



Lewis - Mason - Thurston Area Agency on Aging

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Advisory Council Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, November 14, 2023 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM In person and via ZOOM

Members Present

Lewis County: Debbie Aust; Greg Rohr; Liz Hicker; Tim Wood

Mason County: Glenn Harper, Vice-Chair; Tamra Ingwaldson

Thurston County: Angela Hock, Anna Schlecht, Cat McGaffigan; Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Chair

Members Absent

Lewis County: Heidi Buswell

Mason County: Becky Cronquist

Thurston County: Ellen Wendt; Michelle Horaney

Staff Present

Becca Frisch, Communications Manager; Emily MacFarland, Case Management Director; Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director; Jessica Hodges, Senior Executive Assistant; Lisa Bachmann, Executive Assistant; Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer.

Guests Present: Carol Brock, Community Member

Welcome & Introductions

Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM, followed by introductions.

Approval of Minutes and Agenda

A motion to approve the September 6 minutes and proposed November 14 agenda was made by Glenn Harper, Vice-Chair, and seconded by Tim Wood.

Legislative & Advocacy Updates: Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director

Nicole shared a power point with the committee titled “Legislative and Advocacy Updates.” The Legislative Team members are: Nicole Kiddoo; Jessica Hodges, Senior Executive Assistant; Becca Frisch, Communications Manager; and Michelle Horaney, Advocacy Committee Chair. The Legislative priorities for 2024 are:

Hunger Relief: With current funding, in 2025, there will only be 61% of what is needed to assist

seniors and adults with disabilities. Inflated food and fuel costs make the crisis worse and when nutritional food cannot be purchased, it causes a decline in health. The extra funding received during COVID allowed us to serve more seniors, but with that ending, it leaves many with less resources added to the higher costs. There was additional discussion among the members regarding menus and how the money is divided between counties. Nicole encouraged the members to share stories that highlight the impact of how these programs help seniors with their legislators. Eileen McKenzie Sullivan suggested the members all visit their local senior centers and interact with those in attendance to hear more stories as these will have an impact. Jessica Hodges said these stories can be emailed to her.

Increasing the Number of Caregivers: We need 1.58 million dollars to increase the number of Case Managers so they can focus more on assisting clients find caregivers. Tim Wood suggested that breaking down how we have used money given to us in the past may help show why we need more funding for the future.

Case Manager Ratios: It is another priority to reduce the caseload ratios for our Case Managers. When they have less clients, they have more time to make sure each client receives all the benefits they qualify for. We currently serve about 2500 clients, with current caseloads of about 70-85 clients per Case Manager. For clients without caregivers, a ratio of 55:1 is preferred.

Nicole the role USAging has supporting all AAA's and that she is a member of their board. She also discussed the Older American's Act (OAA) and how the funding we receive through their programs help us assist the aging to remain in their homes. The 2024 priorities are: support aging well at home; recognize and support caregivers; prioritize Medicaid Home and Community based services; and connecting health care and aging sectors. There was discussion regarding how the committee members can assist. Nicole shared there are opportunities to call and/or write to the legislators and that these do make an impact. W4A provides great training for the council members on how to advocate.

Nominating Committee Updates, Eileen MckenzieSullivan, Chair

Eileen shared that the committee includes: Tim Wood, Angela Hock & Becky Cronquist. She has been talking with all council members about what kind of commitment they want to have next year. The list will go out by email and be voted on at the December meeting.

Community Updates:

Thurston: There was a Gala in October and about 180 came. They raised over \$130,000. There was a video showcasing the last 50 years for Senior Services called "Time Traveling Senior" which was funny and showed the importance of being involved.

Lewis: Liz Hicker shared that the Winlock Senior Center is seeing larger turnouts, and the activities are improving. They are integrating another group into this one. Affordable housing is an issue. There is a non-profit organization that will be helping with this and looking for land. Debbie Aust shared that the Veteran's Memorial Museum Quilts of Valor Group made 597 quilts statewide in 2023; 214 of them from the Chehalis group she is part of. There was discussion that one of the Lewis County Area Plan

Forums was cancelled due to them being closed. Jemma Williamson will work to reschedule a time at the Twin City Senior Center. Jemma also shared we had the best participation with the surveys that we have ever had. She also explained that the needs shared are consistent within the three counties. The plan provides guidelines for the agency. When it comes to putting the plan in action, it we will tailor the assistance that each county receives.

Membership Committee: Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Chair

Eileen shared that she hopes everyone on the council will work at filling the open positions. We have openings in each county, with the most in Lewis. Glenn Harper, Vice-Chair suggested we contact Commissioner Trask for her assistance with this.

Housing Committee: Anna Schlecht & Glenn Harper, Vice Chair

Glenn attended the Western Plaza meeting regarding the company that bought out a mobile park under secrecy and raised the rent \$100 a month right away. There has been legislation that has passed that gives residents 120 days to form a membership association to purchase the park and avoid having this happen. Anna added that the magazine Crosscut, had an article on trailer parks. 70% of the residents in these parks are seniors. She will have Lisa Bachmann forward the article to the members.

Socialization & Engagement Committee, Glenn Harper, Vice Chair

Glenn shared are still waiting for the security clearance on the Mon Ami program. He added that the Surgeon General just reported that even one added activity helps seniors feel more included by 17%.

Village to Village Network, Glenn Harper, Vice Chair

Glenn shared he started a non-profit called the Elderhood Senior Alliances. The mission is to support the creation of affordable & sustainable housing and helping seniors stay in their homes as long as possible. He attended a two-day event with Michele and Ellen through Village to Village. They will be meeting with a Village-to-Village group in Seattle called Greater Horizons to learn more about their network. These non-profits aim to serve the missing middle who make too much to qualify for services, but not enough to be able to afford all that they need. The program encourages seniors helping seniors and giving people opportunities to serve and make connections. They form groups of 10 to network.

Advocacy & Legislative Committee

There was no report as that committee is meeting today.

Executive Directors Report, Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director

Nicole shared some staffing changes at the agency. We have added Becca Frisch our new Communications Manager; Jessica is now the Senior Executive Assistant; and Lisa Bachmann the Executive Assistant. We will be hiring a Chief of Programs & Services next year and could have close to 100 on staff by the end of 2024.

Area Plan, Jemma Williamson Chief Executive Officer

Jemma explained that while we hoped to go over the plan today that with so many parts to the plan it

is being postponed until January. In order to accommodate this, the January Advisory Council Meeting date will be changed to the 10th for the council to review the plan. It will then go to the COG for final approval.

A motion was made by Glenn Harper to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Liz Hicker. The meeting was adjourned at 11:56 am.

Submitted by: Lisa Bachmann, Executive Assistant