



COG Meeting Minutes
June 2, 2023

Members present: Commissioner Mahar, Councilor Marshall, Commissioner Zoller, Commissioner Mortensen

Members present by phone/Zoom:

Members absent: Commissioner Cothren

Alternates present: none

Staff present: Mike Reardon, Claire Steiner, Karen Wolfe

Advisory Council member present: Arnie Dyer, Chair by Zoom

Visitors present: AAADSW Staff members Irina Ryan, Wendy Gabalis, Mandy Soderlund, Katie Pedersen, Lori Sinclair, Nellya Zornes, and Joyce Scudder.

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. Agenda Review: no changes

2. Review of Minutes: **Councilor Marshall moved to approve the March 24, 2023 minutes. Commissioner Mortensen seconded the motion. Motion carried.** Commissioner Mahar reemphasized his appreciation for Karen's minutes.

Councilor Marshall moved to approve the April 27, 2023 minutes. Commissioner Mortensen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

4. Anniversary Recognition

Mike introduced the anniversary celebrants this month.

- Irina Ryan, 5 years, via zoom. Irina thanked the COG. She very much enjoys working with the agency and she is very happy. She noted the time has gone by fast.
- Wendy Gabalis, 5 years - Wendy expressed her thanks to the COG.
- Mandy Soderlund, 5 years – Mandy started as a receptionist and now works in Care Coordination. She is very thankful and grateful for the Agency supporting her development. She noted that Mike knows what he's doing. She appreciates that he is a man of faith and he has given her a lot of peace regarding the future of the agency.
- Deawn Herrmann, 5 years (excused, respite caregiving for family member)
- Katie Pedersen, 5 years, via zoom. Katie works in the Longview office as a Care Coordinator. The time has gone by so fast. Katie stated it has been a good experience and she appreciates being able to do meaningful work and make an impact. She enjoys her

great coworkers, they were very welcoming and they have a lot of fun. She also enjoys working with her clients, and appreciates the support from the COG.

- Lori Sinclair, 5 years – Lori had never done social services but has a degree in it. She saw the ad in the newspaper and thought it was a perfect job for her. Mike congratulated Lori.
- Neil Degerstedt, 10 years (excused, on vacation in Alaska)
- Nellya Zornes, 15 years, via Zoom. Nellya is retiring at the end of the month. She thanked everyone for the opportunity to be part of the agency. It's been fun and a good time, and she will miss everyone.
- Joyce Scudder, 25 years. Joyce has spent most of those years in Medicaid case management as a case aide. She started originally with the Human Services Council. She is now in Fiscal. She is not ready to retire; she really loves it here. She noted she hasn't had to fill out a job application in a very long time. Joyce stated she enjoys all the great coworkers and appreciates the benefits.

5. Director's report: At the end of April Mike went to Washington D.C. for the USAging Policy briefing and conference. There were many presentations on federal programs. Washington State leads the way in the United States in providing services to Seniors. He's proud that we already have a lot of programs in place that are new to other AAAs. He attended a session on the ongoing caregiver crisis, which was especially informative. The caregiver crisis is having a big impact on clients, especially getting them out of the hospitals. CMS continues to prioritize Social Determinants of Health. Mike noticed at his last doctor appointment they had a survey on some of these issues like transportation and food insecurity. We already work with MCOs to address a lot of these issues. While in D.C. Mike met with staff for Senators Cantwell and Murray and had an in-person visit with Congresswoman Marie Gluesenkamp Perez. These visits centered on continuing to build relationships.

W4a monthly meetings – The State and W4a are reworking the Case Management unit rate for Medicaid clients (5,000 in our service area); we get a per member, per month rate. The rate hasn't been adjusted in over 20 years and w4a is spending lots of time working on updates. Mike expects our rate will go down slightly (from \$234 to \$222 per client per month). They are using the Bureau of Labor Statistics data. Currently the rate has been high due to extra COVID money. Will be about a \$500k-\$600k loss to our bottom line annually. No layoffs expected. W4a is also working on the intrastate funding formula for State money for the OAA programs. Mike expects a \$70k annual decrease, mainly due to population shifts from east of the state to the Puget sound area and NW WA. Mike is not overly concerned. Councilor Marshall asked if the new rates will be stable for awhile. Mike reported that the unit rate will be reviewed annually with current BLS data and the formula used by the State will be incorporated into ongoing State budgets. It may be indexed for Cost of Living. Care Coordination is getting a 24% increase in July from \$244 to \$308 per month. We've been breaking even up until now. Later in the summer we will analyze the impact of these rate changes and do some forecasting. Councilor Marshall asked if there was a focus on family caregivers. Mike reported that there is a federal ask for double the funding for family caregiver support. Councilor Marshall asked how great the need is and how many family members are affected. Mike noted that 80% of the caregiving in Washington is provide by unpaid family caregivers and there are over 800K family caregivers in the State.

Area Plan – Mike reported we are in the process of developing our 4 year area plan for 2024-2027. We will hold public meetings in all 5 counties in mid- to- late August through early September. COG

members will be invited and welcome to attend. At the hearings we will present a high-level overview of the Area Plan priorities for the next 4 years. We will submit the Area Plan to the COG for approval at an upcoming COG meeting.

