



Area Agency on Aging

Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging

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ADVISORY COUNCIL Meeting Minutes for November 6, 2019

Members Present

Lewis County: Lynn Ford; Cindy Mund (Chair); and Charlene Woodring
Mason County: Glenn Harper; Ida Sevier; Carroll Raether; Debra Jamerson; and William (Bill) Bezanson
Thurston County: Gwen Gadberry; Walter Sulskis; Howard Burton and Michele Horaney

Members Absent

Lewis County: Liz Hicker; Patricia (Patti) Craig; and Deb Mizner
Mason County: Beth Gizzi
Thurston County: R. Dave Hughes

Staff Present

Nicole Kiddoo; Joy McBride; Valerie Aubertin-Lamb; Juno Whittaker; and Charyl Warriner

Guests

Paul Tosch, Regional Long Term Care Ombudsman

Welcome & Introductions

Cindy Mund, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. She continued to welcome all to the meeting and introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes & Agenda

Cindy Mund, Chair, entertained a motion to approve the October 2, 2019 minutes as presented, and to approve the draft agenda for the November 6, 2019 meeting. Ida Sevier, Vice-Chair, made a recommendation to revise the proposed November 6th minutes with a correction to her name from Isa, to Ida. Cindy Mund, Chair, made a recommendation to change wording to reflect terms of leadership, instead of terms as leadership. Bill Bezanson made a motion to approve the draft November 6th agenda, as presented, and to have the recommended corrections from both Ida and Cindy, as stated above, to the draft October 2, 2019 minutes. Lynn Ford seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports

State Council on Aging (SCoA) Meeting Report – Ida Sevier

This was a much shorter meeting, as the conference in Tacoma was the main focus. There is a potential lawsuit that would affect the new Consumer Directed Employment program that the State is negotiating. The SCoA will be supporting the State in its defense to keep family members at home with support. In addition, the 2020 Legislative priorities are being developed, and there was discussion over Nursing Home Facility rate increases.

Council of Governments (CoG) Meeting Report – Ida Sevier

Nicole Kiddoo presented the Agency's 2020-2023 Area Plan to the Commissioners on October 16, 2019. The two commissioners present reviewed the proposed plan, asked questions, and approved the proposal, as well as the proposed budget. The draft plan was posted on the Agency's website and the plan was submitted to Department of Social and Health Services on the October 25, 2019. Once we hear back from the State regarding approval status, the Council will be updated.

W4A/Senior Lobby Conferences (review) – Council Members in attendance

Lynn Ford felt as though A4A's keynote speaker, Bob Blancato, did an excellent job. She also attended the legislative receptions and was impressed they were well attended, but not by many legislators. The Senior Lobby Conference was informative, and the State Council on Aging had a booth as well.

Howard Burton mentioned that Bob Blancato, keynote speaker seemed to understand the scheme of things and noted that Washington State is doing well. Howard felt as though the session that focused on social media is something that we, as an agency, need to embrace and use social media as an advocacy tool. It was recommended to have someone help the Council use Twitter, FB, Instagram, etc., as they are very powerful tools of communication. Using social media may get our message out to the public of what we do and what resources we can help provide. He felt as though the comments on social isolation at the conference was also well done. The discussion on people being lonely, ill, and unhappy are destructive. We need to work collectively to become part of the solution.

Glenn Harper believes that the most sensible approach is cyber/social media communications. Having discussions through email, then having an agency representative post on behalf of the Advisory Council would be a good idea. In order to avoid too much chatter, he felt as though it would be best to have one point of contact, perhaps a staff member that would come to these meetings, solicit input and gather information to share with our communities.

Michele Horaney commented that by posting online the chances of information being reposted by others is a benefit. As an example, news media is all over twitter, and the Council's notes (through social media) she believed, would carry a lot of power. She commented that Bob Blancato is indeed a "man on a mission". Transportation remains a large concern for many of the remote areas. Cindy Mund shared a story of her community, where the most challenging task is to get people over 70 out of their home to increase health and well-being.

Lynn Ford talked about senior centers, and volunteers who help get residents out more. She mentioned that Packwood has limited resources, due to their remote location and the concerns that if medical attention was needed, the residents would have to be transported to facilities further away.

