

**MINUTES  
ILLINOIS COUNCIL ON AGING MEETING**

**TELECONFERENCE**

**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT ON AGING OFFICES**

**ONE NATURAL RESOURCES WAY – ROCK RIVER CONFERENCE ROOM  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS**

**AND  
160 NORTH LASALLE, SUITE N-700  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2015  
9:00 A.M. – 10:00A.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

John Hosteny  
Phyllis Mitzen  
Ram Gajjela  
Bernarda Wong

**MEMBERS ON TELEPHONE:**

J. Diane Adams-Alsberry  
Steve Wolf  
Jane Angelis  
Charles Crowder  
Anthony Frazier  
Paulette Hamlin  
Margaret Huyck  
Talat Khan  
Mubarak Mirjat  
Lee Moriarty  
Anna Oestreich  
Dana Rosenzweig

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Betty Martz  
Melvin Grimes  
Robert O'Connor  
Eugene Verdu  
Sen. Julie Morrison  
Sen. Sam McCann  
Rep. Ron Sandack  
Sen. Mattie Hunter  
Rep. Dwight Kay

**VISITORS:**

None

**DEPARTMENT ON AGING STAFF:**

Elizabeth Delheimer, Community Relations & Outreach Manager, Council Liaison  
Brad Rightnowar, General Counsel  
Alex Burke, Legislative Liaison  
Cathy Houghtby, Special Events and Fair Coordinator  
Jessica Blood, Administrative Assistant to the Director

**SUMMARY**

**Opening:**

The meeting was called to order by John Hosteny, Chairman.

The roll call was taken by Chairman Hosteny.

Members, staff and guests at the meeting introduced themselves.

**New Business**

**Special Meeting to discuss qualifications incoming Director should possess:**

Chairman Hosteny opened, stating that this special meeting was called pursuant to the Council By-Laws Section VII A., whereupon written request from ten members, a special meeting is permitted. Chairman Hosteny named sixteen members who sent him a written request for the special meeting: Jane Angelis, Charlie Crowder, Steve Wolf, Phyllis Mitzen, Lee Moriarty, Melvin Grimes, Mubarak Mirjat, Paulette Hamlin, Diane Alsberry, Margaret Huyck, Dana Rosenzweig, Betty Martz, Bernie Wong, Talat Khan, Anthony Frazier and Anna Oestreich.

Chairman Hosteny noted that the Council would allow for public comment, time permitting. Chairman noted that details of the special meeting and the agenda were posted and published to the IDoA website in order to meet the requirements of the Open Meetings Act and reminded members that this will be the protocol the Council will follow moving forward. Chairman discussed email sent out by Elizabeth Delheimer noting the requirement for Ethics training and Open Meetings Act training. He also reminded members to look over the Council Member information on the Department on Aging's website and provide comments or corrections as necessary. He read from the Open Meetings Act (OMA) to inform the Council of the requirements of holding a meeting in compliance with the OMA. Chairman then noted that the only business being discussed would be the legal requirements, skills, expertise, qualities and experience that the new Director of the Department on Aging should possess. Chairman Hosteny named several qualities to consider – budget management, partnership building and experience with managed care; and then asked the Council to consider what attributes would be desirable in the next Director.

Chairman Hosteny asked Brad Rightnowar to clarify if there were any legal requirements for the position of Director of the Department on Aging. Brad Rightnowar stated that the individual must be 55 or older and an Illinois citizen; also stated that he would get a memorandum together stating the legal qualifications of the position.

Chairman Hosteny asked all members present to discuss the skills, qualities and attributes they think the incoming Director should possess. Each member listed their preferred qualifications for Director:

**Phyllis Mitzen** noted the letter that the Council submitted in December outlining characteristics the Council would like to see in the new Director:

- Leader having the vision to see what the needs of seniors will be and have the ability to direct resources to meet those needs.
- Should have the ability to be a “change agent”.
- Be an aging advocate with business experience and a business sense.
- Be someone savvy enough to work with the public and private arenas.
- Someone who can build relationships inside and outside of state government.
- Be someone who can continue to leverage resources and goodwill.
- Someone who has the ability to engage and influence others – older people, the aging network, current and new partners of healthcare and business, philanthropy, etc., to ensure we all share the responsibility to strengthen and modernize the infrastructure of the state to make Illinois a good place to age and grow old.
- Someone who can continue to build on the influence IDoA has within the legislature and would passionately uphold the vision and the mission of the Department.

Phyllis then asked the Council members if she had missed anything they previously discussed.

**Bernarda Wong** also reiterated that the Council had taken a lot of time in December to list desirable characteristics of the next Director, but wanted to add that with the current environment of the State, need a Director who can work with a limited budget. The new Director should also be an administrator who will select individuals who share common goals to support the administration and should be someone who is open to new ideas.

**J. Diane Adams-Alsberry** reiterated that the Council had gone over the preferred characteristics of an incoming Director but added that they should be able to work with legislators also.

