



Washington State Council on Aging

Meeting Title: 2023 January Washington State Council on Aging Meeting

Date: 1/24/2023

Location: Zoom Meeting

	Members Present	Appointment			Appointment
✓	Jean Kindem	At-Large East	✓	Art Swannack	Association of Counties
✓	Gavin Carmichael	AAAD Southwest WA Advisory Council		Vacant	O3A Advisory Council
✓	Rep. Kelly Chambers (Dianna Hawkins, Leg. Aide)	WA House of Representatives	✓	Dennis Wheeler	Snohomish County AAA
	Sharon Curley	At-Large West	✓	Susan Kerr	Kitsap AAA Advisory Council
✓	Georgiann Dustin	NWRC Advisory Council	(✓)	Arlen Washines (Melissa Howtopat)	Yakama Golden Eagle Advisory Council
✓	Deb Murphy	Central AAA		Guests Present	
✓	Michele Horaney	Lewis Mason Thurston AAA Advisory Council	✓	Patricia Hunter	WSLTCO
	Vacant	At-Large West	✓	Cathy Knight	W4A
	Vacant (Sariga Santhosh sitting in)	ADS King County Advisory Council	✓	Walt Bowen	Senior Lobby
✓	Bob Scarfo	Aging & Long-Term Care Eastern Washington Advisory Council		Melanie McGuire	AL TSA
	Sen. Karen Keiser	WA State Senate	✓	Cameron Akita	AL TSA
✓	Michele Blythe	Association of Cities	✓	Cheri Perazzoli	HLAA
	Kathy Medford	Southeast WA Aging and Long-Term Care	✓	Jacqueline Cobbs	AL TSA
	Vacant	WA House of Representatives	✓	Ron Vivion	Guest (Snohomish County)
✓	Bruce Dougherty	Pierce County Aging & Disability Resources Advisory Board	✓	Rebekah Smith	Guest
✓	Karen Kiessling	At-Large East	✓	Britta Willson / Laura Culberg	Goldsen Institute, University of Washington



