



# Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging

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## **Council of Governments Monday, November 27, 2023**

2:30 PM – 4:30 PM  
ZOOM

### **November 27, 2023, 2:30 PM**

**Members Present:** Commissioner Sharon Trask, Mason County; Commissioner Sean Swope, Lewis County; and Commissioner Gary Edwards, Thurston County

**Members Absent:** N/A

**Staff Present:** Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer; Carrie Petit, Contracts Director; Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director; Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director; Emily MacFarland, Case Management Director; Jessica Hodges, Senior Executive Assistant

**Guests Present:** Joyce Wilmes, President, Thurston County Council on Aging; Antoinette, Medical Equipment Bank Manager

**Call to order:** *Commissioner Trask called the meeting to order at 2:38 PM*

### **Opening/Introductions**

**MOTION** to approve the draft meeting minutes for January 26, 2023 and March 21, 2023 was made by Commissioner Sean Swope and seconded by Commissioner Sharon Trask. Commissioner Trask moved to amend the November 27, 2023 agenda to reflect item 8 moved to item 5. A vote was taken and carried unanimously.

### **CFO Report – Sabrina Dean**

Sabrina shared LMTAAA's bank balance as of September 2023. Deposits and payments were reviewed and discussed. Sabrina reported that the Fiscal team is working to improve efficiencies to include payroll and accounts payable moving

in-house. Within the last 3 months, Fiscal has billed \$2,456,348.99. Sabrina elaborated on the Fiscal office is presenting all accounts payable batches from the end of 2022 through September 2023 totaling over three-million dollars. This packet is intended to bring everything current as of the end of September 2023.

Based on the recommendation of the Executive Director, Commissioner Swope moved to approve the vouchers as noted above from May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to September 2023 in the amount of \$3,670,545.80 and seconded by Commissioner Edwards. A vote was taken and carried unanimously.

Based on the recommendation of the Executive Director, Commissioner Swope moved to approve the vouchers as noted above from October 1, 2023 through October 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 in the amount of \$375,382.04 and seconded by Commissioner Edwards. A vote was taken and carried unanimously.

**Public Comment:** Commissioner Trask called for public comment and discussion. *Joyce Wilmes, President Thurston County Council on Aging and Antoinette, who manages the Medical Equipment Bank were present. Joyce and Antoinette expressed gratitude to the commissioners and LMTAAA staff for supporting the Medical Equipment Bank.*

**Advisory Council Report:** Glenn Harper, Vice-Chair LMTAAA Advisory Council Glenn reported his attendance and notable experience of the Open House hosted by LMTAAA. The Advisory Council has a phone reassurance program in the works for seniors. Glenn reported that the Advisory Council Roster for Mason County has several vacancies to be filled. Glenn reported on the Council's Housing Committee. As housing remains the main concern for many seniors, Glenn requested that any lands in counties suitable to convert into a mobile home or other form of affordable housing, please make Anna Schlecht or Glenn Harper aware. Glenn also expressed concerns around housing and emergency room capacities. Commissioner Edwards questioned the date of Glenn's last meeting with the Council. Commissioner Edwards thanked Glenn for his commitment and contributions to the Advisory Council. Commissioner Edwards elaborated on the state of the homeless population we support as a community.

**Executive Director's Report: Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director**

Nicole shared with the Commissioners details of the LMTAAA Open House to include 100+ attendance. Nicole elaborated that we wanted to open our doors to the community and share the work and services we provide. We also wanted to celebrate the internal work we did around DEI, for which we received national recognition from USAging. Nicole shared that she is proud of the staff for the work and training related to that. During the Open House, we visually portrayed

some of the DEI work by way of local muralist, Jahla Brown. The goal of these murals was to demonstrate support in the community in bringing everyone together. Nicole hopes to host an annual Open House as an ongoing event. Nicole shared priorities based on advocating for legislative session. In past years we have received great funding for Case Management. The current funding request for legislatures is for \$1.5M to help transition those from the state with identifying a care provider. Questions regarding funds distribution were discussed.

Nicole shared that there is a Hunger Relief ask from legislatures of \$15.2M to sustain current services. Pandemic dollars were received that helped meet basic needs. As a result, we can help folks we may not have been able to otherwise, without those pandemic dollars. This Hunger Relief ask would fund 1.4 million meals across WA and impacts 19,000 people. At current, we have 61% of funding to sustain services. We may have to implement waiting lists or other supports from the community. Questions regarding current funding dollars and how many people are being served at that level were discussed.

