



COG Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2023

Members present: Commissioner Arne Mortensen, COG Chair Commissioner Richard Mahar, Councilor Sue Marshall, Commissioner Lori Zoller

Members present by phone/Zoom: Commissioner Dan Cothren

Members absent:

Alternates present:

Staff present: Mike Reardon, Claire Steiner, Karen Wolfe, Shari Moore

Advisory Council member present: Gavin Carmichael, Vice Chair (via zoom)

Visitors present: AAADSW Staff members Erica Hoapili, Ivonne McGuire, Karen Schnitzer, Amberly Rose, Matt Gustofson, Sandy Phillips, and Jennifer Robarge

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by COG Chair Mahar.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. Agenda Review: Mike added an agenda item to discuss before the Executive session. He will propose a COLA adjustment for staff in 2024.

2. Review of Minutes: Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve the September 22, 2023 minutes. Marshall seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Public Comment (3-minute limit): none

4. Anniversary Recognition: Mike reported on the anniversary celebrants this month.

- Erica Hoapili, 5 years – Erica thanked Mike and the COG for the recognition. She started with AAADSW as an IP specialist, then moved to Case Management in the Medicaid program and now works as a community Services Case Manager. She is looking forward to 2024.
 - Emily Riley, 5 years. Emily is off on Fridays and could not attend today.
 - Ivonne McGuire, 10 years- Ivonne started in Vancouver office as a Medicaid Case Manager and then moved to Longview Medicaid Case Management. She now works as a Community Services Case Manager. Ivonne thanked the COG for the recognition.
 - Karen Schnitzer, 10 years – Karen is so thankful to the agency and what we do for our community. She started as a Medicaid Case Manager, then moved to Community Services Case Management. In 2022 she moved to a Program Coordinator role for the of MAC/TSOA program
 - Amberly Rose, 10 years – Amberly had gotten her 2nd degree and found a job at the agency as an IP specialist, then Care Coordinator, then Care Coordination Supervisor, and now is the Health Home Lead Program Coordinator.
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- Matt Gustofson, 15 years – Matt is also retiring today. He is the Accounts Payable Specialist. Matt also picks up trash in the parking lot. He once found a set of dentures and was finally able to reunite them with their owner, thanks to Sandy's help. Matt recollected how small the agency was when he started. He also appreciates all the benefits for him and his family, and all the great people he's worked with.
- Sandy Phillips, 15 years – Sandy had followed the agency before she moved from California. She stated it's a privilege to work here, and appreciates the Advisory Council, the COG, and the stable management.
- Jennifer Robarge, 20 years – Jennifer has had both her children since she started working for the agency. Her son had leukemia when he was a little boy. He is now top of his class and has received many scholarships. She was able to keep her job and appreciated the flexibility through her family's struggles. She appreciates all the great coworkers and supervisors, and the great opportunities to help people every day. She is now managing the GOSH clients who can be very challenging.

5. Director's report: Mike thanked the COG for attending today.

- W4a meetings – Mike is proud to say the perseverance with AL TSA over the WA Cares program has succeeded as they are now going to have the AAAs to manage the intake of those clients. Scope of work still to be developed. Mike is very thankful.
- Legislative priorities – partnering with the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) to advocate for House Bill 1859 to apply the same rights of nursing home clients to Assisted living and Adult family home clients. The bill would give those residents the right to accessible notices, right to not have an unlawful discharge. Commissioner Mahar asked how prevalent the problems are. Mike says the issue is great enough that the LTCOP is advocating for this change. Commissioner Mortensen expressed concerns that the owners of facilities are forced to keep a client they don't want any longer. Mike will get the data to Commissioner Mortensen. Commissioner Mahar asked if the client has a contract with the facility. Commissioner Zoller shared that often there is nowhere else for them to go. W4a has also joined with Northwest Harvest et al to increase nutrition funding for older adults via a budget proviso. The funding will be contracted out through our service providers. The pandemic afforded us the opportunity to work more closely with Food Banks. Demand is going up quite a lot. Mike elaborated that he did a home delivered meals ride along with Lower Columbia College in Cowlitz County. Some people paid for their meals. Many of their living situations were pretty dire. Also went out with the Meals on Wheels (MOWP) driver and some of the client situations were heartbreaking. It was good for Mike to see how much of an impact these programs have on their clients.
- Contracts report – nothing out of the ordinary. We do have a new home delivered meals provider – Home Style Direct LLC, for Medicaid clients. It is for all five counties and clients receive 1 meal per day. Meals are delivered via UPS (like Hello Fresh) which is especially helpful for rural communities. Service started 11/1/23.
- Management Team calendar – 6 Area Plan public meetings. Attendance was low. Also meetings with our BnK Construction.
- Mike shared a video, Bob's Story, for Oral Health Care clinics. Originally Partnered with UW students & Community Health Partners, the program has now expanded to Clark County with Battle Ground Health Care.

Commissioner Mortensen shared his concerns of the cost of MOWP rate per meal, that perhaps taxpayers are being abused by the costs of the services when so much of the service is done by volunteers. Has a concern that the opportunity costs get lost in the equation. Commissioner Zoller

shared that as a new commissioner she has had to become involved with the State and she sees the problem has to do with “overcollection”. Mike explained that we contract with MOWP and then we monitor the program. We reimburse costs, under the Older Americans Act. Medicaid clients are under a different MOWP program that costs \$8.50 per meal. Volunteers are reimbursed for their mileage, though many do not claim the reimbursement. Councilor Marshall expressed that we should focus on the programs we administer to make sure they are running properly but fraud, waste and abuse oversight can swing the other way and cause delays for people in accessing the benefits. Commissioner Mahar agrees the issues are important but we are not going to solve them today.

