

## **Northwest Senior Services Board Meeting Minutes**

**September 13, 2022**

**Members Present In-Person:** None

**Members Present via Zoom or Telephonically:** Carl Bender, Shirley Bennett, Shirley Forslof, Alberta Horn, Mary Kanter, Kathleen O'Connor, Barb Pesola, Jodi Sipes, George Edward, Georgiann Dustin, Jennifer Lautenbach, Stephen Shubert

**Members Absent:** Jana Finkbonner, Wendy Gilbert, Marshall Gartenlaub, Denise Irely, Bob Monize, Doug Cornelsen,

**Staff Present Zoom or Telephonically:** Amanda McDade, Bethany Chamberlin, Ryan Blackwell, Darla Smith

Guest: Cameron Akita

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### **Call to Order (Barb Pesola) at 1:03 PM**

#### **Review of July Minutes:**

Motion put forward by the Board President, Barb Pesola to accept the minutes from the July 12, 2022, meeting.

Motion was made to approve the July 12, 2022, meeting minutes by George Edward and seconded by Shirley Bennett. **Motion Passed.**

#### **Announcements:**

#### **Public Comment:**

Stephen Shubert requested the NWRC URL so the Island County Senior Center can link to the NWRC website. Darla will email to Stephen Shubert.

Jennifer Lautenbach informed the group that September 20<sup>th</sup> is national voters registration day. The Lynden Community Center is having an event to update voter registration information and signatures. As people age signatures change and it is good to update your signature from time to time.

#### **Executive Director Updates**

Amanda McDade, Executive Direction

- Agency Updates – NWRC is following the national employment trend and experiencing a very mobile marketplace. We have been able to successfully recruit and hire many new professionals for the agency. Staff are investing a lot of time training new employees. NWRC is continuing to mask in the workplace. Because we have been getting mixed feedback about continued masking in the workplace, we sent a staff survey out to gather more information from them about their feelings on safety in the workplace. The Governing Board approved requiring newly hired staff to be vaccinated for COVID-19. There is not a current recommendation for mandating boosters. We are experiencing an unusually high number of staff out on medical leave for a variety of reasons.

- Fiscally we are on track. Watching the rate of inflation and effective COLA, looking at additional wellness benefit. Expanding Behavioral Health Program.
- Legislative Updates – NWRC will continuing building on last year's initiative to keep funding for case management with inflation so that we do not fall behind again.
- 2023 Budget – The 2022 budget is on track, and we are starting to look forward and planning the 2023 budget. Fiscal staff will be meeting with the management teams to discuss funds needed to continue to support current initiatives and grow programs moving forward.
- Success stories – NWRC is gathering program success stories and sharing with employees, partners, and board members. Moving forward we will share the stories with the NWSSB through Board packets and email. Amanda McDade will reach out to Stephen Shubert and Carl Bender regarding sharing the information with their communities.

### **NWSSB Committees**

#### Breakout Discussions

### **Break**

2:15-2:30

### **Presentation**

Cameron Akita shared a presentation on the Older American's Act. There was a question about widely distributing the survey to the communities. The survey will be sent to NWRC who can then further distribute the survey. There was a request for the slideshow. A copy of the presentation can be found on the [NWRC](#) website.

### **Updates from Our Communities**

- Georgian Dustin – SCOA has been on summer break. There is a virtual conference coming up in October. Georgian can email Beth and Amanda a link with information about the conference.
- Shirley Forslof – Bellingham Senior Center has a Flu Vaccine clinic happening today.
- Stephen Shubert – The San Juan Senior Center has applied for a grant through the Community Foundation to strengthen caregiving on the Island. Voters approved purchase of a nursing facility dedicated to Medicare and Medicaid eligible clients.
- Georgian Dustin shared that there an initiative to raise wages and benefits for home providers/caregivers. The State Legislators need to hear from their constituents supporting this initiative. Motion was made by Stephen Shubert that NWSSB writes a letter of recommendation that increased funding for caregivers be a legislative priority in the coming 2023 legislative session. Jodi Sipes seconded the motion. There was additional discussion regarding the need to increase both wages and benefits. **Motion passed.** Amanda McDade will work with Ryan Blackwell to draft a letter.

### **Adjourn:**

Motion was made by Barbara Pesola that there being no further business this meeting is adjourned.  
Motion seconded by Georgian Dustin. **Motion passed.**

**The meeting adjourned at 3:19 pm**

DocuSigned by:

*Darla Smith*

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Darla Smith, Office Supervisor

Reviewed and approved by the Northwest Senior Services Board at the November 8, 2022, meeting.

DocuSigned by:

*Barbara Pesola*

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Barbara Pesola, NWSSB Chair