



LEWIS-MASON-THURSTON
AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Council of Governments Minutes

Meeting Date: December 18, 2025

In Person and via Zoom

Commissioner Attendance:

Lewis	Mason	Thurston
<input type="checkbox"/> Sean Swope (Vice Chair)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sharon Trask (Chair)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rachel Grant

Staff Attendance: Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director; Jemma Williamson, Deputy Executive Director; Valerie Aubertin, Community Supports Director; Carrie Petit, Chief of Contracts & Planning; Donna Feddern, Chief of Programs & Services; Mary Beth Mercer, Chief of Human Resources; Sabrina Dean; Chief Fiscal Officer; Lisa Bachmann, Government Affairs Program Liaison; Sarah Link, Executive Assistant; Chrissy Franklin, Office Manager

Guest Attendance: Heidi Buswell, Advisory Council Vice-Chair; Tim Wood, Advisory Council Member

Minutes prepared by: Lisa Bachmann

Meeting Minutes		
Call to Order: 3:05 pm		
Opening/Introductions: Commissioner Trask opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Introductions were made by all in attendance.		
Approval of Draft Agenda and Minutes:		
Approval of the December 18, 2025, Draft Agenda and October 29, 2025, Draft Meeting Minutes.	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask
Public Comments:		
There were no public comments		
Advisory Council Report: Heidi Buswell, Vice-Chair		
Heidi shared that the Advisory Council has been working on a revision of the current Advisory Council Bylaws to bring to the COG for a vote at the January 2026 meeting. These changes will bring the Bylaws into compliance with the new Older American Act regulations. Next year, the council will look at updating some procedures. There was an election of officers in the December meeting. Tim Wood will be the new Vice-Chair and Glenn Harper the Chair.		
Executive Session:		
Commissioner Trask cited the RCWs pertaining to the Executive Session. She noted that the Executive Session would end at 3:25 p.m. The session ended at 3:25 p.m.		

Approval of 2025 Wage Opener: Mary Beth Mercer, Chief of Human Resources		
<p>Mary Beth Mercer shared the proposal for a bargained wage increase of 3% for all Agency employees, effective January 1, 2026.</p> <p>Commissioner Grant made the motion <i>“I move to approve the proposed 2025 contract wage opener, bargained between Lewis-Mason-Thurston Area Agency on Aging and Local 618-A of the Washington State Council of County and City Employees, with the agreed upon provision to take effect for all Agency employees on January 1, 2026.”</i></p>	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask
Approval of Unrepresented Wage Increases: Mary Beth Mercer, Chief of Human Resources		
<p>Mary Beth Mercer shared the proposal for additional increases for the Executive Director & Executive Staff to align with competitive levels.</p> <p>Commissioner Grant entertained the motion <i>“I move that in addition to any Agency-wide increase approved for LMTAAA staff, the Executive Director’s salary be increased by 2.5% and the remaining executive team be increased by 2.5% effective January 1, 2026.”</i></p>	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask
Addendum to Agency Bylaws: Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer		
<p>Sabrina Dean explained that with the State no longer having the requirement of submitting an Area Plan Budget on an annual basis, the Agency will operate off of an Annual Budget. She reference the suggested change to the Bylaw language included in the meeting materials.</p> <p>Commissioner Grant entertained the motion <i>“I move to approve an Addendum to the Bylaws dated 1/24/2019, which will replace the reference of Area Plan Budget to Annual Budget in Section D of Article I.”</i></p>	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask
Fiscal Report: Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer		
<p>Sabrina Dean reported that THERE WERE NO FINDINGS IN THE 2023-2024 AUDIT REPORT. Praise was given by the Commissioners for this achievement. The Agency is now up to date on audits. She also shared that the Agency would be closing an account at Peak Credit Union that is no longer being used. The \$750.00 balance will be moved to the operating account.</p>		
Approval of Accounts Payable: Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer		
<p>Sabrina Dean referenced the included detailed list of expenses for July 1-July 31, 2025.</p> <p>Commissioner Grant entertained the motion <i>“I move to approve the Accounts Payables from July 1, 2025, through July 31st, 2025 in the amount of \$808,339.54.</i></p>	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask
Approval of Consensus Motion: Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer		
<p>Sabrina Dean referenced the consensus motions dated September 3rd, October 3rd and November 5th, 2025.</p> <p>Commissioner Grant entertained the motion <i>“I move to approve the consensus motions dated September 3rd, October 3rd and November 5th, 2025.”</i></p>	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask

