



Lewis - Mason - Thurston Area Agency on Aging

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Area Agency on Aging

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Advisory Council Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, January 5, 2021 9:30 – 12:00 p.m. Via [ZOOM](#)

Members Present

Lewis County: Carol Brock, Liz Hicker;

Mason County: Glenn Harper, Bill Bezanson, Diane McLean Jamie Queen;

Thurston County: Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Angela Hock, Howard Burton, Michelle Horaney

Members Absent:

Lewis County: Heidi Buswell, Amy Turnbull, Cynthia Clark, Tim Wood

Mason County: None

Thurston County: None

Staff Present

Dan Spiegel, Fiscal Director; Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director; Lori Thom, Executive Assistant

Guests

Anna Schlecht

Welcome & Introductions

Eileen called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions.

Approval of Minutes and Agenda

Bill Bezanson made a motion to approve the December 1, 2021, draft meeting minutes and the January 5, 2022, meeting agenda. Janeen McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Comments from Council Chair – Eileen McKenzieSullivan

Connect to Purpose Story: Eileen McKenzieSullivan shared a story about a gentleman who had a stroke and was paralyzed and is now receiving benefits through the agency's MAC/TSOA program.

Community Updates & Announcements:

- Carolyn Brock, Lewis County, stated Lewis County senior centers are open and each site offered free luncheons, which was very rewarding.

- Howard Burton, Thurston County, reported he attended the grand opening for Unity Commons, apartments, and low-income housing. He also noted there are other similar projects in the works throughout western Washington.
- Bill Bezanson, Mason County, commented that with the new Omicron variant the Mason County Senior Activity Center is discussing discontinuing coffee and snacks because it is challenging to insure people re-mask afterwards. Angela Hock, Thurston County, commented that in Thurston County re-masking doesn't seem to be an issue.
- Eileen McKenzieSullivan commented that some centers are discussing requiring a booster for admittance. Eileen also shared that some seniors are not returning yet to some senior centers that do not require vaccinations.

Housing Committee

The Housing Committee did not meet in December. Council members who are interested in joining the committee include Bill Bezanson, Diane McClean, Angela Hock, Liz Hicker, Allison Voss, and maybe Anna Schlecht if she is appointed to the Council. There was discussion if Judy Stratton would be interested but Glenn stated she has resigned from Advisory Council. Glenn would like to set up housing committee meetings on the third Mondays from 1- 2pm. Eileen will email everyone if that works.

Council of Governments (COG) Report - Glenn Harper

Glenn Harper reported on vacant Advisory Council positions, vaccinations, meals on wheels, and how Mason County Senior Activities Center is having trouble funding its own congregate meals program. Glen shared about the new Housing Committee and Unity Commons project and exploring setting up a non-profit organization that can work with the Area Agency on Aging and support socialization and housing. Nicole Kiddoo gave her report to the COG and shared her appreciation for the Advisory Council members. She noted the agency has experienced 18% growth and caseloads are growing. She also mentioned the agency is working on a hybrid home/office work model. Agency Directors also gave departmental updates.

Socialization & Engagement Committee – Glenn Harper and Angela Hock

The Committee reviewed a different tablet device, like the GrandPad. Glenn Harper stated the IN2L device is sturdier device than GrandPad, but he is not enthusiastic about having it as part of our program. Angela Hock concurred as it is more challenging to utilize some programs and missing features; however, she did like the web capabilities. Eileen McKenzieSullivan noted this demographic might be lacking basic internet skills. Glenn also mentioned using flyers in the Meals on Wheels program to advertise online resources including Zoom meetings for socialization. Howard Burton suggested giving flyers at food banks too.

State Council on Aging (SCoA) – Michelle Horaney

Michelle Horaney shared information about supplemental budget proposals within what the State Council will be advocating for during the upcoming Legislative Session that starts in January. There are nine topics that Council Members should be aware of, including Medicaid enhanced rates, case management ratios, behavioral health transitions, raising the personal needs in-home allowance, adult protective services abuse registry system, home care

agency tax rate adjustments, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Tribal government Medicaid eligibility determination, provider rates add. The WA Cares long-term care insurance program has been put on hold. The Legislature will work on making fixes to the program and plan to revisit it July 2023.

Advocacy & Legislative Committee – Michele Horaney

The Legislative Committee will meet with Nicole to discuss how members can provide advocacy for the issues discussed previously. The Legislature will be meeting remotely and will need to meet with community representatives through Zoom. The committee will provide a list of contact information for the representatives and scripts they can use for advocating.

2022 Calendar Approval – Eileen McKenzieSullivan

Eileen McKenzieSullivan asked for a motion to approve the 2022 calendar. Bill Bezanson moved to approve, and Jamie Queen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Director Report – Nicole Kiddoo

Nicole Kiddoo shared her appreciation for the Council's work and looks forward to the 2022 year. Nicole assured Council that socialization is a topic that is being discussed at the national level. Nicole shared that funding has been an issue in the past, but it looks like there will be some funding in the Older Americans Act that can be used in the future. Housing and homelessness are also issues being discussed.

The Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A) will be hosting a training on advocacy on January 13, 2022, from 10:00-11:00. Nicole stated that January 24 – 28 is advocacy week and we are hoping to have the opportunity to meet with some of the Legislators. In the Governor's proposed budget there was questions about why the amount from DSHS is less than the amount requested by W4A for Case Management. W4A is working to request parity for AAA Case Management rates in line with DSHS rates.

Nicole shared that the Agency is continuing to plan for a hybrid model for returning to work in the office at least two days per week. The return to office date was pushed to February 28, 2022, due to the increase of the COVID Omicron variant. The hybrid home/office model will be piloted for six months, then we will review to determine if we will stay with that model or revert to five days per week in the office. Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director added that we will only see outside individuals on an appointment basis. Eileen McKenzieSullivan asked how many outside visitors the agency had prior to COVID. Nicole commented that most of our outside visitors were home care Independent Providers (IPs), but we will no longer be working directly with IPs, so we do not expect a large impact. We would like to go back to offering more in-person services, especially through the Family Caregiver Support Program. Case Managers will begin conducting home visits soon, but they will be shorter in duration to reduce risk of COVID transmission.

Populating Committees – Eileen McKenzieSullivan

Eileen McKenzieSullivan inquired who wanted to stay on their current committee or change for the 2022 year. Eileen will forward responses to Lori Thom for the new committee assignments. Glenn Harper asked if anyone else would like to chair the membership committee. Eileen shared she can assign who leads the nominating and the membership

committees. Carol Brock shared she thought that each county should be responsible for assigning open council members vacancies rather than having a separate nominating committee do it. Eileen explained that the nominating committee does have one person from each county to fulfill that purpose. At this time no one volunteered to take over Glenn Harper's spot on the committee.

Membership Committee – Glenn Harper

Eileen McKenzieSullivan commented that a goal of the committee will be to broaden the diversity of the Council. There are not a lot of different backgrounds represented on the Council and she hopes the demographics of the Council will mirror the demographics of our communities.

Adjournment

Bill Bezanson motioned to adjourn the meeting; Glenn Harper seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously at 11:57 a.m.

Submitted by: Jessica Hodges, Executive Assistant

(Edits prepared by Jodie Kohler and Carrie Petit)