



Lewis - Mason - Thurston Area Agency on Aging

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Area Agency on Aging

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Advisory Council

Amended Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, September 1, 2021

9:30 – 12:00 p.m.

Via ZOOM

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

By phone: 253 215 8782; Meeting ID: 274 391 4614; Passcode: 359778

Members Present

Lewis County: N/A

Mason County: Glenn Harper (Chair); Allison Voss; Bill Bezanson; Janeen McLaughlin; Diane McLean; Jamie Queen

Thurston County: Howard Burton; Eileen McKenzieSullivan (Vice-Chair); Michele Horaney; Angela Hock

Members Absent

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

Mason County: Debra Jamerson

Thurston County: Judy Stratton

Staff Present

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Donna Feddern, Community Supports Director; Valerie Aubertin, Contracts Manager; Carrie Petit, Contracts Manager; and Lori Thom, Executive Assistant

Guests

Brian Windrope, Executive Director at Senior Services for South Sound

Welcome & Introductions Glenn Harper called the meeting to order at 9:33 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 draft meeting minutes, as well as the draft agenda for the August 4, 2021, meeting. Eileen McKenzie-Sullivan, Lewis County, made a motion to approve both. Bill Bezanson, Mason County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Comments from Council Chair – Glenn Harper

Eileen suggested that we include a story or remark at the beginning of our meetings as a reminder of our mission statement and a how we affect change. This will be included on our next agenda.

Welcome to our newest member, Alison Voss, representing Mason County. We continue to look for additional Lewis County board members. Reviewing pending applications.

Senior Center Directors Updates, Challenges, Successes During Pandemic

Brian Windrope, Director of Senior Services for South Sound

Covid challenges: they have been very conservative in their approach to re-opening facilities. They opened July 2 in Lacey and Olympia, requiring proof of vaccination. Angela Hock is a safety ambassador, who are on the front lines, verifying vaccine cards.

Survey for seniors (500+) show that more than 90% of respondents self-report that they are fully vaccinated; 70% said they would not return unless all others were also vaccinated. The decision to vaccinate all employees, volunteers, drivers, vendors, etc. was made based on this survey.

Challenge came with delta variant with the unvaccinated, and our community is at greater risk. In addition to requiring vaccinations, masks have been reinstated as well. Staff is already following the mask mandate, regardless of vaccination status.

The problem is that there are a finite number of volunteers and requiring all of them to be verifiably vaccinated poses one more obstacle. The biggest challenge is the anxiety/stress/pressure to stay open and find volunteers.

Most programs are up and running in a more limited capacity. Liberty and public health are hard to balance right now. Anti-vaxxers are not being served. If they are not vaccinated but want a meal, there are options for those people. Nobody is being denied meals.

Discontinuing congregate meal program in Belfair and Shelton. Need commercial kitchen in Mason County so they can continue to do the meals on wheels. Please send your suggestions and/or contacts. Meals on wheels enrollment was as high as 500 due to extended eligibility. Now down to 400, but still larger than ever. Eligibility requirements for meals on wheels is age 60+, homebound, and unable to prepare a meal for themselves (need help with at least one activity of daily living).

Question from Bill Bezanson: do congregate meal participants need vaccination cards?

Answer: Yes. Also, socially distanced dining as well. "Mask off to eat, mask on to talk."

Howard: how many meals a month? Lacey has had as many as 100 people show up for lunch, averages 50. Olympia is currently around 25-35, which is an effect of the pandemic.

Need more volunteer drivers to deliver meals.

Still looking at partnering with the Tumwater Senior Center.

The effects of the pandemic and isolation are very apparent in the mental and physical decline in many of the seniors they know. But the population that participates in the programs are very pleased and happy to be involved.

Reports/Committee Updates

Thurston County: Angela reported that the classes being offered online are effective, very inexpensive, and valuable.

Socialization and Engagement – Eileen McKenzieSullivan, Vice-Chair
Committee will meet on Monday, 9/6/2021

Grand Pad: doing some zoom meetings so they know how to use it. Sharing info with the clients on resources. Communicating about their QOL. Has proven to be a very beneficial and positive tool.

Start date was 2/26/2021. At the end of 6 months, which was the length of our pilot program, we need to evaluate and determine next steps. Problems include: no email (for their protection) and if internet access is spotty, the video connection is problematic.

Bill Bezanson: True Connect is a phone company that provides seniors with free phones and phone services.

Advocacy & Legislative Updates – Michelle Horaney

Committee Meetings & Session starts January 2022. The 3 main areas of concern/projects are: 1. Get funding 2. Changing the personal needs allowance, 3. Presumptive eligibility.

Will send around the presentation on how to reach out to legislatures. It's easy as picking up the phone and being authentic. Script/talking points will be circulated too.

[WA Cares](#) is not just for nursing home care. Long Term Care Services is another name for the service that helps people understand this. Seniors who make \$48k and under can get assistance on their taxes. It is 58 cents per \$100. The cost is far less than purchasing long term care insurance. Opting out is an option.

Executive Director's Report – Nicole Kiddoo

W4A is offering training in September on the 3 priorities Michelle listed in September. Materials with easy talking points is being circulated.

In October the W4A conference, we will hear from Bob Blancato's federal perspective. Look for email invite to attend the training.

Not recommending changes to our area plan in a way that changes our original plan, which the pandemic deterred.

Need to take a new photo of council for the website. Will do at next meeting. Lori put on agenda.

LMTAAA Area Plan 2022 – Jemma Williamson

The area plan is a 4-year plan. Today is the 2-year update.

[Link to Area Plan Document](#)

Will add in the Grand Pads plan to the area plan document.

Need AC approval on the area plan, then approval from COG. Likely ready to review the 2nd Wednesday in November. Propose move the AC meeting to accommodate.

We need to have a public hearing and we will have ready for review the 2nd wed in Nov, so maybe postpone to second week in November. After AC approves, then COG approves.

Glenn asked how is the council participating in the new plan? Nicole: would like to include the council in the focus groups activities. Will need to schedule this meeting before the October meeting.

Hybrid work model. 2 day a week in-office, the rest remote. Return to office work was pushed from October 1 to Jan 3, 2022, because of the delta variant. There is also a push to get back to in-person visits.

Next Advisory Council Meeting

Advisory Council Meetings will continue via teleconferencing until further notice. The next scheduled meeting will be on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, at 9:30 a.m., via Zoom.

Adjournment

Glen Harper called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bill Bezanson made the motion to adjourn, and Eileen McKenzie-Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 am.

Submitted by: Lori Thom, Administrative Secretary