

Northwest Senior Services Board Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2024

Members Present via Zoom or Telephonically:

George Edward, Georgiann Dustin, Jodi Sipes, Holly Robinson, Jen Lautenbach, Mary Kanter, Alberta Horn, Mike Shaw, Stephen Shubert, Carl Bender, Shirley Bennett, Marshall Gartenlaub, Jana Finkbonner

Members Absent:

Lucretia Devine, Tim Poe, Evan Perrollaz

Staff Present: Amanda McDade, Bethany Chamberlin, Darla Smith

Guest: None

Call to Order at 1:02 PM

Chair-Georgiann Dustin

- Introduction of Board Members and Guests
- Announcements- No announcements made
- Public Comment

Review of March 12, 2024, Minutes:

Motion put forward by Georgiann Dustin to accept the minutes from the March 12, 2024, meeting. Motion made by Jen Lautenbach and seconded by Jodi Sipes. **Motion Passed Unanimously.**

Board Members Term Expiring in June of 2024:

Mary Kanter – voiced desire to renew term.

Stephen Schubert – voiced desire to renew term.

Georgiann Dustin - voiced desire to renew term.

Jen Lautenbach - voiced desire to renew term.

Alberta Horn – participating via Zoom on her phone. Bethany called participant who declined renewing term.

Board Members Committees (general discussion):

There was discussion that NWRC can help set up committee meetings, and they can be virtual or in person.

1. Social Connection

Marshall provided an overview on the impact's isolation. People who are socially connected have a 50% increase in longevity by being active and connected. Many organizations help by connecting people and reducing isolation. Marshall voiced concern about organizations that state they connect people in the community, and that he has found their information difficult to use their resources, and some of the organizations are for profit. Marshall would like to use the Social Connection Committee to focus interactive activities that connect people for our area in person. There was conversation about how to find people that are isolated to try to help them be more connected.

Committee Members – Marshall Gartenlaub, Jen Lautenbach, Mike Shaw, Mary Kanter

2. Save our ‘selves’

Stephen Shubert spoke about the national crisis and desire for seniors to age in place and the barriers including increasing costs of institutional care, access, lack of caregivers. Some of the challenges to recruiting more caregivers to work in the field are wages and training. Stephen would like to advocate for using Older American’s Act Funding to help address these issues. Amanda McDade suggested connecting to Kate White Tudor as our next step. Guest, Evan Perrollaz, spoke about San Juan County and how the San Juan County Public Hospital District #1 is starting to address some of these issues including opening a small home care agency, CNA training, potential housing for healthcare workers. Committee Members – Stephen Shubert, Carl Bender, Lucretia Devine, Mary Kanter.

3. Advocacy

No discussion

Contact Bethany Chamberlin or Georgiann Dustin to sign up for a committee.

Caregiver Outreach Program

Mariah Davis spoke to the group about the caregiver outreach program including types of interactions, outreach activities, referrals, referral sources, and supporting NWRC teams. She is looking for ways to engage and recruit a younger population, and finding ways to recruit people who are open to working with new clients they are not currently connected to. She provided a general overview of common challenges and system improvements of CDWA. Stephen requested a copy of the presentation.

New Business (add on):

Georgiann Dustin requested to add New Business to the agenda.

Carl Bender represents Lopez Island and stated they are having a large influx of population. He has had multiple requests about what the AAA’s are and has a difficult time finding the best way to explain it. Carl made a request to have staff come to the NWSB meetings to explain their program with some real-life examples as he believes it would be helpful. Amanda McDade, Executive Director agreed and will continue planning on brining different staff to the meetings to provide overviews of their programs.

Executive Director Updates

Amanda McDade

- Agency Updates

Compass Health has closed some Skagit and Whatcom programs. We have been able to hire a number of those staff who bring their clients with them. The agency has also hired the last open BH clinician position. The agency hired a Care Coordinator who will be embedded at the jail. The agency is doing a lot of diversity, equity, and inclusion work. There was discussion focusing on how to increase medical accessibility, including doctors’ offices. In addition, how do we help caregivers be aware of accessibility needs. A good resource for Caregivers would be SEIU.

- Legislative Priorities

The legislative priorities include:

- Nutrition: the 2024 approved funding was one time, so we need to continue to advocate for this resource.
- Case Management: was not funded in 2024. We are collaboratively working with the State to communicate the need for more support for people without caregivers.

Georgiann requested our state representative attend the July meeting.

Break

State Council on Aging Update (SCOA)

none

Communities

Lynden:

Jen Latuenbach stated the Lynden Senior Center is working with NWRC on getting an embedded counselor one time a month on a 3-month trial period at the Center. In addition, Lynden Senior Center is going to be a place for Powerful Tools for Caregivers. Jen is working with WCOA on additional funding for senior centers in Whatcom County.

Adjourn:

The next meeting, July 9th will be a hybrid meeting.

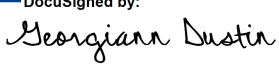
Marshall asked about meeting schedule and how many times the NWSSB should meet. This item will be on the next meeting agenda.

A motion was put forth to adjourn by Georgiann Dustin. **Motion passed.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:21 pm

Darla Smith, Administrative Manager

Reviewed and approved by the Northwest Senior Services Board at the July 9, 2024, meeting.

DocuSigned by:

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Georgiann Dustin, NWSSB, Chair