Glenn Harper believes that volunteering makes you feel needed. He mentioned an active memory clinic, and a STEP program that tries to engage younger people to interact with older individuals. In discussing isolation, Glenn believes that when people are married for 40-50 years their comfort in communicating with others outside their home is often limited and difficult.

Bill Bezanson stated that many people, after they retire, just want to do what they like, even if that means staying in their home.

Nicole Kiddoo added that part of the Older Americans Act (OAA) reauthorization brings up language about social isolation. The Agency has joined a coalition that supports Bob Blancato's mission with social isolation.

Charlene Woodring was curious as to whether or not there had been a study as to why people are isolated, and what would make people 'want to stay home'? Many commented that it could have been due to a loss of a spouse, ailing health, bladder issues, etc., that could be keeping them from leaving their home and socializing.

Executive Director's Report – Nicole Kiddoo

Nicole Kiddoo reminded the Council that next month we will be having our holiday appreciation luncheon for the Advisory Council members. We will also be extending our invitation to the Commissioners in the hope that they might be able to see what great work the Council is doing.

Reflecting back to the W4A/senior lobby conference in Tacoma, she asked the members if they felt as though there is a challenge in attending, due to the location in Tacoma. Although attending is important, maybe next year the recommendation would be to have more participation at one of the two days, and the Council could opt for attending the W4A conference.

There was general discussion among the Council members asking if there is a way to get more legislators to attend the conference. It was mentioned that in the future, LMTAAA could have legislature packets of information, so members could be ready to provide handouts with agency information to any legislators in attendance.

Nicole informed the Council members that the agency plans on putting together legislative talking points for the 2020 session, as well as building an Advisory Council TOOL KIT. This tool kit will become part of the Advisory Councils' packets for opportunities of advocacy and outreach.

Nicole shared that the Regional Housing Summit 3 will be held on November 20. Nicole provided the Council members with a handout, and stated that there will be six workshops. Nicole, Howard and many community members, known as the "Silver Team" have been meeting for over a year discussing affordable housing for seniors. Howard added that Social Security has a 'shared housing/home program', but it is slow going at this time, and many don't wish to open their homes to strangers. The overall intent of this summit is to provide information, have builders, bankers, and developers discuss the housing crisis and see how they can become part of the solution.

Nicole shared with the Council the current status of the Older Americans Act, which is also being called the Dignity and Aging Act. During the conference in Tacoma, we found out the reauthorization was hitting the House floor. The press release (see handout) passed by unanimous voice vote. There is no official note on the next call to action. We would like to have the Advisory Council prepare to support this reauthorization. There may be a call to action to send a letter to your senator that will ask to support the House of Representatives in their unanimous vote for reauthorization.

Discussion/Announcements:

Nicole shared with the Council that we have been researching upgrades for our conference room; these upgrades will involve improved speakers, a drop down screen, and a projector that will be recessed in the ceiling as well as additional listening devices. This large project will need to be completed by the end of the calendar year 2019.

Our website team is working hard, and working through a few challenges resulting in a delay of the website reveal. We will keep the Council informed on when to expect this.

Carroll Raether mentioned that there is a challenge in hearing what takes place during the Advisory Council meetings, and because of the difficulty, he was going to step down. The members did not realize that this was a problem, and thanked Carroll for letting us know. Moving forward, we will ensure that those speaking use a microphone to ensure all Council members/guests can hear what is taking place.

Cindy Mund, Chair, reviewed the 2019 Goals from the Advisory Council's Action Plan, which is mostly focused on advocacy and outreach. We will have a new Chair and Vice-Chair soon, and will continue with our advocacy with hopes of bringing in experts to present information to the Council, will have legislative tool kits and will continue to educate ourselves with putting narration on our PowerPoint presentation.

In preparation for the Chair and Vice-Chair elections in December, the Executive Committee will be meeting with Nicole to ensure those who have expressed interest in running are put on the ballot. Anyone interested in either position are to email Cindy by COB, Friday, November 22, 2019.

There was general discussion around the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and having our Council members spend time with seniors, encouraging the continued fight for their ADA rights. In addition, the Council spoke about various topics such as homelessness, Point in Time Study, nutritional risk assessments and needed resources.

Next Advisory Council Meeting

The next scheduled meeting will be on December 4, 2019.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Submitted by: Charyl Warriner, Executive Assistant