

**Joint
Senior Services Advisory Council (SSAC)
and
Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC)
Meeting
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 6, 2020**

SSAC Members Present: Saleem Noorani, Chair; Robynn Pease; Catherine Skiens; Suzanne Lazaro; Mitzi Naucler; Lee Strandberg; and Doris Lamb.

DSAC Members Present: Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald, Chair; Lee Lazaro, Vice Chair; and Mike Volpe.

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

Guests: Cathy Savage; Richard Montgomery; Allison Hobgood; Joann Cvar; Richard Montgomery; and AJ Warren.

Members Absent: Commissioner Claire Hall, Lincoln County; Anne Brett, Bill Turner; Carolyn Mendez-Luck; Jasper Smith; and Mark McNabb.

Staff: Randi Moore, Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director; Ann Johnson, SDS Program Supervisor; Andrea Smith, SDS Program Supervisor; Kim Cooper, SDS Executive Assistant; and Terri Sharpe, SDS Administrative Assistant.

1. Welcome, Roll Call, and Additions to the Agenda (SSAC Chair Saleem Noorani):

SSAC Chair Saleem Noorani called the meeting to order at 10:03 am. Introductions were made, including guests.

2. Approval of Minutes:

ACTION: Motion to approve the August 4, 2020 Joint SSAC/DSAC meeting minutes made by DSAC Vice Chair Lee Lazaro, seconded by Mike Volpe. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Care Planning Committee (CPC) Report (CPC Chair Robynn Pease):

CPC Chair Robynn Pease reported that the CPC met September 1st, via Zoom, where they reviewed the data tables for the *Area Plan 2021-24*. The data tables are to demonstrate the population in aging, disabilities, race, and ethnicity; keeping in mind the issues of equity and inclusion, isolation, housing, transportation, behavioral health, food security, social determinants of health, family caregiving, and Tribal support. After reviewing the tables, the CPC determined they would like more information regarding housing, poverty, and homeless populations demonstrated in the data tables as well.

In the past, small stakeholder groups of underserved populations were organized, but due to the pandemic, SDS Director Randi Moore suggested a different approach where SDS surveys their community partners regarding the services they deliver to SDS's underserve populations. SDS would then follow up a year later to determine how SDS and their community partners can work better to further serve these people.

SDS Director Randi Moore had gone over the budget cuts from the last legislative session where the Programs to Encourage Active Rewarding Lives for Seniors (PEARLS) program was eliminated as well as the funding for expansion of Case Managers. Any Case Managers that

were already hired will be retained. SDS is still looking for additional Case Managers and if anyone knows of anyone they should contact SDS Director Randi Moore with their recruitment suggestions.

There was a brief introduction of the *Stand by Me* program which is a financial empowerment coaching model program to help families and individuals reduce debt, increase credit scores, plan for home ownership, and college savings. More about the program will be presented to the Joint SSAC-DSAC at a future date.

The next CPC meeting is scheduled for November 3rd.

4. Meals on Wheels Advisory Committee (MOWAC) Report (MOWAC Chair Catherine Skiens):

MOWAC Chair Catherine Skiens reported MOW received an \$18,525 check from six of the Rotary Clubs of Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties, which included a matching grant from the District Rotary, to help with the increase in demand of more than 2,500 meals due to COVID-19.

SSAC Chair Saleem Noorani commented on the ability of the Rotaries to raise \$18,525 given their usual MOW fundraiser, Tapa's and Treasures, was canceled this year due to COVID-19.

SDS Director Randi Moore thanked SSAC member Lee Strandberg for all his support with the MOW program.

In regards to the fires, the MOW site in Mill City had closed due to the fire evacuations but is now back up and running with all their consumers getting deliveries. During the evacuations the Lincoln City's MOW site served over 150 meals to those evacuated from Otis. They are back up and running and still serving meals to those that were displaced. MOWAC Chair Catherine Skiens praised the MOW staff in their outreach to their consumers and volunteers during the fire evacuations.

