



Area Agency on Aging

Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging

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ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes for September 2, 2020

Teleconference (via ZOOM) <https://zoom.us/j/487746388>

Meeting ID: 487 746 388; Call in # (253) 215-8782; or (301) 715-8592

Members Present

Lewis County: Lynn Ford (Chair); Elizabeth (Liz) Hicker; Cindy Mund; Deb Mizner

Mason County: Glenn Harper (Vice-Chair); Bill Bezanson; Carroll Raether; Karen Wolf

Thurston County: Judy Stratton; Howard Burton; Michele Horaney

Members Absent

Lewis County: Charlene Woodring

Mason County: Debra Jamerson

Thurston County: Gwen Gadberry

Staff Present

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Joy McBride, Contracted Services Director; Dan Speigle, Fiscal Director; Valerie Aubertin, Contracts Manager; Carrie Petit, Contracts Manager; and Charyl Warriner, Executive Assistant

Guests

Paul Tosch, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman; Brian Windrope, Director, Senior Services for South Sound; Mindie Dunham, Senior Programs Manager, Lewis County Seniors; Beth Gizzi, Executive Director (The Hub); Patricia Vernie, Executive Director, Shelton Senior Center; Col. Ron Averill, Board President, Lewis County Seniors; Nora Davis, Pe Ell Site Manager; Diana Haug, Toledo Site Manager; Lindsey Giverson, Winlock Site Manager; and Sally Allen, Morton Site Manager.

Welcome & Introductions

Lynn Ford called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions. In recognition of Senior Center Month, we were pleased to welcome several Directors, and/or Senior Center representatives to the meeting.

Approval of Minutes & Agenda

Lynn Ford, Chair, entertained a motion to approve both the August 5, 2020 draft meeting minutes, as well as the draft amended agenda for the September 2, 2020 meeting. Bill Bezanson made a motion to approve both the August 5, 2020 draft meeting minutes, as well as the amended draft agenda for the September 2, 2020 meeting. Glenn Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Comments from the Chair – Lynn Ford

Lynn Ford attended the Senior Housing (virtual) meeting, and was glad to report that the group continues to look for private sector financial opportunities to build senior housing. The original goals of the Advisory Council have changed however we have accomplished a lot through committees and By-Laws updates. Lynn shared that Ida Sevier resigned from the Advisory Council, and will be greatly missed. Lynn mentioned that the Committee needs to focus on 2021 goals, as much of 2020 goals are no longer valid. Lynn introduced our new Advisory Council member, Karen Wolf, representing Mason County. Karen Wolf shared her background as a retired community health nurse and focus on special education in California.

Community Updates –

There was nothing reported from Lewis, Mason, or Thurston county for community updates.

Paul Tosch, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman, shared with the group that he has turned in his resignation and this would be his last Advisory Council meeting. Paul's last day with the Ombudsman program will be September 30, 2020. Paul also shared with the Council that there are other volunteers within the program that have turned in their resignations, many due to health reasons. The collective Council and AAA staff members extended their sincerest thanks and best wishes to Paul in his next journey.

Advocacy & Legislative Committee Report – Michele Horaney

Michele Horaney reported that the Advocacy and Legislative Committee met on August 25 with Nicole and had a very productive first meeting. This committee will be engaged with our Legislators, keeping the agency apprised of bills and programs that will be vital to the continuation of programs serving our clients. The committee will work on messaging within our three counties, as well as collaborating with Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging (w4a) representatives on training opportunities and networking. The committee's focus will be connecting with those who will assist in advocating for programs that serve seniors and disabled adults in our communities, as well as showcasing what the consequences might be for cutting programs. The committee will be working on messaging, and not lobbying. Nicole Kiddoo added that we are looking forward to a few trainings in October, outside of the Senior Lobby and Fall Conference.

Lynn Ford added for clarification that the state of Washington, as part of the budget reduction exercise, is considering a reduction of approximately 20,000 seniors from the Medicaid system.

Advocacy & Legislative (continued) – Nicole Kiddoo

Nicole Kiddoo added that the Advocacy & Legislative Committee is working hard on our messaging. Part of this work is being done with the help of our website developer, Hemisphere. Hemisphere will be assisting us with our messaging through different platforms. We will be having videos, electronic documents and overall a more robust website or our advocacy and outreach to our clients.

Socialization & Engagement Committee – Glenn Harper

Glenn Harper shared that the committee has received a rather good response from a recent survey sent out with the help of Senior Center Nutritional Meal pick-up/deliveries. This survey was created in the hope of finding out whether or not individuals isolated due to COVID-19 could benefit from some type of technology. We have received approximately 79 surveys so far and are awaiting the final batch. Charyl Warriner added that once the surveys are returned, the committee will review all based on those individuals who have expressed interest in participating in our pilot project. Charyl also shared that we are working on the criteria requirements, as well as an end user agreement before commencing the project.

