



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, April 5, 2023 9:30 – 12:00 p.m. Via ZOOM

Members Present

Lewis County: *Tim Wood, Carolyn (Carol) Brock, Heidi Buswell, Liz Hicker, Debbie Aust*

Mason County: *Glenn Harper, Vice-Chair, Tamra Ingwaldson, Cynthia Stang, Becky Cronquist*

Thurston County: *Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Chair; Cat McGaffigan; Ellen Wendt; Angela Hock;*

Members Absent

Lewis County:

Mason County:

Thurston County: Michele Horaney, Anna Schlecht

Staff Present

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director; Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director; Carrie Petit, Contracts Director; Dan Speigle, CFO; Valerie Aubertin, Contracts Manager; Lisa Bachmann, Administrative Coordinator; Chrissy Franklin, Administrative Secretary

Guests: *Bob Blancato*

Welcome & Introductions

Eileen *McKenzieSullivan, Chair*, called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM, followed by introductions.

Guest Speaker: Bob Blancato

Bob shared a PowerPoint with the Council with emphasis on the debt ceiling, dueling FY 2024 budget proposals to include Medicaid programs, rise of prescription drug prices, OAA increases and access to more healthcare in rural areas and telehealth as well as mental health. Bob reported on the Public Health Emergency, Farm Bill, Social Security and Medicare as well as Elder Justice.

Nicole Kiddoo explained key aspects of Washington Association of Senior Nutrition. Carol Brock shared that thousands of freezer meals are going out to homebound seniors in our communities and expressed concern around the impending hardship this demographic will experience upon the SNAP benefits expiring. The current SNAP guideline is not based on monetary eligibility, but on the ability to get out of your home to shop. Tim Wood suggested that the number of meals given out be shared as the members advocate. Eileen added that including stories to emphasize the SNAP need is helpful.

Approval of Minutes and Agenda

Motion to accept the Draft Agenda for April 2023 was made by Glenn Harper and seconded by Heidi Buswell. A vote was taken and carried unanimously.

Motion to approve the Draft Meeting Minutes from March 2023 was made by Glenn Harper with the edit on page 4 and seconded by Tim Wood. A vote was taken and carried unanimously.

Reports

Community Updates & Announcements – Glenn Harper reported on Friday Fun Night in Mason County for April 14th. Glenn also included details on the Death Café for April 27th where grief discussions are held.

Carol Brock shared that Lewis County's event went well.

Review of Committee Assignments – Eileen McKenzieSullivan

Eileen shared a document listing each committee assignments for 2023. Discussion ensued regarding each committee's charge, positions, availabilities, and impending openings.

State Council on Aging (SCoA) – Michele Horaney

Michele was unable to attend the meeting. Her report was shared via email prior to the commencement of the meeting.

Housing Committee & Charter – Anna Schlecht

Anna was unable to attend the meeting. Glenn Harper shared his gratitude for Annas hard work in all counties. Debbie Aust added that you can find updates on the AARP website.

Socialization & Engagement Committee – Glenn Harper, Vice-Chair / Angela Hock Glenn shared LMTAAA's impending decision around switching from GrandPads to the IN2L.

Angela Hock shared they are still working on the Mon Ami program. Donna Feddern shared that the agency is working with the state on approval for software supporting the Mon Ami program.

Advocacy & Legislative Committee – Michele Horaney

Michele Horaney was unable to attend the meeting. An update will be provided during the May Advisory Council Meeting.

Executive Director's Report and Legislative Updates – Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director / Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director

Nicole shared a PowerPoint on W4A budget Priorities in Case Management, Health Homes and Dementia Resource Catalyst. Nicole emphasized the importance of the rates increasing as the cost-of-living increases. She also explained that our Case Management and Health Homes budget requests were not in the original budget created by legislators, so a big push was made advocated for those items to be added. The budget was amended, and both were added. We hope that our agency will be one of those chosen to be added to a pilot program for the Dementia Resource Catalyst Program. The Alzheimer's Association was the group that approved the first to organizations of this program.

The Hunger Relief bill has been passed and is now ready for the Governor to approve. We have positioned ourselves to be ready to move on utilizing this money if it is approved since there is a short window to use it. Nicole explained that sharing stories of seniors who's benefits will be dropping from \$200/month to \$20/month are having an impact. Cynthia Brock commented that this will also help families with young children.

The US Aging Policy Priorities were shared with the Council. Supporting Aging Well at Home demonstrates that with 10,000 people per day being added to Medicare, the gap needs to be increased since the OAA budget was reduced previously and has never caught up to the current cost of living. Nicole also recognized the support of Caregivers, emphasized the prioritization of Medicaid home and community-based service options, as well as connecting health care and aging sectors to improve care and reduce costs. Carol Brock asked what the best way is to reach out to legislators. Emphasis on every call, email and letter included is impactful and if we don't do this, they will assume there is not a problem.

Thurston County Food Bank opportunities were highlighted with emphasis on working closely with them to help facilitate their current efforts.

Covid Tests are now available at our agency through a grant and can be distributed in the community.

May 18th is the Alzheimer's Conference and LMTAAA will sponsor Advisory Council Members who wish to attend. Email Lisa Bachmann (lisa.bachmann@dshs.wa.gov) with your request to attend.

Survey Question Results – Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director

Jemma thanked the Council for their feedback. All responses will be distributed to all members with the previous survey questions via email. She shared that there will be multiple places for people to write comments, not just answer questions.

Adjournment

Glenn Harper motioned to adjourn the meeting; Tim Wood seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously at 12:02 PM