Washington State Council on Aging

Topic	Key Points and/or Decisions Made
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Review/approve agenda • Review/approve minutes • Review action items • Member Organization Updates 	<p>Vice Chairperson Karen Kiessling called the meeting to order at 9:00am.</p> <p>Council approved January’s meeting agenda and November’s meeting minutes.</p> <p>Action items were reviewed, including discussion of the meeting platform poll sent to SCOA members, and the Open Public Meetings Act.</p> <p>Member Organization Updates</p> <p>Bob Scarfo reviewed a community puzzle event put on by a Massachusetts town’s parks & recreation department, and discussed whether Council Members had other ideas for similar community organized events. Bob asked that ideas be sent to him to compile for others.</p> <p>Jean Kindem and Council discussed the potential of engaging more senior center leadership as COVID restrictions lift. Walt Bowen noted the new Chair of the Washington State Association of Senior Centers (WSASC) was Maryann Grafton, and Ron Vivion detailed other work WSASC and ALISA was doing to update a statewide resource listing. Cathy Knight added that individuals can contact local Area Agencies on Aging for regional resources on senior centers.</p>
<p>WA State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program</p>	<p>Patricia Hunter, WA State Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombuds</p> <p>Patricia presented information on the Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTC Ombuds Program), for which she has served as the State Ombuds since 2011.</p> <p>LTC Ombuds serve a unique role in that they are independent from government agencies, resident driven advocates that are not mandated reporters. Their role is to protect and promote the rights of all LTC residents. LTC Ombuds can enter a facility at any time giving them unique access to serve on behalf of the resident.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>Unlike many other states, the Washington LTC Ombuds Program is independent from state government. Embedded in the Multi-Service Center and under contract with the Department of Commerce, the LTC Ombuds Program serves residents under broad mandates to protect health, safety, welfare, and rights of LTC residents.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges for the program as LTC residents faced restrictions that prevented them from going outside or dining in groups. These restrictions loosened throughout the pandemic but resulted in a very busy time for Ombuds as quality of life and quality of care are at the forefront of their work.</p> <p>The top 5 issues LTC Ombuds investigate are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) improper eviction/inadequate discharge planning,2) unanswered response to assistance,3) lack of respect for residents (includes a wide range of issues),4) administration and organization of medications, and5) quality of life (i.e., resident roommate disputes, food/snacks, etc.). <p>LTC Ombuds are required to have ongoing annual training (18 hours) on various topics. The LTC Ombuds Program lost many volunteers over the past few years, and there is ongoing work to rebuild the volunteer base.</p> <p>In 2019, a stakeholder group helped to assess three models to better position the LTC Ombuds Program for projected growth. A 2020 report followed and found the LTC Ombuds Program was significantly underfunded. Support for two of the models included funding for a ratio of one Ombuds for every 2000 LTC beds, and funding to support the same 1:2000 ratio using future bed counts as projected by the Caseload Forecast Council. This assessment also compared Washington to other states similar to Washington; Washington was at 58% percentage of actual staff to recommended staff.</p>
AgePride	<p>Britta Willson and Laura Culberg, Goldsen Institute, University of Washington Britta presented on AgePRIDE, a division of the Goldsen Institute (University of Washington) that provides training and services to inform and serve LGBTQ+ older adults, care partners, families, and other underserved communities.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>There is a growing need for inclusivity in aging services. LGBTQ+ populations face greater health disparities due to risk of social isolation, income not being commensurate with education, and facing more lifetime discrimination. These disparities are compounded in BIPOC (black, indigenous, and people of color) LGBTQ+ communities.</p> <p>Laura Culberg presented on the Healthy Generations program within AgePRIDE. This program focuses on LGBTQ+ older adults and offers a series of programs, including online options. Some of these are monthly caregiving drop-ins, a program for older adults with early-stage memory loss, and others that provide tools for caregiver support.</p> <p>The Legacy Letters program offers intergenerational community building in a 5-week program that pairs younger and older adults. This helps to address loneliness for both the older adults and high school aged participants.</p> <p>The Safe Home Program offers evidence-based training to address needs of LGBTW+, sexual and gender diverse minorities, and racial and ethnic minorities in LTC communities. Training on best practices, improving cultural inclusivity, and developing effective communication strategies (to name a few) is offered at no cost to CMS certified skilled nursing facilities.</p> <p>AgePRIDE created a glossary and resource guide and offers monthly virtual office hours to provide assistance. In March, they will offer a 4-hour virtual training.</p>