Senior Center – updates

Lynn Ford was pleased to share that September is “*Senior Center Month*”, and introduced the Advisory Council to some special guests from our partners at various Senior Centers within Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties. Lynn reminded the Council that as of January 2021, she and Cindy Mund will have completed with their terms on the Advisory Council and asked that each of us look for potential new members. As a reminder, part of our Area Plan, outlines the need to have one elected official as part of our Council.

Brian Windrope, Executive Director, Senior Services for South Sound (SSSS)

shared that he became the new Executive Director just as Eileen McKenzie-Sullivan retired, which also was right at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the Olympia and Lacey Senior Centers are temporarily closed to the public, their senior nutrition program works hard to get those who need meal services enrolled if they already were not receiving meals or going to senior centers for lunch. After the closure in March, Senior Services for South Sound (SSSS) served approximately 213 people in Mason and Thurston counties through home delivered meals. In April, the number increased to over 500 people. Meals continue to be delivered for all centers, just not cooked in all locations. Donations continue to come in. There have been many challenges, from the budget going down from 2.3 million (annually), to the furloughing of 39 staff members. SSSS received a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan, which allowed the return of some staff through June, unfortunately as of July 1, many were furloughed again. The current size of the organization is approximately 40% smaller than before the pandemic. SSSS continues to leverage their resources, and offer their fall classes online. As with other agencies and organizations, most of the work is virtual. On a pleasant note, the staff remain in good spirits.

Beth Gizzi, Executive Director at The HUB, thanked the Advisory Council for inviting the Directors to this meeting. Due to COVID-19 restrictions in March, the center starting working on grab-&-go hot meals. Unfortunately, due to the restrictions, they are no longer able to have live music, which is a favorite activity for most of their members. They remain hopeful to have an outdoor, live music event on October 2, from 10-2 p.m. The center continues to offer activities, but in a new manner. Zumba gold is being held in the parking lot, Tai Chi is inside. Their main focus has become doing one thing a

month that's meaningful and impactful. On September 25 & 26 Bloodworks NW will be coming to the center for a blood drive. During Halloween, the center will be offering a "Zombie Drive-thru" for the kids in Belfair. Beth shared that they continue working with the Mason County Emergency Food Bank, and their last report was that they shared 1,000 pounds of food with the community. The HUB received a PPP loan, which allowed them to bring staff back to work, unfortunately they had to be furloughed again, when the time period expired. The members and donors continue to donate to the center.

Deb Mizner, Program Manager, Cowlitz Elders Senior Nutrition

Deb shared a similar process the Cowlitz Tribe is offering for drive thru meal pick-up options. They are meeting the tribal elders and supplying them with meals, garden produce, household staples, and medicine/herbs. They have started a pen pal program between the elders and some youth in the area which has been fun for all. The garden is doing well, and many items are being canned, and distributed to the elders. Deb is working on ordering blankets as Christmas gifts for *Inner Tribal Luncheon*. She mentioned that they will be asking for funding through gaming money, as their grant was cut short. In addition, some meal deliveries have been cut in certain areas, as they lack funding for all locations. They are currently offering lunch on site two days per week and the elders are pleased. They continue to encourage those who are considered higher risk to stay home and stay safe.

Patricia (Patti) Vernie, Executive Director, Mason County Senior Activities Center

Patti shared that the staffing situation at their center is very similar to what the others described; hours have been cut back, putting most staff between 16-20 hours per week. The Center remains closed to the public. Volunteers were participating in a food drive; however, limited volunteers and extra labor needed was too great, so the program was stopped. In the meantime, they are having volunteers perform "buddy calls" to check on one another and see if there are specific needs for those who can't get out. This also helps with keeping in touch with one another and the seniors appreciate hearing someone else's voice. The line dancing, Tai-Chi and quilting classes have all been shifted to virtual platforms. The Center continues to offer a medical lending library, but by appointment only. The thrift store sales have proven valuable, and sales are helping keep the doors open.

Mindie Dunham, Senior Programs Manager, Lewis County Seniors

Mindie introduced Site Managers from their some of their senior centers including: Nora Davis, Pe Ell Site Manager; Diana Haug, Toledo Site Manager; Lindsey Giberson, Winlock Site Manager; and Sally Allen, Morton Site Manager. Mindie shared that Lewis County Seniors (LCS) is making about 3,700 meals per week. All sites are doing drive thru pick-up meals, as well as home delivery for those who cannot get out. LCS is now serving seven (7) meals per week and numbers went from 3,000 meals per month to approximately 20,000 meals per month. Twin Transit was assisting with deliveries, until they resumed their normal service routes in July.

Next Advisory Council Meeting

Advisory Council meetings will continue via teleconferencing until further notice. Due to an annual conflict with our October meeting and w4a's October meeting, Lynn Ford entertained a motion to change the date of the October Advisory Council's meeting. There was a request to change the meeting from October 7, to October 5. Bill Bezanson made a motion to move the meeting to Monday, October 5, 2020 and Glenn Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Therefore, the next scheduled meeting will be on October 5, 2020, at 9:30 a.m., via ZOOM.

Adjournment

Lynn Ford called for a motion to adjourn. Bill Bezanson made a motion to adjourn. Glenn Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Submitted by: Charyl Warriner, Executive Assistant