

**Joint  
Senior Services Advisory Council (SSAC)  
and  
Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC)  
Meeting  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, August 2, 2022**

**SSAC Members Present:** Mitzi Naucler, Chair; Robynn Pease, Vice Chair and Care Planning Committee (CPC) Chair; Suzanne Lazaro, Issues and Advocacy Chair; Richard Montgomery; and Kay McDonald.

**DSAC Members Present:** Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald, Chair; Allison Hobgood, Vice Chair; Michelle Giammona; and Joann Cvar.

**Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) Members Present:** Jasper Smith.

**Guests:** Dennis Epstein; Janelle Cervantes, Oregon Veterans' Home; Kacey Urrutia, Samaritan Health; Peggy McGuire, Community Services Consortium; and Emma Koester.

**Members Absent:** Bill Turner; Terri Fackrell; and Lee Strandberg.

**Staff:** Randi Moore, Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director; Ryan Vogt, Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) Executive Director; Meg Walker, OCWCOG Communications Officer; Christy Fitch, Meals on Wheels (MOW) Supervisor; Vickie Staffelbach, SDS Program Supervisor; Beth Lee, SDS Program Supervisor; Heather Schermerhorn, SDS Program Supervisor; Danny Magana, Ride Line Supervisor; Kim Cooper, SDS Executive Assistant; and Terri Sharpe, SDS Administrative Assistant.

**1. Welcome, Introductions, and Additions to the Agenda (DSAC Chair Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald):**

DSAC Chair Jan Molnar-Fitzgerald called the meeting to order at 10:03 am. Introductions were made, including guests.

New guests include:

- Meg Walker – OCWCOG's new Communication Officer.
- Vickie Staffelbach – SDS's new Clerical Support Supervisor.
- Kacey Urrutia – Samaritan Health Services Health Education and Engagement Manager.
- Janelle Cervantes – Edward C Allworth Veteran's Home Director of Social Services.
- Heather Schermerhorn - SDS Program Supervisor for Eligibility.
- Beth Lee - SDS Program Supervisor for Eligibility.
- Christy Fitch – Meals on Wheels Supervisor.
- Emma Koester – guest.

Addition to the agenda will include an update on Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments and Community Services Consortium (CSC) by OCWCOG Executive Director Ryan Vogt and CSC Executive Director Peggy McGuire.

**2. Approval of Minutes:**

**ACTION:** Motion to approve the June 7, 2022, Joint SSAC/DSAC meeting minutes made by Suzanne Lazaro, seconded by Allison Hobgood. Motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Eligibility Team Update (SDS Program Supervisors Heather Schermerhorn and Beth Lee):**

SDS Program Supervisors Heather Schermerhorn and Beth Lee supervise the Eligibility Specialists who perform financial eligibility and determine eligibility for programs like Medicaid, SNAP food benefits, and other State supported medical and food benefits.

Two and a half years ago the State rolled out ONE, a statewide model of performing eligibility work that spreads the workload across the State uniformly. ONE lets any Oregonian go into any office that administers these benefits where previously one would have to go to an office in their region.

Switching to the ONE model resulted in:

- A smaller average wait time from when individuals apply for benefits to when they receive those benefits (going from up to 30 days before seeing benefits down to a week or less).
- Less complaints from Oregonians in their service with less barriers and no gaps in benefits.

Another change with Eligibility is their recent partnership with Department of Human Services (DHS) offices. The ONE model has led to everyone needing to know a little bit about everything. About a year ago, the Director of the Eligibility Program encouraged the districts to break down the walls and barriers between DHS, SDS, and other Adult and People with Disabilities (APD) Area Agency on Aging offices by working together to close the gap of knowledge and emphasize the no wrong door mentality for accessing benefits.

The Embedded Workers program was developed where SDS is sending staff into DHS offices as subject matter experts for a week and vice versa, which is resulting in the continually breaking down of barriers. There has been lots of success with being hands on in each other's offices and spreading the network of information, as well as developing relationships with other community partners. They have just started doing remote training for those staff members who have barriers and cannot travel to other offices.

SDS just recently started their partnership with Community Services Consortium (CSC) in a referral network, which entails those eligible for SNAP benefits to be immediately referred to CSC so CSC can reach out to them and offer them their low-income housing and utility assistance programs. SDS has also gathered a list of all their past SNAP recipients and data shared with CSC, who were then able to do a mass mailing, identifying SDS as a partner agency, and offering them benefits they may be eligible for due to their eligibility for SNAP benefits.

SDS Director Moore pointed out that this relationship SDS is developing with self-sufficiency and the sharing of staff is not a common practice around the State. This is a unique relationship that District 4 staff and the leadership in the self-sufficiency offices have developed and embraced in partnering to serve Oregonians. This has been a great transition for everyone in the communities.

