



COG Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2022

Members present: Commissioner Richard Mahar, Chair, Councilor Richard Rylander, Commissioner Arne Mortensen

Members present by phone/Zoom: Commissioner Dan Cothren, Commissioner Dave Sauter

Members absent: none

Alternates present: none

Staff present: Mike Reardon, Monty Hansen, Karen Wolfe, Whitney Oswald, Shari Moore, Chasity Charette, Nik Thanasouk, Cyndi Doolin

Advisory Council member present: Arnie Dyer, Chair

Visitors present: Lauren Read, Mobility Management Coordinator for the Wahkiakum Cowlitz Council of Governments.

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 p.m. by Commissioner Mahar.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

1. Agenda Review: Karen noted one change to the agenda, Resolution #2022-3, added this morning. No other changes.

2. Review of Minutes: Commissioner Sauter moved to approve the July 22, 2022 minutes. Commissioner Cothren seconded the motion. Commissioner Mahar noted that Karen does an excellent job on the minutes, above the call of duty. Some of the best minutes he sees regularly. Councilor Rylander prefers the detail. Motion carried.

3. Anniversary recognition: Mike announced two five-year anniversaries: Christina Rose and Chasity Charette; three ten-year anniversaries: Nik Thanasouk, Cyndi Doolin and Mary Ann Shaw; and one fifteen-year anniversary, Kay Mueller. Chasity is thankful for being hired and for the opportunities to advance in her career. She has enjoyed the last five years. Mike shared about Cyndi Doolin's job as a care coordinator, and that she bills a lot each month. Cindy thanked the COG for their commitment to the organization and thanked for freedom of choice around vaccinations. Nik is thankful to be here and for his position and will continue to do his best to serve the staff.

4. Introduction of new Human Resources manager. Mike introduced our new Human Resources Manager Shari Moore, to the board. Shari is glad to be here. She spent many years in high-tech and then went to non-profits, including the Institute on Aging in San Francisco and a Portland non-profit. She is looking forward to working with everyone. Commissioner Mortensen noted he worked very closely with the HR manager at Qualcomm and can appreciate Shari's work in the high tech world. Commissioner Mahar added that after 6 years in government he

appreciates the unique work of Human Resources. When he met Shari for her interview she was smiling and he is glad to see she still is.

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

5. Executive Director's report:

- Longview Office Staff Safety – there have been seven incidents since February with the public/transients/homeless near the office and/or parking lot. In March we wrote a letter to the management company. They added some signage and lighting, and also added an on-call porter when needed. In the last couple of months we have had more incidents and we are sending a letter asking for another meeting to request 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. full-time security from a legitimate security company. Councilor Rylander asked if there are any cameras. Mike reported there are not. He suggested we might ask the property management that they add cameras. Commissioner Mortensen is a bit concerned that we are leaning on the landlord as their hands are tied too. He suggested leaning on the City Council regarding the Alabama Street encampment. Mike noted the letter we wrote in March was also provided to the City Council. Councilor Rylander asked if we have a plan B for a new location. Monty noted we can't get out of the lease without paying the remaining term of lease payments. Councilor Rylander noted that sometimes the threat is helpful. Commissioner Mortensen suggested talking to the Longview Chief of Police. Monty added that the building has other issues that have been ongoing. Mike suggested we might find space at the old 3 Rivers Mall.
- Vancouver Office buildout – The last empty section of the Vancouver building is scheduled to be built out. We expect an 8-10% growth in Medicaid case management in the next 3-5 years, along with the reduction of case load ratios. 2023-2024 we also expect to see a growth in the Care Coordination program. Monty noted we're about 5-6 weeks out from commencement of the project. Commissioner Mortensen noted if the County buys and rents out the building in Longview they can bypass some of the procurement rules. Monty said we tried to do that in Vancouver and federal rules prevented that from happening. Monty described the improvements being made to the Vancouver office. We're good in this building for another 2-4 years. Monty is also researching a previous clause in the old Vancouver lease where the landlord shared some of the cost of the construction.
- Senior Drug Round table with Senator Patty Murray – August 17th. Senator Murray's staff reached out to us for host a round table. Karen Wolfe did an excellent job organizing the event. Participants were Cass Freedland of the Clark Commission on Aging, Bridgette Fahnbulleh of the NAACP (past President) and retired Vancouver Housing Authority employee, Lisa Bayautet (past AAADSW Advisory Council member) and Pat Cano (current Advisory Council member and LULAC member).
- W4A – Lots of discussion this month about Legislative priorities and decision packages that AL TSA is putting forward for the next legislative session. Items for advocacy include indexing the rates tied to inflation and baked into the maintenance budget, increasing the residential personal needs allowance (from \$75 to \$100) for those residing in assisted living, nursing homes, Skilled Nursing Facilities and Adult family homes, and housing for seniors at risk of or experiencing homelessness and using hotel rooms as temporary housing.
- Communications – Mike highlighted an article in the Columbian on AAADSW's Long Term Care Ombudsman program. He also highlighted another article about our partnership with the Battle Ground healthcare free clinic. We have given them a grant to provide dental care to uninsured seniors