### **Contracts Director's Report: Carrie Petit**

Carrie updated the Council on expanding Hunger Relief funds. Carrie reported that her department analyzed subcontracted Senior Nutrition and Transportation in the spring to find what the impact of inflation was. We decided to administer a 7% increase to congregate home delivered meals to fight inflation. We also gave additional increases to transportation subcontractors by way of mileage or per trip rates to help with gas price increases and utilized pandemic related funding sources for these increases. Carrie also reported that the goal is to continue to spend down pandemic funding whilst still utilizing OAA dollars. We received special funding to address hunger and as a result have been able to provide support to subcontracted nutrition providers throughout our service area and Thurston County Foodbank. With that funding we purchased shelf stable food and supplies to get out to clients in the form of commodities bags/boxes. Our partnership with Thurston County Foodbank will continue providing commodity boxes and bags into the next year. Carrie shared a story of the impacts of those additional funds.

Commissioner Swope asked if LMTAAA is aware of any senior centers using an org providing the meals to lower the price point as opposed to cooking them themselves. Carrie informed the COG that they are cooking their own meals at the center while some home delivered meals are making mass produced meals through Medicaid contracts. Meals on Wheels, with Catholic Comm Services, are purchased through a company. Commissioner Swope added that the price point for meals in Lewis County is around \$15/Meal and can receive a better price with a company that is doing high volumes to get those price points down in an effort to provide further impact. Carrie continued with information around side-by-side comparison of current providers receiving food from commercial food distributors.

Commissioner Swope added information around cost of jail meals being at \$3 per meal. Nicole added information around organizations providing services for Senior Center meals, elaborating that those companies do exist, and organizations allow senior centers to provide services with potential pro and cons. Glenn Harper added information around labor costs being bundled into the meal cost. Commissioner Edwards asked when the last date to utilize funds from Pandemic funding sources. Nicole reported funds are valid through Sept 30, 2024.

### **Community Supports Director's Report: Donna Feddern**

As the Community Supports Director, Donna oversees two teams - Information and Assistance team and Aging and Disability Resource Connection. We put out a new edition of Resource Guide. Donna reported that her team has been helping the Office of Insurance Commissioners for MIPPA to assist with applications for Medicare Savings Program. We also do outreach and education on WACARES, long term care fund in the community. The Family Caregiver Support team boasts a new supervisor and new staff. We are excited for that team working with family caregivers specifically those with Dementia. Our teams put on the dementia conference and happy to report great attendance there. The conference was intended to educate people on the needs of those with dementia and their caregivers.

As it relates to Hospital Transitions Care Coordination, we've experienced challenges with the hospital (Providence) to help people get out of the hospital and not come back, but instead to get to DR appts. We have experienced additional challenges in hiring for this position, with a few candidates to be interviewed.

Donna reported to the COG on the Thurston County Affordable Housing Board. She elaborated on the calls received regarding housing concerns. Donna is hoping to be the voice for some of those folks around importance of affordable housing.

Donna also serves as the Agency's Tribal Liaison. Donna met with two tribes in 2023 providing outreach for 4 of the 5 tribes in our service area.

Donna reported that her department is working on social isolation through reimagined versions of classic board games. These games are designed to play with multiple generations at the same time. They include larger font, pieces that are easier to grasp. We are working to distribute to senior centers in our service area.

Commissioner Edwards asked how many FTE's we are missing for recruitment purposes. Staff responded that are doing well with a few openings around 5-6 FTE's to fill.

Commissioner Trask recognized Brandon Humphries for his article in senior news regarding light of hope.

### **Case Management Director's Report: Emily MacFarland**

Emily reported that the Case Management department met a goal of caseload ratios being 75:1. She elaborated that a combination of significant hiring and turnover as impacted the 75:1 ratio. While 75:1 is still a lot, it does allow more time for Case Managers to pay close attention to their clients. Emily discussed Case Transfers with the COG, emphasizing initial client volume and time commitment.

Emily also oversees the Health Homes team of 4. With each passing month the team is improving in outreach and client research. The program is incredible with the wraparound services and is continuing to grow. Commissioner Trask questioned the influx of cases during the holiday season. Donna Feddern reported an increase in call volumes to get folks on services.

### **Human Resources Report: Nicole Kiddoo on behalf of Mary Beth Mercer**

Nicole reported the implementation of a new cloud based Human Resources platform, Bamboo HR. She elaborated that the teams are making triangulation efforts to our systems to provide technological advancement and efficiencies. Nicole also reported that the Agency is currently in collective bargaining meetings and hope to reach a tentative agreement soon. Nicole shared that LMTAAA received awards for the DEI work we have completed as an Agency at a national level.

### **Deputy Executive Director: Jemma Williamson**

Jemma reported on the Area Plan and will be readjusting the schedule as she finishes up the final details of the Plan. Staff will bring the Area Plan to Advisory Council in January, followed by a Public Hearing. Through the curation process of the Area Plan, we received 300 survey responses, with impacts made by our Advisory Council members to assist in gathering surveyors. We expect to bring the Area Plan to COG for the January meeting.

### **Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Edwards and seconded by Commissioner Trask. A vote was taken and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 PM. The next regular meeting of the CoG is scheduled for January 25, 2024.*

**Submitted by: Jessica Hodges, Senior Executive Assistant**

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