



Washington State Council on Aging

Meeting Title: 2024 January Washington State Council on Aging Meeting


Date: 1/23/2024

Location: Zoom Meeting

	Members Present	Appointment			Appointment
✓	Jean Kindem	At-Large East	✓	Vacant	Association of Counties
✓	Gavin Carmichael	AAAD Southwest WA Advisory Council	✓	Susan Conniry	O3A Advisory Council
	Rep. Kelly Chambers (Dianna Hawkins, Leg. Aide)	WA House of Representatives	✓	Dennis Wheeler	Snohomish County AAA
✓	Suone Cotner	At-Large West	✓	Susan Kerr	Kitsap AAA Advisory Council
	Vacant	NWRC Advisory Council		Vacant	Yakama Golden Eagle Advisory Council
✓	Deb Murphy	Central AAA		Guests Present	
✓	Michele Horaney	Lewis Mason Thurston AAA Advisory Council	✓	Mary-Anne Grafton	Guest
✓	Ron Vivion	At-Large West	✓	Walt Bowen	Senior Lobby
✓	Vacant (Michael Adusah sitting in)	ADS King County Advisory Council	✓	Mike Tornquist	ALTSA, RCS
✓	Bob Scarfo	Aging & Long-Term Care Eastern Washington Advisory Council	✓	Melanie McGuire	ALTSA
	Sen. Karen Keiser	WA State Senate	✓	Cameron Akita	ALTSA
✓	Michele Blythe	Association of Cities	✓	Cathy MacCaul	AARP
✓	Stephanie Carpenter	Southeast WA Aging and Long-Term Care	✓	Susan Engels	ALTSA
	Rep. Tarra Simmons	WA House of Representatives			
✓	Bruce Dougherty	Pierce County Aging & Disability Resources Advisory Board			
	Karen Kiessling	At-Large East			