6. Advisory Council: No regular meeting in October, instead the Advisory Council attended the Fall Senior (virtual) Conference. A statistical researcher from the State presented on the demographics of the State and the growth of the older citizens population. 85+ is the largest growing population segment in Washington. Numbers of caregivers per person will be half what it is now, by 2040. Amie is confident that AAADSW has the creativity and the drive to tackle these opportunities. The council approved the 2024-2027 Area Plan and approved a slate of officers for next year’s council.

7. Review of Financials. Fiscal Manager Claire Steiner reviewed the September and October 2023 expenditures of \$1,997,538 and \$1,888,103 respectively. September was pretty normal. Claire reviewed the October expenses. Bills that come in every six months (for example) are shown as prepaid and then amortized over the months. Commissioner Zoller asked about the rent for the White Salmon building, which is actually now in Goldendale. Claire will follow up.

Councilor Marshall moved to approve the September and October 2023 expenditures of \$1,997,538 and \$1,888,103 respectively. Commissioner Mortensen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Claire reviewed the August 2023 financial statement. More good news. Net position is on the increase. Negative State revenue due to correcting Health Home Lead revenue and expenses for the first 6 months of 2023. On track for budgeted revenue, and under budget for expenditures. Mike explained that the unit rate we receive from the State is what allows us to grow our fund balance. We operate under the unit rate by operating efficiently. Council Marshall elaborated that this will continue to grow our fund balance. Mike explained that one of our goals is to provide supports to delay entry into the Medicaid program. We spent \$111k of Fund Balance in August.

Claire reviewed the September 2023 financial statement. September is also positive in all regards. We are at 75% of our budget goal, under budget in expenses. We spent \$83k of Fund Balance in August.

Claire reviewed the September 2023 Fiscal dashboards. We did not receive our Case Management caseload for July so it was left out of this dashboard. Medicaid TXIX is steady with some growth from the beginning of the year. Community Services has grown. Care Coordination is on a slight decrease. Fund Balance was previously approved at \$17,700,000 spread over 3 components.

8. Resolution #2023-6. Claire presented Resolution #2023-6, appointing IT Manager Tony Velasco as check signer for the two imprest accounts at US Bank.

Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve Resolution #2023-6, appointing IT Manager Tony Velasco as check signer to the two AAADSW imprest bank accounts with US Bank. Councilor Marshall seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Mortensen asked if there is a risk of only having one authorized signer. Claire explained that there are other internal controls that prevent fraudulent checks.

9. Claire presented the GASB report for 2024. She then reviewed the upcoming GASBs for 2024. GASB 94 does not apply to us. GASB 96 regarding subscription based IT arrangements, will bring all of our IT arrangements onto our balance sheets. We are reviewing, evaluating and working with our outside CPA to determine if we need to report any to our financials. GASB 99 will mostly have no affect on AAADSW. GASB 101 will affect us regarding compensated absences; i.e. sick leave, emergency leave policy, which may need to be added the balance sheet on the liability side. The State Auditor's Office is still working on providing guidance. Timeline to implement is for fiscal years beginning in 2024. Claire also reported on GASB's technical agenda overview.

10. Christina and Claire presented the 2024 - 2027 Area Plan and Budget. Christina reviewed the Area Plan Executive Summary. 299 client surveys were returned, representing all five counties. The most unmet needs were: help with yard care, fitness or wellness programs, and information and referral services. Required areas for the Area Plan to address: 1. Healthy Aging The goals include a variety of programs to achieve the goals to further these needs. 2. Expanding and strengthening services and supports to prevent or delay entry into Medicaid funded Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS). 3. Person-centered home and community-based services. 4. 7.01 planning with Native American tribes and tribal orgs.

Claire explained that the Area Plan Budget is done yearly for each of the four years covered by the Area Plan. Overall, the budget decreased from the 2023 Area Plan budget due to changes in accounting for Health Home Lead from gross to net.

Councilor Marshall moved to approve the 2024-2027 Area Plan and Budget. Commissioner Zoller seconded. Motion passed.

11. Mike presented the 2024 COG Meeting schedule for approval.

Commissioner Zoller moved to approve the 2024 COG Meeting Schedule as presented. Councilor Marshall and Commissioner Cothren seconded. Motion passed.

12. Mike presented the 2024 COLA adjustments for staff. Mike explained that the formula to come up with the COLA – 90% of the July-June CPI, which is 2.5 %. Will be effective for all staff members on 1/1/24. Commissioner Mortensen stated he thinks that the COLA is too low. Do we have the authority to provide more? Shari provided data from the Conference board. 400+ companies are projecting an average: 4.1% COLA increase. The COG asked Claire if the budget could absorb a higher COLA. She confirmed it could but would decrease fund balance.

Commissioner Mortensen suggested 3.5%. Councilor Marhsall supports a higher COLA.

Mike added that management is considering competition with the State for higher wages. Shari

and Claire both confirm they feel we are losing our competitive edge. Pay and advancement opportunities are the two main issues. Commissioner Cothren recommended we give as much as we can to ensure retention. Wahkiakum is in a hole right now and can't afford to give a COLA adjustment this year.

**Commissioner Mortensen moved to adopt a 3.5% COLA adjustment for 2024.
Councilor Marshall seconded. Motion passed.**

13. The COG adjourned for an Executive Session at 3:07 p.m.

The COG returned from Executive Session at 3:18 p.m.

14. Commissioner Mahar reported that the COG agreed with Mike's self-evaluation, but he should have marked himself higher on communication with the board. They agreed to a one step increase.

**Commissioner Zoller moved to approve Executive Director Mike Reardon's
performance review with a one-step increase effective December 16, 2023.
Councilor Marshall seconded. Motion passed.**

15. Good of the order. None

16. Adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.