Hearing Loss Association	<p>Cheri Perazzoli, Hearing Loss Association of Washington</p> <p>Cheri presented information about the Hearing Loss Association of Washington. In Washington, there are 1.5 million individuals that face hearing loss. Hearing loss makes participation in virtual trainings difficult, and growing research shows it decreases quality of life.</p> <p>Hearing loss is the third most chronic condition in the United States. A Johns Hopkins study associated mild hearing loss with a doubling of the risk of developing dementia, and severe hearing impairment with a five times risk.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>It often takes an individual seven years for someone to ask for help with a hearing impairment. This issue must be addressed to address social isolation. Federal, state, and organizational levels must work together for meaningful change.</p> <p>There are continuing efforts in Congress to fight for hearing loss coverage in Medicare. In Washington State, HB 1222 would require private insurance to cover hearing loss, and SB 5338 would add hearing loss to the essential benefits package.</p> <p>Hearing loss must be represented in strategic planning. The Hearing Loss Association of America can provide resources on accommodations for clients, informing clients/staff, and allowing for equal participation for those with hearing impairment.</p>
Partner Updates	<p>Cathy Knight, W4A Cathy shared that many advisory council members sat in on W4A's legislative training. W4A will be providing an updated fiscal not on their online resource page.</p> <p>Case management is a priority including maintaining AAA caseload parity with the State.</p> <p>Another priority is reinvesting in the Health Homes program, which started as a pilot and helps those with higher health needs.</p> <p>Work continues to support the Dementia Action Collaborative including the dementia resource catalyst, which has two current pilots. Funding requests for two more sites is being led by the Alzheimer's Association, and W4A is supporting this request.</p> <p>Walt Bowen, Senior Lobby Walt shared that January 24th was day 16 of the 120-day legislative session. The Senior Lobby has tracked 75 bills, and other issues were being tracked without an assigned bill number.</p> <p>The Senior Lobby held an Age Wave breakfast for the first time since 2019. Representative Steve Tharinger was the emcee, and many sponsoring organizations were able to attend.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>There is ongoing work to continue the Joint Legislative Executive Committee on Planning for Aging and Disability Issues, or JLEC, which is a special committee created by the legislature consisting of representatives from each party and government agency members. Work is being planned to identify needs around senior centers for upcoming meetings.</p> <p>Cathy MacCaul, AARP Cathy noted that AARP is tracking bills around housing, including HB 1110, which involves improving zoning for multiplexes, and HB 1337 with addresses accessory dwelling units.</p> <p>Housing for older adults is key to health and longevity and affects higher and lower income individuals. This is also an important issue at the national level as well, specifically around livable and age-friendly communities.</p> <p>Another bill, HB 1051 being tracked involves creating stricter regulation for robocalling.</p> <p>The Attorney General's Office is also working on legislation around extreme heat events. Washington currently has prohibitions around cutting off electricity for cold weather events, but not for extreme heat.</p>
ALTSA Update	<p>Jacqueline Cobbs, Deputy Directory of HQ Operations Jacqueline provided an update on current ALTSA related legislation.</p> <p>Request legislation to raise the personal needs allowance is in HB 1128, and companion SB 5138.</p> <p>SB 5318 involves legislation around pre death liens.</p> <p>SB 5278 would support an adequate workforce for homecare aides by amending the definition of family members and shorting training hour requirements.</p> <p>Jacqueline provided an update on the 1115 Waiver. ALTSA has submitted the update with amendments to CMS and anticipates a response by the end of March for a July implementation.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>The omnibus bill delinked Medicaid which puts many recipients at risk of losing coverage in April. AL TSA is working to get individuals (MAGI population) on other programs or waiver services. This will be a challenge for financial staff who must ensure clients have updated contact information in order for timely coordinated redeterminations.</p>
Break	
Committee Meetings	[breakout rooms]
Committee Updates	<p>Legislative Committee Art Swannack, Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee reviewed the discussion around ADUs which will face conflict among varying jurisdictions. The Governor’s budget was discussed in relation to housing, which is reliant on a \$4B bond which will be challenging to enact.</p> <p>Michele Blythe, Co-Chair of the Legislative Committee discussed the process for individuals meeting with legislators. Council discussed how often people are meeting with legislators, and Walt noted that in-person visits may require masking or other requirements. Georgiann Dustin shared that visits may require appointments and to plan ahead.</p> <p>Public Outreach and Education Committee Michele Horaney, Chair of the Public Outreach and Education Committee discussed the committees plans to work more with the Legislative Committee in 2023.</p> <p>The committee plans to develop promotional materials for Council Members to use with certain outreach. Current planning involves developing a draft plan within the committee followed by a joint meeting at a future date. An update will follow in February’s meeting.</p>
New Business / Public Comment	<p>Representative Chambers shared an update on a bill she has developed, HB 1568 which has dropped and is being scheduled for committee hearing. The bill proposes making a two-year licensing process for home care aides. This would also reduce fees for licensing aides.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

Bob Scarfo discussed his work with a local gerontologist and Spokane parks and recreation department to discuss the installation of a memory garden (e.g., [Portland Memory Garden](#)).

Council discussed the next in-person meeting, suggesting a survey be sent to members for the potential of starting in May.

Ron Vivion suggested the meeting topic of Dementia Friends, which has been involved with the DAC.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58am.

ACTION ITEMS	Assignee	Due Date
Send survey to council members	Cameron Akita	Before Feb. meeting
Outreach to Dementia Friends for future presentation	"	ASAP

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