- Cowlitz Wahkiakum Senior Heroes – Mike shared photos of the Cowlitz Wahkiakum Senior Heroes awards presentations. Myron and Mary Nelson were presented the Community Hero award and Mike described the many activities they have been involved with over the years; Dave Rordon received the Senior Champion award for his legal services to seniors and the homeless; Diane Hollenback was presented with the Caregiver of the Year award. Mike also noted that Myron and Mary’s daughter is their family caregiver and lives with them full time. The Senior Heroes committee consisted of Advisory Council members Diane Craft and Pearl Blackburn, AAADSW Community Services supervisor Kelli Sweet, and Tammy Davies of Lower Columbia Cap.

6. Contracts Report – Whitney Oswald presented SOPPADA #2022-7 for the establishment of revised Contracts policies and procedures. She asked the COG to approve the updated and revised internal contracting procedures. Comm Mortensen asked for an example. Whitney reported that every other year her team does a focused monitoring of our subcontractors, and we have added an annual risk assessment to determine the level of monitoring we will do. It actually makes it less burdensome to the contractors since their risk assessment may determine they don’t need a comprehensive review. AL TSA has provided a risk assessment tool with 8 risk factors to determine the risk. Most of it is focused on client health and safety and Monty gave some examples of the risk factors – how much unsupervised contact with clients, how many different contracts the subcontractor has with the State, do they subcontract out any of the work. Comm Mortensen asked if there is auditing of expenses. Monty reported that he looks at that. Mike noted that the comprehensive monitoring was very exhaustive and it took staff a whole day, oftentimes with additional documentation required.

Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve SOPPADA #2022-7 for the establishment of revised Contracts policies and procedures. Councilor Rylander seconded the motion. Motion carried.

7. Advisory Council: Arnie gave some examples of the monthly check-ins from our AC members from September’s meeting. Joanne Baker’s volunteering with SHIBA. Jenn Wright connecting the Food Gleaners with the Senior Meal site in Stevenson for extra food supplies like flour. Kathy Briggs is also working with the local food bank and the senior meal site and advocating for better handicapped parking in Cathlamet. Jodi Oliver does her advocacy through her work with Kaiser. Sandy Bacus gives out lots of the tri-fold brochures. Gavin was nominated to SCOA and Pearl active with Senior Heroes Awards. Commissioner Mortensen asked about the handicapped parking – what’s the next step? Mike elaborated on the parking issue in Cathlamet and is not sure what the next step is. Mike noted that when the AC brings something to the staff we then reach out to partner agencies etc. to get a better idea of the issue and solutions. Arnie reported on the presentation from Neil and the importance of all the programs. Senior Lobby Day in the Fall will be virtual again this year. Mike reported that Karen does a great job making arrangements for our Advisory Council members to attend the conference. The Advisory Council is also working on a Staff appreciation event in December to recognize our staff. Commissioner Mortensen suggested we could fund the staff appreciation event from the Advisory Council. Monty noted that the program is proscribed by the Older Americans Act so we have to be careful of how we spend money.

