



LEWIS-MASON-THURSTON AREA AGENCY ON AGING

 LMTAAA.org

 (360) 664-0791

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Advisory Council

Draft Meeting Minutes for Wednesday, March 5, 2025

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

In Person & Via Teams

Members Present:

Lewis County: Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair; Debbie Aust.

Mason County: Glenn Harper.

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

Members Absent:

Becky Cronquist; Greg Rohr; Tim Wood.

Staff Present:

Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director; Donna Feddern, Chief of Programs & Services; Lisa Bachmann, Senior Executive Assistant; Chrissy Franklin, Executive Assistant; Carrie Petit, Contracts Director; Kyle Sanchez, Planning Manager; Valerie Aubertin, Community Supports Director; WinDi Sanchez Soler, Administrative Coordinator.

Visitors Present:

Liz Hicker, former Advisory Council member; Willie Merryman; Lewis County Guest.

Tribal Land Acknowledgement, Cat McGaffigan, Chair

Welcome and Introductions, Cat McGaffigan, Chair

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

Approval of the March 5, 2025, Draft Agenda and February 5, 2025, Draft Minutes

A motion was entertained to approve the March draft agenda and February draft minutes by Cat McGaffigan, Chair. The motion was approved by Eileen McKenzieSullivan seconded by Michele Horaney and passed unanimously.

By-Laws Draft: first reading amendment Article III – Membership Terms, Cat McGaffigan, Chair

Cat read the proposed revision for the amendment Article III – Membership Terms. This was the first reading of the amendment that allows the respective local Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to decide when a member's term ends: if they will continue to be on the council or if the member will be asked to take a break to allow community members that have applied to step in. After several council members shared their opinions, A motion was entertained to take out the last sentence and move the suggested revisions to our County Commissioners to review and vote at their April meeting by Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair. Cat

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stated Heidi will explain to the County Commissioners what our goal is in revising the Membership Terms as well as inform them that we will do an overview of all the By Laws this year. The motion was approved by Cat McGaffigan, Chair seconded by Glenn Harper and passed unanimously. Cat reminded council members that they can readdress the Membership Terms when all the By Laws are updated this year. Council members expressed they also want to discuss the mission statement.

Legislative and Advocacy Updates, Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director & Michele Horaney
Carrie Petit, Contracts Director, talked about American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) Lobby Day explaining that staff are joining State Representative meetings for the nutrition ask. Carrie stated we need to advocate how important the nutrition programs are to our communities. The agency will continue to send out advocacy alerts for support. Nicole shared that Friday, March 14th is the continuing resolution deadline. There are a lot of discussions regarding budget negotiations. At this time, we are unsure what the Older Americans Act (OAA) annual appropriations will be. Nicole discussed the possibility of Flat Funding and the possibilities of a Government shutdown. Carrie stated that OAA is currently expired and it's crucial we have OAA funding as it supports programs for our communities. In discussing regarding state happenings, if we do not receive funding up to 20,000 community members would go without food. Nicole discussed Governor Ferguson's budget cut exercise and the importance of advocating how important the funding is to our communities. Nicole opened the floor for questions. It was asked if we should advocate at the Senior Centers. Nicole responded that this was a good idea and expressing how much community stories help with advocating the needs for the community. The agency will continue to reach out to Council Members asking for help as we continue to advocate by signing letters, calling, and attending meetings.

Participation in OAA Month, Cat McGaffigan, Chair

Cat shared that Older Americans Act (OAA) Month is in May and in the past a council member has volunteered to attend city council meetings to read proclamation. Multiple Council Members volunteered.

Review 2024 and Update 2025 Advisory Council Goals, Cat McGaffigan, Chair

Cat presented the 2024 Advisory Council Goals to the council members. There was discussion about the 2025 goals. Council members agreed the need to continue advocating will be an ongoing goal. Council members discussed ways to advocate for state and federal needs. Members discussed continuing the goal of doing more with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Everyone agreed the need to continue to learn how we can be inclusive and learn more about our community members and their differences. Members discussed how important it is to get younger generations involved in senior needs. Council members discussed suggestions of getting involved in public schools and colleges and how that may help capture

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younger generations' opinions and ideas on how to help our communities. The Agency's 50th anniversary will be in 2026, and council members would like to know how they can get involved. Council members discussed the goal to support socialization and engagement needs. The Mon Ami program was discussed and council members asked if they can help. Members agreed to continue multiple 2024 goals and extend those for 2025.

Community Updates

Cat McGaffigan, Chair – announced that both Angela Hock and Ellen Wendt, Thurston County Advisory Council Members, have resigned. We are now in need of two Thurston County Council Members to fill the remaining terms.

Village to Village – Michele Horaney reported that there are now 51 paying members. Once you are a member they reach out to ask what the new members' interests are and how they would like to get involved.

Glenn Harper reported the First Annual Death Care and Life Transitions Expo on Saturday, March 15th at the South Sound Manor Event Center in Tumwater from 10am to 3pm. Details are on the Elderhood Senior Alliance website, and he will email a flyer with the information to Advisory Council members. The agency will have a table setup at the event to discuss services offered to help families.

Glenn Harper reported that Friday Fun Night at the Mason County Senior Activities Center is each month. Details are on the Mason County Senior Activities Center website.

Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair, reported she is supporting the startup of having Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) available in Lewis County. Heidi spoke about working with the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC). The funding needed to start will be \$37,000. Heidi will be going through training and the goal to have it up and running by July. They will work on outreach to inform the community of opportunities to help build the program.

Anna Schlecht reported that they are organizing a block march to advocate for Social Security and Medicaid needs due to the political climate. Anna will provide more details to come.

Membership & Outreach - Chrissy Franklin, Executive Assistant - Chrissy reported that there have been applications for Thurston and Lewis County members. Each county has a process to review each application, and the agency is in communication with each county office regarding the process. There is interest from the community to get involved in Advisory Council and we will update everyone as we receive the information. Chrissy stated she is working with each department at the agency to capture opportunities for council members to get involved and

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advocate. She shared the importance of having members from each community as well as the opportunity to work with agency staff during an outreach event to learn more about the services and programs.

Housing Committee - Anna Schlecht - Anna reported that we are continuing to work on a date for the Lewis County Senior Housing Froum in Lewis County.

Review & Feedback – SCoA March Meeting - Glenn Harper - Glenn reported that he was unable to attend the entire meeting. He shared the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) has a new hiring freeze and employees are nervous. They spoke about hiring retired employees as they don't have to spend the time to train them during the hire freeze.

Socialization & Engagement Committee – Glenn Harper - Glenn reported he will be following up with Donna Feddern, Chief of Programs & Services at the agency, regarding the Mon Ami program and the progress. Glenn reported that the information for Candles in the Dark on Tuesdays and Thursdays is on The Elderhood Senior Alliance website.

Adjournment

A motion was entertained by Eileen McKenzieSullivan to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair and it was unanimously decided to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting will be April 2nd.

Minutes taken by

Chrissy Franklin, Executive Assistant

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