

**AGING & ADULT CARE OF CENTRAL WASHINGTON (AACCW)
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
DATE: February 16, 2023**

MINUTES

OPENING

Members in Attendance:

Judith Tonseth, Kathleen Miller, Dean and Ellen Warren, Shannon Davis, Marylu Martin, Linda Finlay, and SCOA Rep. Deb Murphy.

AACCW Staff:

Bruce Buckles, Ken Sterner, Tammy Harvey, Erin Nelson, Diane Tribble, Debbie Peterson, Josh Hamilton and Christine Johnson.

Guests:

Ivan Schultz and Kay Williams, new member applicants, were also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING: Kathleen Miller moved to accept the meeting minutes from the September, 2022, meeting. Ellen Warren seconded and the motion passed.

ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR: The minutes of the September 2022 meeting were read to remind those in attendance who had been nominated as Chair and Vice-Chair for 2023. Due to a lack of a quorum at the September meeting, these nominations were not ratified. Kathleen Miller moved to again accept Judith Tonseth as Chair, and Ellen Warren seconded. Motion passed. Ellen Warren moved to accept Eloise Hurst as Vice-Chair, and Shannon Davis seconded. Motion passed. Judith Tonseth took over the meeting as newly-elected Chair.

FORMAL VOTE ON NOMINATED MEMBERS: Kathleen Miller moved to accept Ivan Schultz as a representative of Grant County and Kay Williams as a representative to Douglas County to the Advisory Committee. Ellen Warren seconded, and motion passed unanimously.

ADOPTION OF THE 2023 MEETING CALENDAR: Shannon Davis moved to accept the proposed 2023 meeting calendar. Linda Finlay seconded, and motion passed.

QUARTERLY REPORTS:

Fourth quarter, 2022, reports were given by all AACCCW Directors. Erin Nelson said that AACCCW has a new PERS Contractor as of 2022, plus the new programs Powerful Tools and Healthy Aging, and discussed how new Contractors are acquired through the RFP process.

Debbie Peterson reported that nursing referrals are up by 20%, but that the Case Management/Nursing/Health Homes departments are all fully staffed for the first time in a long time. This is largely in part because the agency received extra funding for raises last year to bring the AAA's up to parity with other State agencies, such as Home and Community Services. These increases in salaries have helped attract new employees and will help with employee retention.

Bruce Buckles discussed the lack of long-term care beds available in the state, which causes additional stress on AACCCW nursing and I&A staff, in their treatment and referrals of clients into programs. Discussions and personal stories ensued regarding people who had received inadequate care around the state, or who had to travel long distances to find care, due to the shortage of nurses and medical staff. Deb Murphy reported that due to the lack of staff, those medical facilities that are forced to rely on traveling nurses are now having financial difficulty due to the high wages paid for their services. Deb also reported that the State Legislature is considering ways to allow those staff forced to resign due to the Covid mandates to be able to return to their jobs.

Diane Tribble reported that the number of clients in the MAC/TSOA program had gone down at the end of 2022, but this is directly related to the fact that the State, to address the current crisis in the healthcare system, had made it easier for clients to get into Medicaid programs, by lowering the financial threshold that typically limits people from qualifying for these programs. Diane also reported that a group of AACCCW management staff have been analyzing the agency's current use of advertising medium, to see what is the most effective. She also said that I&A staff will be going out to healthcare facilities in the spring to familiarize them with AACCCW programs and services.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ken Sterner provided information on potential legislation being considered that could affect AACCW services. One could mean an increase in funding for the Health Homes programs, and extra funding for in-home case management services to keep up with inflation and ensure retention of the parity that was achieved in 2022.

Ken also discussed HB1784, that, if passed could allow for more funding across the state to assist with food security. Since there is no longer federal funding going to food banks, this legislation could provide some funding to assist them, as well as some going to the AAA's for food assistance services. However, this funding will have to be spent by the end of June, so it is important that it get passed soon and get put into action.

At the end of the meeting, Judith Tonseth asked about the status of the AED's and Life Vacs that were going to be purchased for those senior centers wanting them. Erin Nelson reported that they had all been purchased and received, but that the agency is in the process of seeking out people (EMS workers) local to those centers to assist with training the volunteers on how to use them.

Ellen Warren moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 12:50. Kay Williams seconded, and the meeting adjourned.