



# Lewis - Mason - Thurston Area Agency on Aging

2404 Heritage Ct. SW  
Olympia, WA 98502

Area Agency on Aging

Phone: (360) 664-2168 • Fax: (360) 664-0791 • [www.LMTAAA.org](http://www.LMTAAA.org)

## **Advisory Council Wednesday, August 4, 2021 9:30 – 12:00 p.m. Via ZOOM**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83640152824?pwd=VE90Zm5mUFA4NVRoaUUyL3hSQWREZz09>

By phone: 253 215 8782; Meeting ID: 836 4015 2824; Passcode: 845674

### ***Members Present***

Lewis County: Elizabeth (Liz) Hicker; Cindy Clark; Heidi Buswell

Mason County: Glenn Harper (Chair); Janeen McLaughlin; Diane McLean

Thurston County: Judy Stratton; Howard Burton; Eileen McKenzieSullivan (Vice-Chair);

Michele Horaney; Angela Hock

### ***Members Absent***

Lewis County: Amy Turnbull

Mason County: Debra Jamerson; Bill Bezanson; Jamie Queen

Thurston County: N/A

### ***Staff Present***

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director; Valerie Aubertin, Contracts Manager; Carrie Petit, Contracts Manager; Alison Lord, Contracts Manager; Lisa Jolly, Contracts Manager; John McBride, Access Services Supervisor; and Lisa Bachmann, Administrative Secretary

### ***Guests***

Lynn Ford, Chair SCoA; Lynn Urvina, Kinship Program Manager, Family Education & Support Services; Diane McClain, potential future council member

***Welcome & Introductions*** Glenn Harper called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Attendance was taken and introductions were made.

***Approval of Minutes and Agenda*** Glenn Harper, Chair, entertained a motion to approve both the June 2, 2021, corrected draft meeting minutes, removing Diane McLean as an attendee, as well as the draft agenda for the July 7, 2021, meeting. Cindy Clark, Lewis County, made a motion to approve both. Janeen McLaughlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### ***Comments from Council Chair – Glenn Harper***

Glenn Harper, Chair, Mason County shared that August is Cataract, MedicAlert and National Immunization Awareness Month. He discussed an app called Senior Planet, which offers free

technology training through Zoom. Information regarding the app and how to take part in the program was emailed to council members prior to the meeting.

**Powerful Tools for Caregivers** – *John McBride, Access Services Supervisor*

John McBride, Access Services Supervisor discussed the Powerful Tools for Caregivers Program with the council members. The program was started about 20 years ago to help support Family Caregivers. Classes run for six weeks and last about two and half hours with time for learning including role-playing and discussion. There is also a small amount of homework each week which includes an action plan participants create to work on one goal during that week. Progress is discussed the next week for some accountability. Classes are currently through Zoom, but when in person they include a healthy snack to demonstrate foods which promote brain health. All Family Caregiver Specialists at the Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging (LMTAAA) take the leadership course so they can assist caregivers using the principles learned in the course. There were multiple suggestions by Advisory Council members after John's discussion on ways for Powerful Tools to reach more people in the future, in person and via Zoom.

**Reports/Committee Updates** – *Various Council Members*

**Lewis County:** Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Vice-Chair, shared there will be a concert by the Olympia Symphony Orchestra this Sunday at the Tenino Quarry. Cindy Clark, Lewis County inquired why the Lewis County Senior Center has not re-opened yet. Valerie Aubertin, Contracts Manager, explained that the HVAC systems at all six (6) centers will need to be cleaned, repaired and in some cases replaced due to lack of use and age. During this time, meals are still being provided as contracted. Cindy Clark and Judy Stratton, Lewis County, also shared the Fords Prairie Grange has re-opened, with a time for seniors to socialize each Wednesday morning. Liz Hicker, Lewis County shared the Winlock Community Hall is also open weekly, providing a meal to seniors, with great attendance.

**Mason County:** Glenn Harper, Chair, shared that the senior centers have started offering van trips again, however with the recent surge of the COVID-19 Delta variant the board is concerned restrictions may need to be tightened again.

**Thurston County:** Angela Hock, Thurston County shared the Olympia and Lacey Senior Centers are both open three days a week, serving congregate meals. Proof of vaccination is required. They are working to increase their services.

**Advocacy & Legislative Updates** – *Michelle Horaney*

Michelle Horaney shared the state is between legislative sessions, so she has been researching the Long-Term Health Care Services Program and working to correct misinformation by providing facts about the program. She has also been following is the Credit for Caring Act, which would release federal funds for in-home care provided by family members.