Contracts – we have a new homecare agency contractor. Also doing lots of monitoring. We have over 110 contracts, all needing to be monitored.

Management team calendar – Mike highlighted the Ripple Impact event – Ripple NW is a non-profit that does fundraising, headed by Jeannie Kojis and Heidi Bixby. This event was focused on older adults and services in Clark County. The audience was prospective donors, and the goal was to make them aware of needs in the county and what organizations they could give to. Three organizations then presented on their programs. Mike hopes the event will generate some additional funds for our non-profits.

Communications – May was Older Americans month and Mike expressed his appreciation to the Clark County Council for the recognition and proclamation.

Commissioner Zoller noted that Klickitat is focusing on mental health programs and what is provided for Seniors. She asked Mike what services are provided and where is the focus needed. Mike noted there is a lack of services in rural counties. He described the PEARLS program, which looks at clients with low or mild depression via a screening tool to determine who is eligible to work with PEARLS representatives for assistance. Sharon Carter has asked about bringing PEARLS to Klickitat.

6. Advisory Council: Arnie Dyer reported on the April and May 2023 Advisory Council meetings. One of our members Pearl Blackburn is moving forward with a program called Aging Unbound to highlight active seniors in our counties. Mike reported the plan is to submit them to the newspapers for recognition locally. Arnie gave an example: in Clark County Ren Wilson volunteers with the Living with Dignity program, doing minor home repairs. Ren is also a member of the Clark County Mens Shed. At the May meeting the Council had Sarah Revord present on our family caregivers program. Arnie was impressed at how many services are available. The Dementia Road Map is packed with ideas. Zinnia TV (www.zinniatv.com) has many channels especially for people with dementia and depression, and caregivers. Mike added that he has previously met the developer of the Zinnia site and the channel content.

7. Review of Financials. Fiscal Manager Claire Steiner reviewed the March and April 2023 expenditures of \$2,340,740 and \$2,370,037 respectively. She explained this report documents all of our cash outlays for the two months. The totals were pretty standard for both months. April was \$40k higher than March. Councilor Marshall asked if there was anything significant to account for the higher costs in April. Claire responded there was no out of the ordinary expense; it just comes down to the timing of when bills are paid. Commissioner Mahar asked about the fees for Robert Half recruiting. Mike explained they were for recruiting for a new Fiscal Manager. Using the recruiter made a big improvement in the quality of candidates. Mike noted we also used them for the payroll specialist position. He added that the fee we pay is negotiable and we only pay if we hire the recruiter's candidate.

Commissioner Zoller moved to approve the March and April 2023 expenditures of \$2,340,740 and \$2,370,037 respectively. Councilor Marshall seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Claire reviewed the February 2023 financial statement. Slightly under budget for February. Balance sheet was very strong.

Claire reviewed the March 2023 financial statement. On target for total revenue and we continue to be under budget for expenditures. Starting July 1st the Medicaid numbers will go down. It was asked if the expenditures were lower because we are not providing as much service? Claire reported the case load is flat. Mike noted we are still hiring for open positions so our numbers are a bit down. We are a bit below the 1:75 ratio. Caseloads will increase as we hire new staff. As caseloads increase we will have to hire more staff. Councilor Marshall asked about fund balance policy. Claire will be presenting a new FB policy later in the year. Karen will send her and Lori the current FB policy. Claire noted the income statement shows the planned Fund Balance spending. Claire reported the balance sheet is also strong.

Claire reviewed the February and March 2023 Fiscal dashboards. She plans to make some formatting adjustments to the dashboards for the July meeting. She will also add a dashboard for cash outlays to see the trends, monthly as compared to previous year. Caseloads went down in February due to it being a shorter month and fewer ADRC calls. Went back up in March. Commissioner Mahar asked about March benefits and taxes – Claire clarified that it was mainly taxes.

8. Resolution #2023-5, Updates to US Bank Master Services Agreement, to add COG Vice Chair Zoller to the US Bank Master Services Agreement. Claire explained the purpose of this resolution is for an additional COG member besides the COG Chair to have the ability to add or remove people to the banking Master Services agreement. Commissioner Zoller has agreed to be added to the agreement.

Councilor Marshall moved to approve Resolution #2023-5, Updates to US Bank Master Services Agreement, to add COG Vice Chair Zoller to the US Bank Master Services Agreement. Commissioner Mortensen seconded. Commissioner Zoller abstained. Motion carried.

9. Good of the order. Commissioner Zoller reported on the Assisted Living project in Klickitat. They have secured \$3.2 M in funding and have applied for another \$3M in capital funding. Senators Murray and Cantwell and Congressman Newhouse staff attended a recent meeting and understand the need. Mike asked how the Agency can support the effort. Commissioner Zoller stated a letter of support from the Agency would be helpful. She and Karen will connect on the contact person and a sample letter for the Agency to send.

Karen shared that she recently had her 9-year anniversary with the agency. The time has gone by quickly, she has learned so much about government, and enjoys working with the staff, the COG and the Advisory Council. Commissioner Mahar thanked Karen for her helpfulness, responsiveness and thoroughness.

10. Adjourn. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.