

**Joint
Senior Services Advisory Council (SSAC)
and
Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC)
Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 4, 2020**

SSAC Members Present: Carolyn Mendez-Luck, Chair; Doris Lamb; Suzanne Lazaro, Issues and Advocacy Committee (IAC) Co-Chair; Bill Turner; Mitzi Naucler; Robynn Pease; Anne Brett; and Catherine Skiens.

DSAC Members Present: Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald, Chair; Lee Lazaro, Vice Chair; Mike Volpe, IAC Co-Chair; Suzanne Brean; Clark Brean; Jann Glenn; and Edythe James.

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Members Present: Dawn Rustrum and Sandy Potter.

Guests: Cathy Savage; A.J. Warren; Michelle Giammona; Susan Strawn; Tomas Hernandez; Blair Bobier; and Richard Montgomery.

Members Absent: Commissioner Claire Hall, Lincoln County; Saleem Noorani, SSAC Vice Chair; Mark McNabb; and Lee Strandberg.

Staff: Randi Moore, Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director; Ann Johnson, SDS Program Supervisor; Kim Cooper, SDS Executive Assistant; Dawn John, SDS Program Supervisor; Marie Laper, Older Adult Behavioral Health Specialist (OABHS); Kate Hall, SDS Program Supervisor, Kayla Armstrong, SDS Program Supervisor; and Terri Sharpe, SDS Administrative Assistant.

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Additions to the Agenda:

DSAC Chair Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. Introductions were made, including guests.

2. Approval of Minutes:

ACTION: Motion to approve the December 10, 2019 Joint SSAC/DSAC meeting minutes made by Suzanne Lazaro, seconded by Doris Lamb. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Issues and Advocacy – Day at the Capitol Information (IAC Co-Chairs Suzanne Lazaro and Mike Volpe)

IAC Co-Chair Lazaro reported to the Councils that the Oregon Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities (O4AD) will be holding their Quarterly meeting at the end of the month when they meet with advocates statewide. The February meeting is closed but she encouraged everyone to attend a future meeting.

With the Oregon State Legislature in short session this year the O4AD will not be holding a Day at the Capitol. However, SDS Director Moore would like the IAC to meet with Legislators at the Capitol to build on SDS's relationship with them. The main focus of their meeting would be to thank the Legislators for the increased funding SDS received last year. They will also continue to present SDS's needs in workforce development and support in easier processes in getting more Home Care Workers (HCW) into the HCW pool.

SDS Director Moore asked for volunteers to join her and IAC Co-Chairs Lazaro and Volpe for a Day at the Capitol. Volunteers included; Ms. Lamb, Catherine Skiens, Mitzi Naucler, DSAC Vice Chair Lee Lazaro, and SSAC Chair Carolyn Mendez-Luck. Talking points will be provided.

IAC Co-Chair Lazaro reported that at the Federal level, the House passed the Older Americans Act (OAA) reauthorization bill, however, the bill is stalled in the Senate. If the bill still has not passed by May, Older Americans month, the IAC would like to advocate for it on a local level through a media campaign. The idea would be to advertise through local newspapers, and posters placed in public buildings, stating the services and benefits the OAA provides locally. If the bill has not passed by then, the campaign would also encourage the public to reach out to their Senator to get the OAA reauthorization bill passed.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro suggested also visiting Oregon's two U.S. Senators on the same day they are at the Capitol to advocate for getting the OAA reauthorization bill passed.

IAC Co-Chair Volpe said the Legislative short session ends on March 8th.

4. Elder Justice Stakeholders Conversation (SDS Director Randi Moore):

SDS Director Moore gave the Councils an overview on the *Area Plan* which is a strategic plan developed every four years with stakeholders, Council members, community members, and consumers. There are State required focus areas as well as other areas that SDS chooses to add. Elder Justice is a State required focus area which will be discussed today. Stakeholders at the table include SDS Adult Protected Services (APS) Supervisors Kate Hall and Kayla Armstrong, Legal Aid Representatives Tomas Hernandez, Richard Montgomery, Blair Bobier, and retired Legal Aid Representative Mitzi Naucler.

Dawn Rustrum stated that the State is putting out webinars that are very informative around the *Area Plan* overview and instructions that she encouraged all to look at.