Mike Volpe asked about the number of MOW volunteers who have been affected by COVID-19. MOWAC Chair Catherine Skiens said that many of their volunteers left due to their age and their vulnerability to COVID-19. MOW Program Supervisor Anita Lengacher reached out to other agencies that had temporarily shut down and was able to take on many of their volunteers. The MOW volunteers have started to build back up again but are still not where they were pre-COVID-19.

5. Monitor and Review Committee (MRC) Report (MRC Chair Mitzi Naucler):

MRC Chair Mitzi Naucler reported that the MRC met to draw up a Request for Proposal (RFP) for *Older Americans Act (OAA)* dollars where an ambitious timeline was determined. Due to the fires the timeline was set back. As of now, the RFP has been sent and the deadline for applications is now closed. The MRC will meet tomorrow to review seven applicants with asks of less than \$75,000 total. There are \$100,000 OAA dollars to work with so if the applicants meet the criteria they will be able to fund them all. There is a short window of time for them to spend the money so it is important to get the funds awarded ASAP.

6. Eligibility Transformation (ET) Presentation (SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith):

SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith provided a PowerPoint presentation on ET where she covered what ET is, the applicant portal, SDS's preparation for going live in November, concerns they are seeing, steps they are taking to be prepared, and lessons learned from the

pilots that has been working in the system for a couple of months. A few Council members had tested the applicant portal and were encouraged to add anything they felt was valuable for others to hear.

PowerPoint:

- ET is a new online Applicant Portal where anyone can apply for and manage any of the following benefits online:
 - Medical Benefits
 - Food Benefits
 - Employment Related Day Care
 - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
 - Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence Survivors

The latter three are benefits that SDS doesn't usually take on but with the new ET this will allow people to apply for all their benefits at once rather than having to go to multiple places to do so.

Staff will use a new program called "ONE" that will be used to determine eligibility and manage benefits for the above programs.

Options for applying include: applying online, calling into an 800 number and applying by phone, or a paper application. The paper application may be a barrier due to the application form increasing from 15 pages to 40. This is due to the number of programs which one can apply for. SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith is anticipating an increase in staff support needed.

DSAC Vice Chair Lee Lazaro said he participated in the testing program and found the application online fairly easy to work with. The number of screens one has to work through is dependent on the benefits they are applying for. He asked if SDS has someone that can help those that are applying online.

SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith replied that they have discussed having a computer available in the lobby for those that wanted to come into the building to do their online applications with staff available to assist them, as well as having more staff on site to meet with people face to face. However, with COVID-19 it is more difficult at this time. Having additional access and someone to support them will be key.

Allison Hobgood asked if Gram Pad tablets are compatible with the online application. SDS Director Randi Moore said they were thinking of doing some testing of the tablet and is interested in seeing if it can handle something as complicated as the online application.

DSAC Vice Chair Lee Lazaro said he felt a keyboard and mouse were critical in filling out the online application and thinks it will be challenging on a tablet.

SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith likes the idea of having options and will look into the gram pad to see if it would be a good alternative to a computer in the lobby.

- SDS is in Wave 1 of the ET rollout and will go live on November 2nd, which includes Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties. Most of the State is in Wave 1 except for a few Northwest and Northcentral Counties who will be going live in February (Wave 2) which, at that time, will bring the entire State into the ONE system.

- The first pilot group went live in the ONE system on July 6th. This group will be doing a lot of the electronic part of the work and taking phone calls. There are long-term care cases in SDS's branch that are in the ONE system, thus allowing some SDS staff early access and practice in the system.

The second pilot group went live in the ONE system on August 3rd, which includes Grants Pass Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) and Self Sufficiency Programs (SSP) offices who piloted the branch processes.

- Applicant Portal – A website, <https://one.oregon.gov/> where Oregonians can:
 - Apply for benefits online;
 - Renew benefits online;
 - Track status of benefits, view notices and requests for information;
 - Upload requested documents;
 - Report changes;
 - Request an EBT card;
 - Designate an Authorized Representative who can complete an application and share information online.

