**

PUBLIC HEARINGS

*Understanding the Aging Unit 3-Year Plan Requirements for Public Hearings*

Before your board can approve your aging plan for final submission to GWAAR, a formal Public Hearing must be held. Public hearings are separate from public input collection done prior to drafting the plan and must follow certain protocol. All public hearings should be documented using the Public Hearing Report form found here: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2004458>

**Q. How is a “public hearing” different from a regular meeting?**

A. A Public Hearing is a formal meeting which must follow Open Meeting laws. Basic requirements of the open meeting law are to:

* give advance public notice of the meeting(s) (for Aging Plans, must be 2 weeks in advance)
* conduct all business in open session
* hold the meeting(s) in locations that are “reasonably accessible”

Pages 6-8 of the 2022-2024 Aging Plan Instructions spell out the minimum requirements that need to be followed when planning public hearings for your Aging Plans. Instructions can be found here: <https://gwaar.org/plansamendmentsassessments>

**Q. What does “official public notification through public notice processes” mean?**

A. Official public notification refers to announcing the hearing to the public at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting. This notification must be given to local newspapers and posted at nutrition sites and senior centers and at least one other place.

**Q. What must be included in the public hearing notice?**

A. Date, time, location, subject of hearing and the location and hours that the draft plan is available for examination prior to the meeting. To ensure all citizens have access to the meeting, include a statement that provisions will be made for people with hearing/visual impairments or for non-English speaking people. (see sample hearing notice below)

**Q. How many public hearings do I have to have?**

A. Ideally, public hearings will be held in several places throughout the county so all citizens have reasonable access to the meeting. In the case of multi-county aging units, there must be a public hearing in each county served by the aging unit. In addition, the plan must be made available for viewing outside the public hearings.

**Q. Can I hold the public hearing along with other meetings/events?**

A. Public hearings should not be held in conjunction with regular board or committee meetings, but could be held with other non-official events, such as after a senior event or public presentation.

**Q. What if nobody attends the public hearing?**

A. It is a requirement of the Wisconsin Elders Act that a public hearing is held prior to approving the plan as a way to collect comments and feedback on the draft plan. Therefore, it is important that public hearings are planned and advertised in a way that draws people to attend and participate.

*SAMPLE HEARING NOTICE:*

Notice of Public Hearing for Cheddar County’s

Plan on Aging 2022-2024

July 30, 2021

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Cheddar County Aging Unit will be conducting public hearings for presentation of and comment on the 2022-2024 Cheddar County Aging Plan. Public hearings will be held at these following times and locations\*:

* Wednesday, August 15 at 3:00 p.m. at the Cheeseville Community Center, 123 West Roquefort Street in Cheeseville
* Thursday, August 16 at 10:30 a.m. at the Stilton Public Library, 456 North Feta Avenue in Stilton
* Friday, August 17 at 1:00 p.m. at West Side Apartments, 789 West 10th Street in Manchego

The purpose of these public hearing is to provide an opportunity for citizens of Cheddar County to comment and provide input on the Aging Plan draft. A draft of the 2022-2024 Cheddar County Aging Plan is available for examination at the Cheddar County Aging Unit, 321 South Colby Street in Cheeseville from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Copies of the Aging Plan will also be available for viewing one hour prior to the start of each hearing at the location of the hearing.

Input received by members of the public at these hearings will be considered in the development of the final draft of this plan. The final draft will be presented for approval at the Cheddar County Aging Unit Board meeting scheduled for 5:00 PM August 28, 2018 at the Cheddar County Aging Unit.

Written comments may be sent to the Cheddar County Aging Unit, 321 South Colby Street, Cheeseville, WI 54321, Attn: Brie Havarti through August 14, 2021.

For more information, contact Brie Havarti, Cheddar County Aging Unit Manager at (123) 456-7890.

\*If you are planning to attend one of the above meetings and will require accommodations (signer, interpreter, etc.) to participate, please call the Cheddar County Aging Unit at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date and time.

* Phone: (123) 456-7890
* Toll Free: 800-456-7890
* TTY: use Relay (711)