### **4. Care Planning Committee (CPC) Report (CPC Chair Robynn Pease):**

The CPC did not meet in July but will be resuming their meetings on September 13th, the second Tuesday of the month due to the Labor Day holiday.

CPC Chair Pease updated the group on the Housing Symposium that will be taking place mid-October. The symposium will focus on the needs of homeless adults and people with disabilities who are medically fragile and have hands on care needs, with the intent of identifying and breaking down the barriers that prevents them from getting the care they need.

The agenda will include:

- Morning breakout session:

- Representatives of different providers from our area will talk about the barriers the different agencies who work with the homeless are experiencing;
- Mental health and the different kinds of mental health services that are needed and being provided; and
- How SDS provides information to their consumers.
- Keynote speakers:
  - Shireen McSpadden, Director of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing for the City and County of San Francisco and who was also a former Area Agency on Aging Director.
  - Local speaker who can provide information from a local perspective on the issue.
- Afternoon breakout session:
  - Conclude with strategic planning to address needs.
  - Develop Memorandums of Understanding to secure the processes.

One of the positive take-aways from the Symposium planning sessions has been the developing relationships between the groups. SDS Director Moore would like to see regular ongoing meetings to talk about the integration and coordination of care for this population as well as other unsheltered individuals in the communities.

#### **5. Meals on Wheels Advisory Committee (MOWAC) Update (MOW Supervisor Christy Fitch):**

MOW Supervisor Christy Fitch gave an overview of the number of consumers and meals they have served over the last two fiscal years. There has been a slight decline in meals served this year with only 93% of the meals and 94% of consumers being served from the prior fiscal year of 2020-21.

Congregate dining has reopened as of late-April mid-May for most of the sites. It was slow going getting people back, but they have started to see pre-covid numbers in the dining rooms this past month.

There have been a few staff changes. There is a new meal site Manager in Corvallis, and they have two meal site managers who are retiring, one in August and the other in September.

The Meals on Wheels Advisory Committee (MOWAC) will start meeting again within the next month or two. They are looking for new members if anyone is interested.

There is a need for volunteers at their meal sites. There is one staff member at each meal site, so they rely on volunteers to help prepare the meals, get them out, as well as deliver them to their consumers.

SDS Director Moore informed everyone that in the Area Plan the sustainability of the MOW program is top priority and they need, not only financial sustainability, but also volunteerism. Without volunteers, it would be too costly and impossible to keep the program going. MOW will be starting a campaign to recruit volunteers and if anyone would like to be involved with this, they should reach out to one of the staff.

The Rotary Club of Corvallis, which in the past held their Tapas and Treasures fundraiser to support the MOW program, will be supporting families who are experiencing homelessness that work with the school district. SDS Director Moore encouraged everyone to support this fundraiser and will send out information regarding it.

**ACTION:** SDS Director Moore will send out information through SDS Administrative Assistant Terri Sharpe regarding the Rotary's Tapas and Treasures event, which is supporting families

who are experiencing homelessness that work with the school district.

## **6. Issues and Advocacy Committee (IAC) Report (IAC Chair Suzanne Lazaro):**

IAC Chair Lazaro attended the Older Adult and People with Disabilities Collaborative Network meeting in June. The information was mostly Lane County oriented, but she would like to be more involved to bring in the mental health issues to advocate on. Mental health is ingrained in a lot of what the IAC does, and they do not have a strong voice in that area. At the meeting they discussed development of a Mental Health Toolkit and, as it is being developed, she will share more information.

There is a Facebook presence for the Older Adult Behavior Health Initiative (OABHI) with tools that are helpful, and Ms. Lazaro would like to see something similar developed for Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties.

SSAC member and OABH Specialist Kay McDonald clarified that her and her colleague Chris Eilers are assigned to Lane, Linn, and Benton Counties for the Initiative. Previously, Linn and Benton Counties had their own representative for the Initiative, but that individual is no longer there so the State asks the Lane County team to serve Linn and Benton County as well. Ms. McDonald said all their colleagues from Linn and Benton Counties are invited to attend the Stakeholder's workgroup and if anyone had anything they would like the Stakeholders to address to just let her know.

ACTION: SSAC member and OABH Specialist McDonald will email IAC Chair Lazaro the June meeting minutes from the June Older Adult and People with Disabilities Collaborative Network meeting and any other information she would like.

IAC Chair Lazaro said she would also like to see more digital presence for Linn and Benton County on the Facebook page.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore said she and the Leadership for the Linn County, and the Benton County Mental Health Departments meets with the OABHI staff once a month and she will address Linn and Benton Counties getting a larger presence on Facebook at their next meeting.