**Chairman Hosteny** suggested going back over the qualifications suggested in December to make sure they are still relevant.

**Anna Oestreich** said that she believes the qualifications discussed in December were still relevant. However, the State does not have resources right now so the new Director should be someone who can expand on the internal resources available.

**Phyllis Mitzen** also added that the new Director should understand the complex financial structure of funding services for the aging, both on the private and public side and have an understanding of Medicaid waivers. Not having a steep learning curve with regards to these is very important.

**Ram Gajjela** suggested the new Director should be comfortable with the public as well as the private healthcare network and should be in support of partnering with education groups in order to promote overall well-being.

**Phyllis Mitzen** added that she would like to see stronger wording in regards to the new Director being an advocate for aging and those with disabilities, someone who can articulate the needs of the rapidly growing aging population in Illinois.

**Chairman Hosteny** mentioned Phyllis's comment about the new Director not having a steep learning curve and asked for clarification on whether that meant experience in Aging. Phyllis clarified that it didn't necessarily mean having experience in the Department on Aging itself, as previous Directors did not; but said it is necessary for the new Director to have a good grasp of the healthcare and long term care systems, and how they are funded and interact. Phyllis also suggested that the new Director should be someone who will work well with the numerous advisory councils and allow the expertise built up over the years to be utilized.

**Chairman Hosteny** read from the statute regarding the required characteristics of the position of Director of the Department on Aging: must be a Senior citizen with sufficient experience in providing services to the aging; is waiting on further clarification regarding actual age requirement.

**Brad Rightnowar** brought up the ability to be a team builder and bring the best attributes of multiple organizations to the table since there isn't enough funding for any one organization to carry the burden alone.

**Bernarda Wong** interjected that being a team member also meant working with providers to support the mission of the Department.

**Chairman Hosteny** brought up the importance of being able to work with different populations such as the different ethnic communities, urban vs. rural, affluent vs. those who are in need. Bernarda clarified that it is important for the new Director to be able to work with all the diverse organizations and understand the different communities the aging networks are assisting.

**Margaret Huyck** reiterated that the Council had already discussed characteristics of incoming Director and didn't have anything to add.

**Charles Crowder** asked when the Council would be discussing recommendations for Director, suggested that the qualifications already discussed in December and July's Special Meeting be distributed to Council members for review and another meeting be set up to discuss recommendations. Chairman Hosteny, along with Brad Rightnowar, agreed that the next step

might be another special meeting posted and held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, with a quorum present. Phyllis mentioned transparency and said it would be helpful for the Council to know what the next step will be in regards to nominating individuals for the position of Director. Brad further explained that the Council's duty at this point is consider the current fiscal climate of the State of Illinois and the Department on Aging, and to present qualifications for the new Director to the Governor's office.

**Lee Moriarty** said the new Director needs to understand the current environment of the State and a background in aging would be beneficial in dealing with the limited resources available.

**Steve Wolf** added that integrity, outstanding communication skills and being a proven leader should all be qualities possessed by the incoming Director.

**Anthany Frazier** agreed with the other Council members.

**Talat Kahn** said the Director should have experience in aging and have the knowledge needed to be sensitive to the different ethnic communities within the aging population.

**Anna Oestreich** added that a creative approach to problem solving is a desired characteristic in order to better serve the aging community with the limited financial resources.

**Mubarak Mirjat** asked if the Council would be recommending individuals from inside or outside the Council on Aging; if not from within, Council should see who is applying and then discuss. Chairman Hosteny asked the members to hold off on identifying certain individuals and reminded the Council that the special meeting was being held to discuss qualifications only.

After no further suggestions for qualifications, Chairman Hosteny asked the Council members for final comments. J. Diane Adams-Alsberry suggested getting the characteristics discussed by the Council summarized in order to move to the next step of selecting recommendations. Anthany Frazier thanked the Council and the Department staff for their leadership and support and agreed with the suggestions put forth by the Council. Mubarak Mirjat said he was interested in the next meeting to discuss recommendations. Lee Moriarty reiterated her suggestion that the new Director should have experience with aging and is interested in having more discussion on that point, and that being able to work with the Council is also an important quality. Anna Oestreich reminded the Council that the statute requires the Director to have familiarity with aging community. Dana Rosenzweig suggested that the new Director have experience in managed care. Bernarda Wong added that the Director should be open to new ideas, have a strong stance on the vision of the Department and be a polished negotiator. Phyllis Mitzen agreed that a strong emphasis on the vision of the Department is important as well as having a strong idea on the future of the Department. She also stated that the incoming Director should be able to team build within the Department as well as across other agencies and disciplines.

A Motion was made by John Hosteny that the meeting be adjourned.

Motion was seconded by Bernarda Wong.

Motion carried, meeting adjourned at 9:53am.

s/Steve Wolf  
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Steve Wolf, Secretary  
Illinois Council on Aging