Arnie shared Marianne Burkholder's goals for the council and reported that she was unanimously elected by the Council on September 21st to represent Wahkiakum County on the Advisory Council, and asked for the COG's approval.

Commissioner Cothren moved to approve Marianne Burkholder to join the Advisory Council effective October 1, 2022, representing Wahkiakum County. Commissioner Mortensen and Commission Sauter seconded the motion. Motion carried.

8. Review of Financials. Monty Hansen reviewed the July 2022 and August 2022 expenditures of \$2,027,991.56 and \$2,358,204.42 respectively. Monty added a column to the report for the function code with a legend to provide more description of the expenses. Advertising related to recruiting new Long Term Care Ombudsman Program volunteers, and website expenses, reduction in Fund Balance expenses. August was a bit higher – one time expenses and higher subcontractor expenses, payment for the State Auditor's Office audit, and AAADSW attendees of the USAging national conference. Fund Balance expenses were a bit higher.

Commissioner Cothren moved to approve the July 2022 and August 2022 expenditures of \$2,027,991.56 and \$2,358,204.42. Councilor Rylander seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Monty reviewed the June and July 2022 financial statements. June had a record high of Fund Balance expenditures and the resulting Fund Balance surplus was down. July had a much higher Fund Balance surplus, due to the higher reimbursement from the state for Medicaid TXIX cases. Commissioner Mahar asked if the Fund Balance surplus will be \$250,000 per month. Monty said it could be up to \$300,000 per month. Mike noted we'll see it drop a bit as we hire more staff and we have more costs.

Monty reviewed the July 2022 Fiscal dashboard. We run well below budget on program expenditures and about normal on revenue. We're tracking about where Monty has projected. Medicaid TXIX and Care Coordination caseloads are going up and down a bit from month to month but nothing out of the ordinary. Community Services clients are increasing due to increases in ADRC calls. Councilor Rylander asked if more calls equates to the current financial climate with respect to inflation. Mike reported that rent and utility bills are the biggest calls we get from the community about meeting expenses. Monty feels we do a good job. Councilor Rylander asked about getting jobs staffed. Shari noted we get more applicants but not all are qualified. She wants to be more proactive in developing a pipeline in having a pool of applicants. Councilor Rylander asked if we coordinate with Workforce. They have the ability to fund programs to train and prepare job seekers. Shari reported she doesn't currently and wants to form relationships with the local schools and universities. On average it's taking us 60-90 days to fill openings. Our interview process is pretty streamlined. Commissioner Mortensen will chat with Shari off-line about the interview process.

9. State Auditor's Office audit of AAADSW's 2020/2021 Financials. Monty presented the State Auditor's Office audit of AAADSW's 2020/2021 Financials. We're required to present

Pensions and leases debts on our balance sheets. At the end of 2021 we had excess of revenue over expenses of \$1,950,476 and final Fund Balance of \$9,911,354.

Councilor Rylander moved to approve the State Auditor's Office audit of AAADSW's 2020/2021 Financials. Commissioner Mortensen seconded the motion. Commissioner Mahar noted how well the agency's exit interview went and was very impressed. Mike gave kudos to Karen for the auditors' recognition of how she organizes the COG meetings and follows the Open Public Meetings Act and all the documentation. Motion carried.

10. 2022 Internal Operating Budget Revisions. Monty presented requested revisions to the 2022 Internal Operating Budget of \$29,628,343 (increase of \$1,486,268), including staffing up to 207.3 FTE and use of \$1,900,574 in Fund Balance. Revenue increases are mostly due to Medicaid TXIX rate increases and a correction of the ARPA expenses. Reduced revenue for Care Coordination but we will still break even. Expenditures increase by \$1,486,268. Increase FTE from 205.5 to 207.3. The FTE positions are not currently funded and will be filled next year.