CSC Executive Director Peggy McGuire informed everyone that CSC maintains a resource guide for Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties. The link: <https://communityservices.us/community-resources/>. If there are any updates that need to be addressed, they can contact her assistant, Emely Day at [eday@communityservices.us](mailto:eday@communityservices.us).

## **7. Addition to the Agenda: Updates on Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments (OCWCOG) and Community Services Consortium (CSC) (OCWCOG Executive Director Ryan Vogt, and CSC Executive Director Peggy McGuire):**

OCWCOG is developing a Strategic Plan to set the course for their focus for the next three years. They are in the information gathering stage now with the completion of the Strategic Plan a number of months away.

OCWCOG Executive Director Ryan Vogt said he and CSC Executive Director McGuire are continuing to work on their partnership and how they are embracing partners throughout the communities who are serving similar populations to see how they could make it easier, smoother, and faster for the people they serve to not have to navigate multiple systems to get the support they need.

SDS Director Moore expressed her excitement with the continuing and stronger partnership between CSC and SDS and asked CSC Executive Director McGuire to give a description of CSC's Board and Councils, which are like OCWCOGs.

CSC Executive Director McGuire said that as a Community Action agency, and in order to have State and Federal designation, CSC is required by Federal Statute to have a tripart type Board. CSC's Board is made up of one-third elected officials or their designees, one-third low-income individuals who hopefully has participated in their programs or groups who represents low-income individuals, and one-third from the community at large.

CSC has two Boards:

- The Governing Board - made up the three County Commissioners, who are CSC's fiduciary body.
- The Community Action Advisory Council (CAAC) - the heart and soul of CSC's agency, and who CSC Executive Director McGuire reports to with the community needs assessment, and any research or surveys they may do. The CAAC advises and provides guidance to CSC on what they are doing, the structure of the programs, and areas of advocacy. Ms. McGuire is then accountable to the CAAC to make sure that CSC is performing to the standards that they expect.

SDS Director Moore proposed bringing the CSC's CAAC and the SSAC/DSAC together for a joint discussion on advocacy, support, and collaboration.

SSAC Vice Chair Pease suggested after the Housing Symposium in the Fall, regrouping with the Housing Symposium workgroup to look at the outcomes. Then in the winter the CSC's CAAC and SSAC/DSAC will meet to discuss the processes, gaps, and barriers discussed at the symposium.

## **8. SDS Program Update (SDS Director Randi Moore):**

SDS Director Moore reported that the Case Management staffing is stabilizing. There are a lot of new staff in training and there are still positions open, but they are out of crisis mode.

The Adult Protection Service Team is struggling now. SDS is recruiting for APS workers and investigators. If anyone knows of someone who would be interested in that type of work, they should send them to OCWCOG's web page.

There is a supervisor position open in the Toledo Office. They would like someone who knows the community and if anyone knows of a good candidate, they should be sent to OCWCOG's web page.

The Oregon Project Independence Medicaid project (OPIM) has a delay in the project and the implementation of it because the Senators for Medicaid and Medicare Services have not approved the 1115 waiver which is required to get the program up and running. Meanwhile SDS is trying to figure out how many of their OPI consumers would be eligible for OPIM, what the transition of those individuals would look like, and figuring out their staffing model. It looks like approval won't happen until at least September. SDS Director Moore will keep everyone informed.

SDS recently completed a Home and Community Based Services audit on Case Management assessments and eligibility requirements around that assessment piece. The results are back and SDS Director Moore is developing a plan of action to resolve the biggest issues that were identified and will share in report soon.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore will share the results of the Home and Community Based Services audit to the Councils.

SDS reached the first year of the Area Plan implementation.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore will be sharing an update of the Area Plan at the next Joint SSAC/DSAC October meeting.

SSAC Vice Chair Pease acknowledged how great it was to see the staff at today's meeting and would like to see them back at future meetings.

Richard Montgomery inquired about Carolynn Mendez-Luck coming back to the Councils after her sabbatical in DC.

ACTION: SDS Director Moore will talk to Carolynn Mendez-Luck about coming back to the Councils.

**9. Other Business and Announcements:**

OCWCOG is having a blood drive to honor and recognize past DSAC Chair Lee Lazaro on August 9th, from 11:00 am – 4:00 pm. There are only five slots left if someone would like to sign-up to donate.

Long time DSAC member Mike Volpe passed away and will be dearly missed. Mike's Celebration of Life is taking place Sunday, August 7th, from 2:00 – 4:00 pm, at Avery Park.

**10. Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 4, 2022.

*Meeting Minutes were recorded by Terri Sharpe.*