



TRI-COUNTY OFFICE ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 8, 2026, 1:00 PM

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

* Please see Attachment 1 for the TCOA Advisory Council 2026 Membership List with member affiliations.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:01PM.
2. **Welcome and Introductions**
3. **Approval of the Agenda for January 8, 2026:** **K. Bouchard-Wyant** motioned for approval. **J. Gardi** seconded the motion. Motion carried.
4. **Approval of the Minutes from November 13, 2025:** **J. Gardi** motioned for approval. **G. Kovnot** seconded the motion. Motion carried.
5. **Executive Director’s Report:** **A. Radel** shared information on the federal budget, TCOA Dinner and Auction, 2025 accomplishments, and what is to come.

Following a prolonged federal shutdown, the federal government reopened on November 12 with three FY 2026 appropriations bills enacted and a Continuing Resolution in place through January 30, 2026, temporarily funding remaining programs, including the Older Americans Act. As Congress resumes negotiations, continued advocacy is critical to protect these programs and secure the highest possible funding levels. An advocacy alert will be shared to encourage outreach to lawmakers.

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The 40th Annual Dinner & Auction, held November 20 at the Kellogg Center, was a successful event bringing together supporters, community partners, staff, volunteers, and Advisory Council members. The event generated over \$75,000 in net proceeds to support Meals on Wheels and in-home services.

In 2025, TCOA connected with more than 28,000 individuals, including over 17,000 who received direct services and more than 11,000 reached through outreach efforts. Key accomplishments included the development of TCOA's first formal strategic plan in over 20 years, expanded advocacy efforts at both the state and federal levels, the launch of a redesigned and more accessible website, enhanced caregiver support initiatives, and the start of a multi-year community outreach effort. Looking ahead, implementation of the new strategic plan will guide TCOA's work through 2030, with advocacy, caregiver support, and community outreach remaining top priorities.

Discussion followed.

6. **Website Demonstration: C. Cooper** provided a demonstration of the new TCOA website highlighting various elements such as the accessibility features, Advisory Council page, and the Resources tab and its improved functionality.

Discussion followed.

7. New Business

- a. **Conflict of Interest Forms: C. Cooper** shared Conflict of Interest Forms. Members must disclose any conflicts of interest for voting purposes and submit the form by the end of January. Information on how to submit the forms was shared. Contact Casey with questions.
- b. **Code of Ethics: C. Cooper** shared Code of Ethics Policy and Acknowledgement Form. Members are required to complete and submit the acknowledgement form by the end of January. Information on how to submit the forms was shared. Contact Casey with questions.
- c. **Demographic Information Request: K. Long** asked Advisory Council members to complete the annual demographic information request. The information is required to complete the Annual Implementation Plan and some funding requests. Members were asked to complete the form by the end of January. Information on how to submit the forms was shared. Contact Kate with questions.
- d. **Semi-Annual Report: K. Long** shared updates, statistics, and information from the 2025 Semi-Annual Report.

Discussion followed.

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8. Council Reports

- a. **Social Security Administration: R. Ford** shared that 1099s will be going out. Those opting out of paper notices will need to go online for their 1099. Additionally, SSA locations are still doing call-sharing across the state (e.g., someone in the Lansing area may not be speaking with the Lansing office).

Discussion followed.

- b. **Michigan Senior Advocates Council (MSAC): K. Long** shared from the December meeting an update from Kelley Cawthorne, the success of the AAA Association Caregiver Resource Center website (MICaregiverConnection.com), MI Elder Justice Initiative updates on Guardianship Bills and various aspects of guardianship, and that the AAA Advocacy Committee is working on the advocacy strategy for 2026.

- c. **State Advisory Council (SAC):** No report

- d. **Nutrition Council: C. Buonodono** provided an update on participants in the Nutrition Program, as follows:

Home Delivered Meals – currently serving 1,283 participants

Other service data can be found in the Semi-Annual Report shared.

The program is anticipating an increase in participation in the Spring for Congregate Dining. Additionally, staff are actively recruiting volunteers to serve on Nutrition Council.

Discussion followed.

- e. **Transportation Reports:**

Clinton Transit: No Report

CATA: As provided by **D. Wiese:**

- New CATA - ATU 3-year contract has been ratified by both ATU and the CATA Board of Directors and is in effect.
- Reduction of service (return to the 2019 boundaries on the west end of the service area) effective Monday, January 12.

CATA is working with clients affected by the service reduction to ensure they are aware and informing them of potential options if they exist.

- Return to Spartan Service (MSU return), Monday, January 12.
- Beginning the process of budgeting for fiscal year 2027.
- New electric buses and vans are in rotation or expected, with more Spec-Tran buses expected early Spring.

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- Staff trainings will occur in January and February.
- Food box delivery from the Greater Lansing Food Bank to Cedar Place Apartments continuing on the first Friday of each month.
- Clarification on Code Blue- Individuals can call CATA before end of business day and be transported to a shelter same day.

EATRAN: As provided by **D. Wiese:**

- Brad Funkhouser has officially left EATRAN as CEO.
- EATRAN has reduced service to their traditional curbside to curbside service, due to the failed Delta Township public transit millage. Changes will take effect January 12.
- CATA will continue to assist EATRAN when possible.

9. Member's Time and/or Announcements:

G. Kovnot shared the Advisory Council Outreach Committee is working on securing a site in Clinton County for a presentation, potentially the library.

L. Maillette shared about the next Age Alive Research Forum at MSUFCU headquarters on Thursday, March 26 from 9am-2pm. The theme is Advancing Mobility Across Settings As We Age and they are looking for keynote speaker (~10min.). Contact Lucy with any ideas or questions.

C. Cooper asked about presentation ideas for 2026. Suggestions included Dementia Minds, AARP, and the 4AM MI Caregiver Connection website. Send any suggestions to Casey Cooper.

The next Advisory Council Meeting is scheduled for March 12, 2026 at 1:00 PM.

2026 Administrative Board Meeting Dates and Advisory Council Guests:
January 26: Lucy Maillette March 16: Ruth Pearson May 18:
July 20: Gloria Kovnot September 21: November 16:

Meeting adjourned at 2:17PM.

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Attachment 1: TCOA Advisory Council 2026 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
VACANT

Ingham County (3 Total)

Gloria Kovnot
Lucy Maillette
VACANT

City of East Lansing (1 Total)

Kathy Bouchard-Wyant

City of Lansing (4 Total)

LaSandra Jones, *President*
Raheema Muhammad
VACANT (2)

Community Mental Health Older Adult Services

Tonya Randall

Disability Network Capital Area

Doreen Patino

Ingham/Eaton County DHS

Kelly Neve, *Second Vice President*

Tri-County Nutrition Council

VACANT

Social Security Administration

Robyn Ford, *First Vice President*

Maplewood AFC

Raul Presas, *Corresponding Secretary*

Michigan State University

School of Planning, Design and Construction

Zeenat Kotval-Karamchandani, PhD

Hospice of Lansing

Nancy Kapp

Capital Area Housing Partnership

VACANT

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 2026 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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