Washington State Council on Aging

Topic	Key Points and/or Decisions Made
<p>Welcome/Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review/approve January agenda • Review/approve November meeting minutes • Review action items • Council Member updates 	<p>Chairperson Michele Blythe called the meeting to order at 9:00am with a quorum in attendance.</p> <p>Council reviewed and approved November meeting minutes and January's agenda.</p> <p>Dennis Wheeler briefed members on the legislative outreach conducted by the Snohomish County Council on Aging, including meetings to discuss priority issues with 20 legislators.</p> <p>Susan Conniry discussed her planned participation in the Roanoke Conference in Ocean Shores which will provide the opportunity to advocate 1:1 with Republican leaders from across the state.</p> <p>Council members introduced themselves and their association to SCOA.</p>
<p>Residential Care Services (RCS) Discussion</p>	<p>Mike Tornquist, Office Chief of Headquarters Operations at Residential Care Services (RCS) Division of AL TSA presented an overview of RCS's role. (Slides reviewed and included below)</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Residential Care Services - Introduction</p> </div>
<p>Legislative Advocacy Discussion</p>	<p>Ron Vivion provided a presentation reviewing the role of legislative advocacy and its differences from lobbying.</p> <p>SCOA was inaugurated and governed by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). Ron reviewed the Powers & Duties of the Council under RCW, including SCOA's partnership with AL TSA/DSHS.</p> <p>Ron reviewed resources outlining what constitutes lobbying, including references from the Boards & Commissions Member Handbook and Public Disclosure Commission.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>Susan Conniry spoke to the importance of SCOA and Advisory Council (AC) members' voices as advocates with legislators. Susan provided an example with her local city council in which she had presented on the SCOA Legislative Priorities which got through to a single member. Upon a second presentation from a local director speaking to food insecurity, several members grasped the impact of this work.</p>
February's Meeting	[moved to later discussion]
Joint Committee Discussion	<p>Bruce Dougherty discussed plans to schedule a separate meeting for the Bylaws Committee. Members of this committee include Ron Vivion, Susan Kerr, Dennis Wheeler, and Michele Horaney if available. Bruce added that changes to the SCOA Bylaws must be submitted to the Council two weeks prior to a regular meeting.</p> <p>Michele Horaney discussed the role of the Public Outreach & Education Committee and asked for more clarification for the committee's mission. Michele proposed that the committee set a time and date to meet outside of a regular meeting to consider this work. Ron Vivion offered that the previous discussion around legislative advocacy may answer some of these questions.</p> <p>Chairperson Michele Blythe noted the forward motion of committees and opted to table the discussion on the Outreach Committee to allow for more work to develop, suggesting that an email to solicit interested members for the Outreach Committee as a starting point.</p> <p>Ron Vivion reiterated the 2024 Legislative Priorities were completed. Michele Blythe reviewed a letter to legislators developed to supplement the 2024 Leg Priorities document. The letter would help communicate priorities and provide outreach. A motion to approve the letter was made and seconded.</p> <p>Prior to a vote on this motion, Council discussed the possibility of creating a separate letter to legislators at the end of session to update members. Ron recounted the more active role Legislators once had with the Council. Current legislators appointed to SCOA roster include Rep. Tarra Simmons, Senator Karen Keiser, and Rep. Kelly Chambers.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>The motion to send the letter to legislators along with 2024 Legislative Priorities was approved unanimously. Suone Cotner added that she would volunteer to reach out to current legislative SCOA members in addition to asking to be included as a member of the Legislative Committee.</p>
Break	
Partner Updates	<p>Cathy Knight, W4A State Director, though not in attendance emailed several resources with Council Members prior to the meeting (W4A advocacy resources found here).</p> <p>Cathy MacCaul, AARP Cathy thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak noting the busy session in progress.</p> <p>Hearings for House Bill 2244 and Senate Bill 6069 were scheduled for hearing on 1/23/24. These companion bills relate to improving retirement security through the creation of a savings program, updating the State's Small Business Retirement Marketplace. Cathy noted that individuals are 15 times more likely to save for retirement if there is a way to save at work. This proposed law would allow the State to establish a portable investment option for businesses that would be managed by private investment companies.</p> <p>AARP is supporting HB 1859, concerning the rights of residents in long-term care facilities. Sponsored by the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP), this bill would extend resident bill of rights previously applied to those in nursing facilities to residents in all long-term care facilities (assisted living, adult family homes, enhanced service facilities). The House is holding a hearing on 1/23/24 for this bill.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>Cathy informed the council on a discussion to be held with Congressman Derek Kilmer the following day. He is interested in hearing from those living in the 6th Congressional District about issues relating to older adults.</p> <p>HB 2467, concerning increasing access to the long-term services and supports trust (WA Cares) is working towards going on the ballot. The bill supports fixes to WA Cares that creates portability for this long-term care benefit. Cathy noted that DSHS recently reported 15,000 individuals recently contacted the state asking to opt into the benefit.</p> <p>Walt Bowen, Senior Lobby Walt shared that it was the 16th day of a 60-day session.</p> <p>Walt described the process of getting initiatives on the ballot, which must first be certified by the WA Secretary of State. Issues being address through initiative include a capital gains tax, WA Cares, and parental rights relating to their children’s public-school education. Walt suggested Council Members tune in to TVW’s coverage of these issues through their respective committee hearings.</p> <p>The next meeting of the Senior Lobby is February 12th, and the Senior Lobby Day is Thursday, February 22nd. SCOA has a platform at these meetings to present on related topics.</p> <p>Walt noted that it’s important to start thinking about the 2025 long session where the biennial budget and major laws are passed. Next year should also see a new governor. Vacancies for legislative offices will be filed in May with the Auditor’s Office. Senior Lobby helps to educate these new members to create awareness around issues affecting seniors.</p>
<p>Council Discussion Future Meeting Topics / Advocacy Months / 2024 Schedule</p>	<p>Council discussed the option of holding a meeting in February in addition to the Senior Lobby Day events. All members voted in favor of holding a meeting on Tuesday, February 27th.</p> <p>Suone Cotner expressed the need to watch the WA Cares initiatives and how to best advocate for it.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>Bruce Dougherty shared his interest in Residential Care Services and noted that licensed facility reports can be looked up by county. Stephanie Carpenter offered her support to answer residential care-based questions with her background in nursing.</p> <p>Dennis Wheeler discussed the idea of advocacy as a philosophy more than an event. This is a long-term process that takes planning and coordination. In Snohomish County, the County Council on Aging discussed efforts with local representatives, local officials, and lastly with county staff who were instrumental in coordinating outreach (i.e., creating one-pagers and scheduling meetings).</p>
<p>ALTSA Update</p>	<p>Susan Engels, State Unit on Aging Office Chief provided an overview of topics to be discussed: updates on presumptive eligibility, Governor’s Aging Summit, bills of interest, and the Governor’s Budget.</p> <p>Presumptive Eligibility (PE) – CMS signed off on PE through the Medicaid Waiver renewal. This allows people to self-attest their financials and offers a basic functional assessment to start services more quickly. The next phase looks at expanding PE to all clients receiving in-home services and avoid more costly residential care. Further down the road, the third phase will look to extend PE into the residential setting.</p> <p>Governor’s Aging Summit – The Governor’s Office pushed the timeline for this event from late 2024 to May 22nd, 2024, kicking planning into high gear. SCOA member Bob Scarfo sits on the planning committee for this summit. This in-person event will host approximately 100 individuals/thought leaders from across the state. Locations are currently being discussed with a likely destination in the South Sound area.</p> <p>Governor’s Budget – was released in December and includes a few decision packages (DP) that were picked up from ALTSA. One DP was to increase funding for the Tribal Kinship Navigator Program, serving 7 WA tribes. Funding that previously increased for other programs, but tribal programs were not included – this would add funding to include these 7 tribes.</p> <p>W4A was successful in advocating for hunger relief funding pre-session, as \$7.1M is slated for Senior Nutrition. This is in addition to the \$1.7M added last year, yet a shortfall is still expected as the funding gap is closer to \$15M.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>Bills of note – AL TSA identified significant challenges with HB 1859, extending the resident bill of rights to all residential settings and submitted striker language to the bill (hearing at 1:30pm on 1/23/24).</p> <p>Michele Blythe asked about the case management ratio prior to when funding was added 2 years or so ago.</p> <p>Susan shared that before the 75:1 ratio was set across the state, each locality set their own caseload ratios. The state average was 81.7:1, with a range of 90.3-76.9.</p>		
<p>New Business / Public Comment</p>	<p>Dennis Wheeler reiterated the idea that advocacy work takes time, up to a year in advance. Staying succinct is critical.</p> <p>Chairperson Michele Blythe called for any other comments or new business, and with none, the meeting adjourned at 11:52am.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS		Assignee	Due Date
Follow up on member questions re: RCS		Cameron Akita	ASAP
Distribute Letter to Legs. w/ Legislative Priorities		Cameron Akita	ASAP