- Goals from last Area Plan – Handout provided:
- Identify gaps in Elder Justice:

APS Program Supervisor Armstrong reported calls to APS increased from 2,230 in 2018 to 2,615 in 2019. If the calls do not meet the criteria for abuse or neglect then the callers are assigned resources, and if they do meet the criteria then they will be assigned for an investigation. In 2019 there were 1,266 investigations in which one-third of those were in Benton and Lincoln Counties, and the other two-thirds were in Linn County. Of those, 725 were community investigations and 550 were facility investigations.

A lot of the trends they are seeing are related to self-neglect, specifically with an increase in financial exploitation due to scams. Other issues they encounter are long term mental health concerns, along with housing and transportation (which are ongoing issues). It is hard to push investigations through to a prosecution with only a handful happening last year. The two most common case types being pushed through were financial theft and neglect. APS Supervisor Armstrong said one of the biggest things they run into is that their Oregon Administrative Rules definition of abuse and neglect don't always align with the Oregon Revised Statute of what constitutes a crime. The Multi-Disciplinary Team is helpful in making those languages mesh and understand the two together. A lot of times it's a bad situation that has not risen to the level of a crime. Safety Oversight and Quality Assurance overlook all APS's reports and investigations.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro asked if there was a process for mediation or negotiation for parties involved to achieve a better level of oversight and cooperation in the older abuse cases. APS Supervisor Hall said in the community situations they try a lot of service intervention such as getting HCW numbers terminated, restraining orders, or getting a guardian in place for those that can no longer take care of themselves. In facility situations they have State Licensors that will go in and intervene with support through different trainings on abuse, neglect, and staffing. As of last year, individuals can now be held responsible, where in the past it was always the facility's responsibility.

APS's biggest source of calls come from hospital discharge planners, medical professionals within the community, and family members. Facilities are required to report within 24 hours if they cannot rule out abuse or neglect.

Clark Brean asked if APS was able to track trends in facilities and in the community. APS Program Supervisor Armstrong said they are able to track trends on specific facilities where they receive an increase in reports and are able to work closely with the State Licensing Units. In regards to tracking trends in neighborhoods, they've had conversations with Community and Economic Development GIS Analyst/Planner Steve Lucker, but as of now they do not have any specifics on any hotspots in the community. Mr. Brean feels this would be useful data in reducing groups that target elders.

SDS Director Moore suggested, in regards to scams, that if they want to do more education or outreach with seniors and people with disabilities, they could make this a goal they focus on for Elder Justice. Mr. Brean suggested they also take this to the Legislators when they go to Salem.

SDS Director Moore pointed out that the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program was not being represented at the table today but would like to invite Fred Steele, State Ombudsman to come present at the next Care Planning Committee meeting.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore will reach out to Fred Steele, State Ombudsman, to come and present at the next Care Planning Committee meeting.

Robynn Pease asked what the community response is when self-neglect rises to the level where it impacts the larger community. How does the APS team determine self-neglect when there is a lack in guardianship that could intervene. APS Program Supervisor Armstrong said they rely on community resources which takes time and many conversations with the community and the person in self-neglect.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro suggested adding to their talking points for the Legislators the disconnect between the Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR) and the Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) with the possibility of finding a bill sponsor.

Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) has a contract with Legal Aid in the tri-County area where they use OAA funds to support Legal Aid to work with consumers.

Mr. Hernandez, Legal Aid Regional Director for the Albany office, stated this contract allows them to help persons 60 years of age and older without regard to their income requirement. The services Legal Aid provides to people 60 age or over are prioritized in relation to housing, such as evictions and involuntary move outs from Assisted Living Facilities (ALF) (which take up the bulk of their resources). Their biggest challenge is dealing with the higher level of bureaucracy (administration, lawyers, and licensing) and getting everyone to work cohesively in finding a solution in not moving a person out that needs the care. Mr.

Hernandez is seeing a disturbing trend where some ALF are not providing the minimum services that are required for a consumer. Part of the reason is due to the Consumer Guide stating one thing and the facilities contract, that the consumer signs, says something else. Legal Aid has a good relationship with a Long-term Care Ombudsman, who is their biggest ally in bringing these cases to their attention. All these cases are investigated at a minimum, but often times receive full representation. Some of the gaps seen are related to financial abuse and financial scams. Mr. Hernandez feels it is a missed opportunity for them not being proactive in educating the elderly on their rights rather than being reactive.