Commissioner Cothren moved to approve the 2022 Revised Internal Operating Budget of \$29,628,343, including staffing up to 207.3 FTE and use of \$1,900,574 in Fund Balance. Commissioner Sauter seconded the motion. Councilor Rylander asked what the average percent wage increase will be. Monty noted the standard step increases are 2.5%. Councilor Rylander asked if we have sufficient funding for wage increases based on the current wage climate. Mike noted with the rate increases from the State we are in a good position as to funding. We are going to move the Case Managers and Care Coordinators range up one band to remain competitive with Home and Community Services (HCS). The State (HCS) will be getting a 4% increase next July. In January we'll have a 4.5% COLA. Monty noted we are being very cautious with respect to wage increases and possibly looking at some kind of bonus. Mike noted we are doing a salary study for all the positions in the agency. Councilor Rylander noted the County is doing a six-month salary study. Monty welcomes any questions at any time. **Motion carried.**

11. SOPPADA #2022-8 to revise Fund Balance Policy. Monty presented SOPPADA #2022-8 to revise the Fund Balance Policy to include changes to Component #3 and establish the 2022 Fund Balance limit of \$12,897,725. Monty has concerns that the Fund Balance policy is not workable and we are generating a lot of surplus. We are making great strides in the problem. The proposal will permanently solve the problem. Monty described the three components of the Fund Balance and proposed we adjust Component 3 only. The component will float based on the reality of our performance and we will always be within the limit and Monty will always report the status of the Fund Balance limit. Councilor Rylander asked how often we will come back with reporting. Monty estimates probably 2-3 times a year (May, September and the end of the year) with official updates to the limit. Councilor Rylander asked what the risk would be if we didn't advance this proposal? Monty said we might get a finding from the State Auditor's Office or ALTSA.

Councilor Rylander moved to approve SOPPADA #2022-8 to revise the Fund Balance Policy to include Component #3 changes and approve an estimated 2022 Fund Balance limit of \$12,897,725. Commissioner Mortensen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

12. SOPPADA #2022-9 for Revisions to Fiscal Policies and Procedures. Monty presented SOPPADA #2022-9 to revise the Fiscal Policies and Procedures, Travel Reimbursement and Rental Car Usage policy. With inflation our travel expenses need to be increased to keep us within the limits. He proposes increasing breakfast expense from \$15 to \$19, lunch expense from \$19 to \$25, dinner expense from \$29 to \$36. Increase hotel expenses in Puget Sound to \$200 and other areas to \$160. Sales tax will now be included in the limits. Rental car reservations will now need to be made at least 1 week ahead in order to get full reimbursement. Councilor Rylander asked if we are required to pay out of pocket for rental cars. Monty reported we have an account with Enterprise.

Commissioner Cothren moved to approve SOPPADA #2022-9 to revise the Fiscal Policies and Procedures, Travel Reimbursement and Rental Car Usage policy. Commissioner Mortensen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

13. Client Support Fund. Mike presented a proposal to revise the start of the July-approved Client Support Fund program to begin in October 2022 rather than in Q1 2023. We have some client needs that need to be addressed that are not covered by Medicaid. Monty noted the anticipated change is included in the budget.

Councilor Rylander moved to approve revising the start of the Client Support Fund program to begin in Q4 2022 rather than in Q1 2023. Commissioners Cothren and Sauter seconded the motion. Motion carried.

14. Resolution #2022-3, Credit Card changes. Monty presented proposed credit card changes. Our bank has suggested some changes to our credit card accounts which will give us more security and flexibility to make changes. No additional costs. Our bill is paid every month so there are no interest fees accrued. Monty noted the bank requested this be approved by a COG resolution.

Commissioner Mortensen moved to approve Resolution #2022-3 Credit Card Changes. Commissioner Cothren seconded the motion. Motion carried.

15. Adjourn. There being no further business, Councilor Rylander moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Sauter seconded. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.