

Cabinet on Aging Meeting Minutes

June 27, 2023 (10:30-11:30, by Zoom)

Workplan Highlights

The Cabinet members provided updates on the Cabinet's work plan and priorities related to **engaging older people in active retirement by supporting employment and volunteer opportunities.**

Commissioner Fortman and Karen Fraser from the Maine Department of Labor (DoL) gave an update on the Employer Summit hosted by DoL, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and the State Workforce Board which was convened in May at the Augusta Civic Center. Over 300 people attended, representing large and small employers across all different sectors. The conference included a break-out session in the morning focused on hiring and retaining older workers (this session can be viewed at: <https://www.maineemployersummit.com/presentations>). The panel included Shiva Darbandi of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services who spoke about the State's process to be certified as an Age Friendly Employer and its value. The afternoon featured another session facilitated by DoL, the Cabinet, AARP, and Maine Council on Aging where employers could connect with each other and learn about additional resources available. See:

<https://www.maineemployersummit.com/relatedresources>

- DoL recently launched a website providing a range of employment resources for older adults. The website can be accessed at: <https://www.maine.gov/labor/olderadultresources/>
- DoL continues to work with the Cabinet, AARP, Maine Council on Aging, and others to strengthen efforts to recruit, retain older workers. Efforts may include targeted messaging campaigns and other strategies to encourage older adults to return to the workforce. This is continuing work and updates will be provided as it progresses.
- The Department of Administrative and Financial Services provided updates related to the State's certification and activities as an Age Friendly employer. On August 9 from 9-10:30 am, the Department of Administrative and Financial Services will offer a live, virtual training on aging. Presenters from the Maine Council on Aging are facilitating a 90-minute session on aging, defining terms, and discussing why language matters when it comes to ageism in organizations. The training is optional for Maine State Government employees. An announcement will be going out shortly for State employees, which will include more information and a link for those that will be joining

the session. On August 14 from 9-10:30 am, a smaller group of employees in the Bureau of Human Resources will go through a workshop called Age-Positive Workplaces. This workshop is tailored towards HR. It focuses on best practices to recruit and retain older workers and ways to value multigeneration work teams.

Age-Friendly/Lifelong Communities in Maine

As part of the Cabinet's work developing **community connections to improve quality of life, inclusion, and engagement of older adults**, the Cabinet invited Patricia Oh from the University of Maine Center on Aging to talk about the work of Maine's lifelong community initiatives. (These initiatives include those that are designated as AARP Age Friendly Communities as well as other similar community initiatives who have not pursued an AARP designation). Patricia provided an overview of the structure and processes for becoming an Age Friendly community and provided examples of their activities and outcomes. Maine has over 100 initiatives and examples of programming include transportation services, food program, home chore and repairs, and social programming. Almost all are completely volunteer run. Knowledge of the community, and trust of the community, are key assets. The presentation slides are available as part of these minutes.

The Cabinet's Coordinator also provided a report on her visits to ten different communities over the past months to hear directly about community efforts, what has been successful, what are the barriers and challenges, and any suggestions people have for the Cabinet as it continues its work. This work is part of ensuring partnership between Maine as an Age Friendly State and Maine's Age Friendly communities and aligning strategies around shared goals. Some of the feedback received from communities included:

- Ensuring state and municipal partners understand value provided by these initiatives
- Identifying ways to meet operational needs not allowed through grant funds (for example, training costs, software)
- Support for volunteer efforts (liability, stipends, costs of background checks)
- Ensuring federal, state, and regional dollars reach down to community-level initiatives ("supplement but not supplant")

Slides are attached as part of these minutes and updates will be provided as additional work unfolds to strengthen partnerships between state agencies and community efforts.

Additional Updates

Judy Shaw of the Office of Securities, part of the Department of Professional and Financial Regulation, reported that **the Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership (EJCP)**, established by

Governor Mills in 2019, will meeting this month to review progress on implementation of the Elder Justice Roadmap's recommendations. The Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future, where the Cabinet is housed, has also submitted a grant application to the National Center for State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions to fund a position to staff the EJCP and help with implementation of the Roadmap's recommendations. Maine will hear late summer/early fall about whether funding will be awarded.

Next Meeting

Scheduled for **Tuesday, August 22, 2023, at 10:30.**

(The Cabinet meets every other month on the fourth Tuesday at 10:30.)