Legal Aid Representative Mr. Montgomery said if the ALFs are represented by an attorney it is easier for Legal Aid to help the client due to the huge turnover in administrators in the ALFs and their lack of knowledge of the rules and regulations. One of the issues they see is people going into a facility with the lack of understanding of how they will pay for it after they run out of money with the expectation Medicaid will. Unfortunately one has to qualify for Medicaid services which are high. Another issue Mr. Montgomery sees is when people move into a home, the money received from Social Security is reduced to \$160 per month for spending money. This is not enough for most people to pay for their storage units, which many have an attachment to since this is where their belongings and history are, resulting in some choosing not to make the move to the home where they can receive care. He would like to see money carved out for storage units which would be a lower expense than the higher cost of medical expenses the person would incur if they chose not to go into the home.

Lincoln County Legal Aid Representative Bobier clarified that Legal Aid works on civil cases, not criminal. With only two attorneys in Lincoln County they have to prioritize because they can't handle everything. In order to qualify for their services people have to be around the poverty level. With the AAA grant they are allowed to serve seniors without the income restriction, however the size of the grant does not let them serve as many people that need to be served. There is a big gap for people who don't get covered by Legal Aid and people who can't afford lawyers. Other gaps Mr. Bobier sees in services in Lincoln County are affordable housing, transportation, and the lack of a permanent overnight homeless shelter.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore will get information on the number of AAA contracted cases Legal Aid serves annually.

Mitzi Naucner clarified that Legal Aid serves many other seniors through other Legal Aid sources of revenue.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro questioned whether, in regards to workload, there would be benefit in an expansion of a non-legal agency to reduce the legal work involved. Mr. Bobier said simplifying things in the legal system overall and making things more user friendly so people don't have to rely as much on courtroom procedure would benefit. Mr. Montgomery sees oversight needed mostly with memory and dementia care due to this population being the most vulnerable.

Ms. Mendez-Luck said the Quality Measurement Council (QMC) uses as one of the indicators of quality, is training with Adult Foster Homes, Residential Care Facilities and ALFs. Facilities are tracking this now and starting this year they will have to report back to the State for the State to report back to the public.

Legal Aid has a shortage of attorneys due to a shortage of funding. The funding they have comes from Federal and State Governments, different grant sources and some donations. They do use law students as interns during the summer.

APS Supervisor Armstrong mentioned one of the biggest gaps in service is when people are aging out of the mental health system and has ongoing care needs. Marie Laper said the population is aging and people with a chronic illness ages at a quicker rate than their peers. There is funding for the different populations but there is lack of understanding on how mental health can impact the physical health of individuals. Community Mental Health and County Mental Health does not serve everyone that has mental illness, their services are very specialized which causes frustration and concern on where these people go for services.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore is considering Behavioral Health for Older Adults as a separate focus group.

5. Break for lunch:

- Identify top three priorities or need statements:

SDS Director Moore suggested developing a Leadership Team and a strategy if APS staff sees a trend in a facility where they are using more APS than they have seen in the past. This would entail speaking with the facility's leadership team, possibly providing support and training to help redirect the negative trend toward the positive. She would like to recommit to annually doing an ALF Administrator training or roundtable with support of Legal Aid and Ombudsmen.

Ms. Lazaro would like to increase education on prevention of financial abuse, scams, and costs when planning one's long-term care. This education campaign would be targeted at the general public and include consumers and family members.

Mr. Volpe feels it is important to find out why Linn County has more APS calls than Benton and Lincoln Counties by finding out the reason for the calls. Ms. Naucner added that they need to look at the proportionality of the calls. There are twice as many people on Medicaid in Linn County than Benton and Lincoln Counties combined and Linn County has a larger population.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore would like to create a map of where the calls are coming from. They will reach out to CED GIS Analyst/Planner Lucker.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore will gather data on APS referrals. She will also get the numbers APS Supervisor Armstrong mentioned earlier (see below for numbers). If the number of calls continue to increase they will have to look at increasing APS staff.

