



LEWIS-MASON-THURSTON AREA AGENCY ON AGING

 LMTAAA.org

 (360) 664-0791

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Advisory Council

Draft Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, May 7, 2025

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

In Person & Via Zoom

Members Present:

Lewis County: Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair; Debbie Aust; Tim Wood; Willie Merryman; Nikki Storms.

Mason County: Glenn Harper.

Thurston County: Cat McGaffigan, Chair; Michele Horaney; Eileen McKenzieSullivan; Anna Schlecht.

Members Absent:

Becky Cronquist; Greg Rohr.

Staff Present:

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Lisa Bachmann, Senior Executive Assistant; Carrie Petit, Chief of Contracts and Planning; Donna Feddern, Chief of Programs & Services; Chrissy Franklin, Advisory Council Liaison; Kyle Sanchez, Planning Director; Valerie Aubertin, Community Supports Director; Julie Dasso, IT Director.

Visitors Present:

Liz Hicker, former Advisory Council member; Carol Brock, Timber River Board Chair.

Tribal Land Acknowledgement, *Cat McGaffigan, Chair*

Welcome and Introductions, *Cat McGaffigan, Chair*

Cat McGaffigan, Chair, welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

Approval of the May 7, 2025, Draft Agenda and April 2, 2025, Draft Minutes

A motion was entertained to approve the May draft agenda and April draft minutes by Cat McGaffigan, Chair. The motion was approved based on one change. A draft watermark must be added to the agenda. The motion was approved by Glenn Harper, seconded by Eileen McKenzieSullivan and passed unanimously.

Older Americans Month, *Cat McGaffigan, Chair & Chrissy Franklin, Advisory Council Liaison*

Chrissy Franklin, Advisory Council Liaison stated that each county is no longer signing proclamations for Older Americans Month and thanked Lewis County member Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair for creating a write up to honor Older Americans Month. Heidi Buswell and Debbie Aust attended a Lewis County Board of County Commissioners meeting to represent Older Americans Month by doing a reading on how important it is to honor May as Older Americans Month. Debbie stated she is also scheduled to attend a Chehalis City Council meeting and

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Napavine City Council meeting. Heidi stated she will be attending a Toledo City Council meeting. Members discussed that each county is no longer signing proclamations for Older Americans Month. Now they are encouraging community members to attend meetings and speak about the importance of acknowledging that May is Older Americans Month and why it's important that we honor it.

Executive Director Report, Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director, thanked the council members for their grassroots advocacy work and introduced the new Lewis County members. Lisa Bachmann, Senior Executive Assistant, spoke about the budget that was passed by our State Legislature and that Governor Ferguson has until May 17 to accept, suggest changes or veto. She also had good news to share: Senior Nutrition received one-time funding of \$27.9 million through June 30, 2027; Health Homes received one-time funding through the end of calendar year 2026; and Care Transitions funding was not cut. Unfortunately, Case Management had a 2% rate reduction ongoing, loss of \$27.9 million statewide. The reduction did not specify an adjustment to the case ratios. Dementia Catalyst was only funded at \$750,000 per year for all three sites, which is a 2/3 reduction in funding per site. The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Nursing Contract: \$200,000 was cut but this does not impact our Agency's contract with DDA. Nicole also shared about the WA Cares Fund and that Kyle Sanchez, Planning Director, will oversee the pilot project. Kyle will do a presentation for the Advisory Council members at a future meeting. Carrie Petit, Chief of Contracts and Planning, spoke about the draft copy of the Administration's Federal FY 2026 budget that was leaked to the media, indicating that the Administration intends to split the Older Americans Act (OAA) into two different agencies and may include cuts to several of the OAA programs, as well as other aging funding. The draft is connected to the ongoing, larger reorganization of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the dismantling of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) within HHS. This is not the final budget proposal or an official document, but there are parts that are concerning. Funding levels would still need to be approved by Congress. With a budget deadline of September 30, changes can be expected as they work through the budget reconciliation process. Nicole added that USAging is guiding the response of AAAs for these new developments. LMTAAA representatives are working closely with our national counterparts for a coordinated response. A council member suggested looking up the Administration for Community Living website (acl.gov) to receive information. Carrie discussed the reauthorization of Older American Act explaining it has expired but continues to be funded through the current Continuing Resolution. We are preparing for potential cuts to Medicaid and its impact on long-term services and supports. Nicole announced that the Senate is getting more calls and letters than they ever have from community members advocating for seniors across the nation. The need for continued advocacy efforts is extremely important and asked that everyone continue to call and write. Carrie spoke about the Policy and Legislative Team

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which supports the Agency's advocacy work. A council member shared another advocacy opportunity from LeadingAge asking the community to take action to support Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Funding.

Community Announcements & Updates

Glenn Harper reported he is hosting six Death Cafes a month now, and the dates and locations are on the Elderhood Senior Alliance website.

Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair, reported she is working on Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) in Lewis County. The goal to have it up and running is still on track for July.

Valerie Aubertin, Community Supports Director, reported that all the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) cards will be issued as the agency has received a lot of applications. Applications are available on the agency website or community members that qualify can call the agency and the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) department can help with the application process.

Cat McGaffigan, Chair, reported that the Senior Action Network is presenting the Dementia Conference on May 29 from 9am to 2pm at the Lacy Community Center and that LMTAAA will be there. Cat also reported that there is an Alzheimer's Association Caregiver Summit in Auburn on June 20 from 10am to 4pm.

Michele Horaney reported that a Housing Affordability Forum the City of Olympia is hosting in collaboration with the Council of Neighborhood Associations is on May 21 from 5:30pm to 8pm in Olympia City Hall Council Chambers.

Membership & Outreach Updates - Chrissy Franklin, Advisory Council Liaison reported that the Council of Governments meeting has been rescheduled to June 18 and at that time our County Commissioners will review and vote on the proposed revisions for amendment Article III – Membership Terms.

SCoA Meeting Report - Glenn Harper reported that at the most recent State Council on Aging (SCoA) meeting they discussed a program called BetterAge that helps improve the health and wellbeing of older adults around the world through insights and engagement. Glenn shared the website and spoke about the BetterAge Washington state Pilot Project.

Socialization & Engagement Committee – Donna Feddern, Chief of Programs & Services, reported that the Well Check (Mon Ami) program has started with a soft launch and is going well. There is information available on the Senior Services for South Sound website

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wellcheck@southsoundseiors.org. Donna reported that the agency is always looking into different organizations the agency may get involved with. Cat McGaffigan, Chair, reported that Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) started a program last year called Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience (GUIDE) Model. The program is a voluntary nationwide model test that aims to support people with dementia and their unpaid caregivers.

Adjournment

A motion was entertained by Glenn Harper to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Eileen McKenzieSullivan, and it was unanimously decided to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting will be June 4.

Minutes taken by

Chrissy Franklin, Advisory Council Liaison

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