**Socialization and Engagement** – *Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Vice-Chair*

Eileen McKenzieSullivan shared the committee met Monday and discussed the GrandPad program, which has four active participants with varying levels of technical knowledge. Zoom is now available on the devices, opening more opportunities to connect. Details were shared about the Senior Planet app, which offers a six-week course to help seniors with technology.

The committee has scheduled a Zoom meeting with the GrandPad participants so they can practice.

### **Executive Director's Report – Nicole Kiddoo**

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director, thanked the members for their time and support. She is anticipating the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A) Legislative priorities will be available soon. At the state level they are working with the Aging and Long-Term Support Administration (AL TSA) and the Department of Social and Health Services on the reduction of the case load ratio for Title XIX (19) case management, with a goal of 50:1. Currently some Area Agencies are above what the contracted ratio is. At this point, it looks like this reduction will happen over several legislative sessions, but they will continue to advocate for a quicker reduction. The other priorities are accelerating the process of providing services for people who are eligible and making it easier for participants to use available money to cover basic needs.

Nicole also shared that the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) has changed their title to USAging. She hopes to have information soon on their priorities for the upcoming legislation session so that the Advisory Council can meet prior to the session and discuss advocating for these goals.

Cindy Clark, Lewis County asked Nicole if there were more the council members could do to help the Lewis County Senior Centers open sooner. Nicole explained the best thing would be to share facts about the situation, including that LMTAAA does not have any authority over that decision. Eileen McKenzieSullivan also reminded members to get the word out that many grange halls in Lewis County have opened and are providing weekly times to meet in the meantime. Valerie Aubertin will see if that information can be included on the Senior Center's website.

Nicole Kiddoo stated that due to COVID-19, our agency has not been able to implement everything we wanted to in our Area Plan. One component of the plan is to update it every two years. She is suggesting in the update that we continue with our previous goals; address the impact COVID-19 has had with social isolation and seniors; and reduce or even eliminate the time it takes for seniors to get services. The structural reorganization and recent hiring will give the agency the support we need to work on these goals. LMTAAA is looking at a hybrid model for when we resume working in person, but that date has not been determined. She is estimating that this meeting will be held via Zoom through the end of this year.

### **Kinship Program – Lynn Urvina, Kinship Program Manager, Family Education & Support Services**

Lynn Urvina, Kinship Program Manager, shared that over 40,000 children in Washington State are being cared for full-time by a grandparent, usually informally, without legal custody. Grandparents may have the children due to abuse of the child or because of substance abuse or absence of a parent. These are called Kinship Families. For every child in foster care, twelve children are being cared for by a grandparent or other close family member. This is preferred because of familiarity and for continuity of family and cultural values, however, families who take on this responsibility are not currently compensated the same way that licensed foster families are. Usually, medical benefits are covered and assistance with childcare for working caregivers, but very little help with respite care, if retired. There is some additional money available through the state, but if accessed, this must be paid back by the parent, which can cause problems between family members. The Kinship Program also

provides support groups that allow the caregivers to share and the children to interact with other children in similar situations. Low-income caregivers, who qualify financially, can take part in the Kinship Caregivers Support Program. There is financial help to assist with rent, school supplies, clothing, and other necessities. Washington State is trying to become the first state to be certified as evidenced-based, which will help bring matching dollars to the program. There is also a need for more Navigators for the programs.

**GetSetUp: Live Classes for Older Adults** - *Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director*  
Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director, talked to the committee about the GetSetUp: Live Classes for Older Adults program for adults 50 and older via Zoom. It is currently free and funded through DSHS for the first twenty-five hundred (2,500) classes. After that, our agency can choose to fund the program for our local seniors. Classes include technical help. Participants are from around the world and course included a variety of topics such as travel, office skills, support groups, gardening, and exercise. On YouTube you can observe previous classes. The agency would use this as a tool to help with social isolation. Nicole would like to see the council members each participate in a few classes, so we have an understanding before promoting it.

**Upcoming Events** – Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director

Nicole Kiddoo reminded the council members that the W4A Fall conference will be via Zoom on October 20, 2021. Bob Blancato will be speaking again this year. They are looking at having breakout sessions to give attendees more ability to connect and discuss topics with other members across the state.

**Next Advisory Council Meeting**

Advisory Council Meetings will continue via teleconferencing until further notice. The next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., via Zoom.

**Adjournment**

Glen Harper called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Eileen McKenzieSullivan made the motion to adjourn, and Howard Burton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 pm.

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Submitted by: Lisa Bachmann, Administrative Secretary