema Muhammad
VACANT

Community Mental Health Older Adult Services

Tonya Randall

Disability Network Capital Area

Doreen Patino

Ingham/Eaton County DHS

Kelly Neve

Tri-County Nutrition Council

VACANT

Social Security Administration

Robyn Ford, *First Vice President*

Maplewood AFC

Raul Presas

Michigan State University

School of Planning, Design and Construction
Zeenat Kotval-Karamchandani, PhD

Hospice of Lansing

Nancy Kapp

Capital Area Housing Partnership

Cristi Setzer

MSU Kinship Care Resource Center

Alyssa Waters

Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA)

Deb Wiese

VACANT (Agency)

VACANT (Agency)

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Attachment 1: TCOA Advisory Council 2025 Membership List, continued

Representatives (non-voting)

Michigan Senior Advocates Council

Mary Ablan
Susan Hoffman
Paula Yensen

State Advisory Council

Robyn Ford
Diana Maddox
Vacant

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