The applicant portal functions like any website where you have a username and password along with an 800 number for assistance. Once in the page, there is a dashboard where one could view any notifications and actions. There are quick links one can click on for announcements, applications, and contact information.

MRC Chair Mitzi Naucler asked if the applicant, when filling out the application, will be prompted for additional informational for benefits that they didn't know they were qualified for or needed. SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith said there are some prompts, particularly around long-term care services, but mostly this would fall on the Eligibility worker who will be processing the information.

DSAC Vice Chair Lee Lazaro said this was one of his concerns as well, and feels it would be easier to apply for everything and then let the system tell you what you were not qualified for. During his testing of the system, he was not informed or prompted of any other benefits he may be qualified for.

SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith said locally they have discussed the importance of asking about other programs. The SSP has similar concerns. She agreed the language could be better and this is an area they may need to advocate on.

CPC Chair Robynn Pease asked if other states were offering the online portal. SDS Program Supervisor Andrea Smith said that the company Deloitte, who is contracted to work on Oregon's system has worked on similar systems in 31 states. The system Oregon chose to adopt is the one modeled after Kentucky's due to their similar demographics. However, Oregon has added a lot of additional features from other states.

- STATEWIDE WORK
 - ONE Customer Service Center – staff are spread across the State working in a virtual environment where they:
 - Take phone calls: answer questions, complete interviews for benefits, etc.;
 - Take voice signature for those applying over the phone;
 - Process paperwork: online/mailed applications, reported changes, documents received.

- Branch Offices
 - Meet with those who walk in the office with questions or want to apply for benefits;
 - Complete scheduled appointments (in person/over the phone);
 - Take phone calls and voice signatures for those applying over the phone;
 - Process paperwork as mentioned above.

The top priority in cases will be those where the person does not have benefits now. The next priority is where the person needs to renew their benefits before they end. The bottom tier of priority is working the cases where there is no risk of losing benefits.

The system is set up to refer cases with long-term care services back to their local branch to avoid people falling through the cracks, or having people who are less familiar with those programs, working those cases.

- Potential Impact:
 - Staff is learning new programs and a new computer system so everyone Statewide will have a learning curve they have to work through;
 - Delays in completing applications with the backlog of work that will need to be worked through as cases are transitioned from the old system to the new system;
 - Barriers to new options for applying for services;
 - Long term care services - encourage those with services to reach out to SDS locally.
- Pilot Wave: Lessons Learned
 - Areas of Concern discovered:
 - ✓ It will take longer than usual to complete the work;
 - ✓ It will take time for staff statewide to become experts at all programs;
 - ✓ They are still discovering and resolving system defects.
 - Actions SDS can take:
 - ✓ Prioritize staff training;
 - ✓ Use Site Support;
 - ✓ Create and train on process changes as a result of moving to the ONE system.
 - Successes:
 - ✓ Partnerships across AAA, APD, and SSP are stronger than ever;
 - ✓ There is a strong support system and staff resources available;
 - ✓ Staff in the ONE system have been able to manage the workload;
 - ✓ Staff are finding that ONE allows for greater efficiency in completing work.

SDS Program Supervisory Andrea Smith stated that while staff working with ET are doing their best, there will be gaps in the system that will need advocacy to resolve.

SDS Director Randi Moore wrapped up by reminding the Councils that they have been talking about ET for years and overall they feel this is good for Oregon. However, it is SDS's consumers who are the most vulnerable and who they are most concerned about getting left behind in the system, so SDS will be working with the Councils in assessing if this is successful or if there are barriers that they will need to advocate on. SDS Director Randi Moore will provide information on how the rollout goes.

7. Area Plan Updates (SDS Director Randi Moore):

SDS Director Randi Moore reported that they are in the midst of creating SDS's four year *Area Plan*. Due to COVID-19, the deadline has been delayed from January of 2021 to June 2021.

Starting in December, parts of the *Area Plan* will be brought to the Councils for their review, assessment, and approval, with the entire *Area Plan* ready for them to approve by March 2021.