Approval of 2026 Budget: Sabrina Dean, Chief Financial Officer		
<p>Sabrina Dean provided information regarding the proposed 2026 budget. She explained that the revenues are contracted revenues and that there are two open contracts: the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) and Older Americans Act (OAA). Additionally, there will be more expenses to add once we have the contract for the Health Related Social Needs Program (HRSN). The agency has the money for the program but have allocated it yet. The budgeted expenses include the 3% cost of living increase for all employees but not any targeted wage increases. She will present a mid-year review of the budget to the Commissioners. The contracts for OAA and NCIP for 2024 & 2025 end September 30, 2026. We do not have the contract yet for the next cycle. The 2026 fiscal cycle for the Agency will start January 1, 2026. There is a fund balance of about \$5 million as well as some additional funds for emergencies.</p> <p>Commissioner Grant made the motion <i>“I move to approve Lewis Mason Thurston Area Agency on Aging’s 2026 Budget in the amount of \$15,964,447.”</i></p>	Motion	Grant
	Approved	Unanimous
	Second	Trask
Executive Director Report: Nicole Kiddoo, Executive Director		
<p>Nicole Kiddoo shared that the Washington Association of the Area Agencies on Aging (W4A) has one priority we will be advocating for this year, which is additional funding for the Health Homes Program. Last year, we were able to obtain some funding so that the program could continue, but we will need additional funding to keep the program going through June of 2027. She was able to meet with some of the Governor’s staff about the program. The document included in the meeting materials, created by W4A to advocate for the Health Homes program next year, was referenced. The data shows that there is cost savings when the program is utilized. The dates for the 2026 W4A Advocacy week are January 20-22.</p> <p>Valerie Aubertin, Community Supports Director, shared that the Agency currently has a Supervisor and two Care Coordinators who are on staff for the Health Homes program.</p> <p>Federal updates were shared as well. The National Association of the Areas Agencies on Aging (USAging) is working on the 2026 policy priorities. These come out in March and will be shared at a future meeting. The Older American’s Act has still not been re-authorized.</p>		
Deputy Executive Director Report, Jemma Williamson		
<p>Jemma Williamson shared her report with the Commissioners, highlighting the activities and achievements for each of the departments she has oversight of. She shared that there has been a focus on becoming more efficient as an agency and keeping up to date with Information and Technology.</p> <p>The staff have been participating in different types of emergency drills to help prepare for a variety of potential situations. They are becoming more familiar with the procedures. She shared the Agency hopes to add CPR and First Aid training in 2026.</p>		

<p>Training of especially new staff continues to be an area we are working on so that we can continue to improve on our QA audits.</p>		
<p>Chief of Programs & Services Report, Donna Feddern</p>		
<p>Information on the Department of Transportation Grant was shared by Community Supports Director, Valerie Auberin. This program assists with transportation to healthcare appointments for older adults and adults with disabilities. The Agency has created a small resource guide for each county listing transportation options. Becca Frisch, Communications Manager, has created placemats to go on the trays at senior centers to help promote the program. Valerie also provide a report on the Senior Farmers Market Program (SFMNP). She will share information for the annual redemption rate once received from the state. It shows the total % of the benefit used for each county.</p> <p>Donna Feddern shared information from her Case Management report. The Agency has been working hard to keep the 76:1 client to Case Manager ratio. Donna also shared background information on the Light of Hope program. She explained there has never been a policy for it: it was more tradition. Because it has been coming up in our audits and it takes quite a bit of staff time, it has been decided to not continue the program. We provided info on other options for people who wanted to donate and have returned any checks with a thank you that came in.</p>		
<p>Chief of Contracts & Planning Report, Carrie Petit</p>		
<p>Carrie Petit shared highlights from her report on the WA Cares Fund Program, including information on the Pilot Program that begins January 6, 2026. Benefits Navigators will help people get set up, answer questions and provide in-home assessments. The ADRC team has been part of the work and will be taking calls and helped with the outreach. People apply for the program through SAW. The program has been promoted with press releases, door clings at the Capitol Mall and window clings on Lewis County buses. The pilot ends May 15, with the full program starting July 1. Spokane County is also involved with the pilot. The Contracts team has been busy contracting new providers for the services that will be provided. Sixty-three applications have been reviewed with twenty fully executed. There is at least one contract for every service that will be an option in Thurston County, and they are close to this goal in the other two counties. Carrie also referenced information on the Request for Proposals for OAA contracts as well as information on the Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) program. We will be working with the Thurston county food bank to provide nutrition services. Medically tailored meals are also a part of this.</p>		
<p>2026 COG Meeting Dates & AC Calendar: Lisa Bachmann, Government Affairs Program Liaison</p>		
<p>Lisa Bachmann shared the dates that have been selected for the meetings in 2026. The Commissioners should all have appointment invitations for these dates.</p>		
<p>Meeting Adjournment</p>		
<p>Commissioner Trask made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:37 p.m.</p>	<p>Motion</p>	<p>Trask</p>
	<p>Approved</p>	<p>Unanimous</p>
	<p>Second</p>	<p>Grant</p>