- 2018-2230 calls. averaging 185/ month
- 2019-2615 calls. averaging 218/ month

- 2018-1078 investigations
- 2019-1266 investigations

- 2019 Benton and Lincoln County = 1/3 of all investigations. Linn County = 2/3 of all investigations
- 725 Community investigations and 550 Facility investigations

DSAC Chair Molnar-Fitzgerald would like to focus on education regarding abuse and isolation, as well as educating facilities to help prevent complaints.

Marie Laper would like to focus on prevention rather than reaction by hiring a prevention specialist to help reduce the amount of investigations.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro would like to see statistical analysis of the number of calls, type of calls, trends, and areas of where the calls are coming from. This would help in the Councils setting priorities and areas of focus. He would also like to see a statistical analysis with Legal Aid as well. He feels there are areas of improvement with State Licensing Units.

Mr. Brean would like to focus on the rural population where there is a lack of transportation, which means lack of services and communication. He feels that, with the increase in spoofing, people are not responding to calls, so when health care providers try to educate on services available, their calls are not being answered.

Mr. Hernandez would like to focus on working together and leveraging relationships.

Ms. Naucler would like to focus on educating themselves on housing issues.

SDS Director Moore said that when the Executive Committee discussed the areas they wished to focus on they didn't add housing because SDS doesn't have money for housing, but they do have money to build relationships and to do outreach. She asked the Councils if they wanted to add Housing as one of the focus areas. Everyone consented.

Ms. Brean suggested building a tiny house community.

Ms. Skiens, who sits on the Linn-Benton Housing Board Committee, volunteered to bring to the Councils their goals for housing. She explained that housing is a basic need in getting help and the element that is missing in all the social service work that they do.

DSAC Chair Molnar-Fitzgerald suggested focusing on providing services to help remove barriers to housing.

Ms. Pease suggested having a Housing forum, bringing all the players to the table, to educate themselves on the complexities of housing, who the stakeholders are, and what people can do to contribute to the solutions. Then possibly, through this forum, they could educate the communities on the idea of supported housing and how it's holistic in its intervention and enhancement of wellbeing of others.

Mr. Brean suggested they focus on Mental Health which he feels needs addressing as much as Housing.

- Draft a plan and strategy:

SDS Director Moore asked if anyone comes up with other ideas or goals to reach out to her. Ideas discussed today will be taken back to staff where they will prioritize and develop goals they feel, as an agency, they can work toward to solve. She will then bring it back to the Councils for their input.

- Identify resources for implementing or maintaining service priorities:

6. Other Business:

SSAC Chair Mendez-Luck announced that Oregon State University's Gerontology Conference is being held on April 1st and 2nd and there are a couple of sessions that speak to topics being discussed today.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore said if anyone is interested in attending the Conference, but the cost is inhibitive, let her know and she might be able to help with that. Information will be sent out.

SDS Director Moore is working on finding a location in Lincoln County for the April Joint SSAC-DSAC meeting where everyone will meet under one roof. At this time it will be brought to the Councils for a vote as to whether they will like to meet face to face for all meetings.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro announced that there is a Transportation Forum on February 24th. If anyone is interested in attending they should let SDS Director Moore know and she will send them an invitation.

DSAC Vice Chair Lazaro shared that the State has funded the Special Transportation Fund (STF) for senior and disabled transportation. Recently there was a new transportation tax put in place that generates about nine - ten times as much money as the STF receives. Most of that money is dedicated to fixed-route major transit improvements. Recently, the Legislature has directed ODOT to merge those two funds. There are good reasons for this but also there is the threat that senior and disabled persons may get lost in the shuffle. There is the opportunity, through the committee that will be formed, to have a larger part of the money go toward senior and disabled transportation, otherwise they could lose it. He suggested adding this issue to their talking points for a Day at the Capitol.

Ms. Brett shared that what she sees missing from the *Area Plan* is a focus on emergency disaster preparedness, environmental as well as social. She encouraged everyone to think about emergency planning. The Emergency Operation Center (EOC), a joint effort by the County and the City to develop a master plan is coming into being and she feels this is something the Councils will want to be a part of. She encouraged everyone to think about focused goals they could have around protecting the vulnerable population during either a social or environmental disaster.

Jann Glenn shared that the Homeless Connect was in Newport with a great turnout and many resources. However, there was disappointment that SDS was not represented there.

7. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 7th in Lincoln County.

Meeting Minutes were recorded by Terri Sharpe.