Surveys went out to SDS's community partners that serve Latino, Tribal, or LGBTQ seniors and people with disabilities. They received the fewest response back from their community partners that serve the Latino and Tribal populations. SDS Director Randi Moore asked the Councils to reach out to her if they knew of anyone that worked in organizations that serve either of these underserved populations and she'll get a survey to them.

SDS Director Randi Moore is currently working with the finance department to ensure that the budget for the *Area Plan* is supported, as well as SDS's *Continuing Operations Plan*. Staff is meeting weekly to get *Area Plan* updates completed with this week focused on the data tables that CPC Chair Robynn Pease reported on. The aim is to make the *Area Plan* language more concise and efficient.

DSAC Vice Chair Lee Lazaro suggested having a meeting dedicated to the review of the *Area Plan* as they have done in the past.

Joann Cvar asked what the *Area Plan* was. SDS Director Randi Moore explained that every Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is required to create a four year plan on how they are going to prioritize and direct their focus with OAA funds, as well as identifying barriers and populations they are going to serve, along with strategizing how they will have the most impact in SDS's communities. Areas of focus are identified by the State but the AAA may choose any additional areas of focus if they chose to do so.

ACTION: SDS Director Randi Moore will send Joann Cvar information on the last *Area Plan*.

Wild Fire Response Report Out (SDS Director Randi Moore):

SDS Director Randi Moore reported both Linn and Lincoln Counties were affected by the wildfires. When the fires started, Case Managers started working with their supervisors in ensuring that SDS's most vulnerable consumers were safe, secure, and had the resources they need. Over 450 consumers in Otis, Lincoln City, Mill City, Gates, Brownsville, Scio, and Sweet Home were contacted to discuss an evacuation plan and identify what supports were needed to help them evacuate. In collaboration with the Community and Economic Development Department, they were able to provide transportation for those that needed it. Consumers were very gracious and appreciative of the outreach.

SDS Director Randi Moore said homecare workers played a huge role in getting people to safety and she would like to provide some kind of recognition for the work they did.

Anyone they were unable to locate in a level two or three zone were reported to law enforcement with varying degrees of resolution.

Staff communicated regularly with the adult foster homes and care facilities in all levels of the evacuation zones. There were several facilities and one adult foster home in Lincoln County that had to evacuate but all were able to return back. However, there was one adult foster home in Linn County that needed to evacuate and unfortunately was lost.

In addition to SDS's consumers, there were a large number of people that reached out to the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) with needs and concerns. They were added to a list, and based on priority, they were contacted and assisted.

SDS Director Randi Moore stressed the dedication of SDS staff when seven staff members had to evacuate but continued to make calls up to when they actually evacuated then resumed making calls once they were safely relocated. There was one staff member who lost her home and they are trying to figure out, as an organization, how they might be able to give support to her.

Case Managers are now reaching out and calling consumers to identify those that have been misplaced. They are also reaching out to all Eligibility consumers in the effective areas to identify any additional support and services they may need.

During the evacuation period staff were sent to evacuation centers to provide onsite resources, and conducted assessments for those that needed more long-term care center placement. *MOW's* displaced consumer meals, along with *MOW's* frozen meals, were used to feed evacuees in the shelter locations.

SDS Director Randi Moore said one lesson learned from this was the need for a quicker and easier way to access consumer information. They are working with the State in advocating for a better system for this process.

SDS is now reaching out to their community organizations that do emergency planning so they will have a better plan for the future. A lot was learned from this experience.

SDS Director Randi Moore gave thanks to organizations like the North End Senior Solutions (NESS) and the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP) for their peer support.

8. Other Business and Announcements:

Lee Strandberg announced he will be contributing information to the Timberhill newsletter on *MOW* and how people can donate.

ACTION: SDS Director Randi Moore will reach out to Finance to pull requested *MOW* data for Lee Strandberg.

SSAC Chair Saleem Noorani said he was speaking for all the Council members on the phenomenal work done by the SDS staff during the wildfire crisis.

9. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 8, 2020.

Meeting Minutes were recorded by Terri Sharpe.