



Our mission is to deliver innovative support to lead aging agencies as we work together to promote, protect, and enhance the well-being of older people in Wisconsin.

Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 20, 2024 | 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Microsoft Teams Conference Call

Attendees

Members Present: Dave Denomie, Kathy Gauger, Beth Esser, Dave Lowe

Members Not Present: Doris Bakker, Bob Best, Denise Sweet

Others Present: John Schnabl, Executive Director; Nick Musson, OAA Consultant-Transportation Specialist; Janet Zander, Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator; Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator

Call to Order: 10:05 a.m.

Dave Denomie, Chair

Review and Approval of September 20, 2024 Agenda

- *No quorum, therefore, approval of September 20, 2024 agenda was not possible.*

Review and Approval of July 19, 2024 Draft Meeting Minutes

- *No quorum, therefore, approval of July 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes will be postponed until next meeting.*

Public Comment:

None



Comments from Chair

- Apologized for missing last in-person meeting.

Director's Report

John Schnabl, Executive Director

- The federal government (ACL) is allowing the state the ability to carryover certain ARPA funds into 2025. Nutrition money was not one of them. The funding that was allowed is going to be supportive services, evidence-based prevention programming as well as the National Caregiver Support Program. So there will be an extension on ARPA funds for those three services, but not for congregate or home delivered meals. In addition, if they're not going to be able to spend funds, there is a process in place where they can de-obligate those funds, so that we can re-obligate those projected unspent funds to someone who can spend them.
- The next Aging Advocacy Day will take place on May 13, 2025. Please mark your calendars and we hope to see you attend and participate. Janet Zander will be sending out more information out to everyone as details become available.
- The state is changing its data reporting software system to Peer Place. Counties and tribes and ADRC's will now be using it to enter consumer information.
- Our Veterans Self-Directed Program is now expanding to the Minneapolis VA. We're just starting to get our first clients/customers who live in Wisconsin on the western end of the state, but go to the Minneapolis VA.
- GWAAR has submitted a grant application to operate the toll-free line that the state is developing so that people can call to get connected to the correct ADRC based upon the county they live in. We are still waiting to see if GWAAR will be chosen to receive this grant.



Advocacy Update

Janet Zander, Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator

Topics Discussed:

- **Please see Advocacy Update report for all details.**
- Aging Advocacy Day. Our sponsors have done a tremendous job at helping us cover the cost of this event. The GWAAR website has an Aging Advocacy Day page with details of the event and a sponsorship form. Please share the sponsorship form with anyone you think may be interested.
- The general election. The Advocacy Update report contains some great resources and links to help you be informed on timelines, candidates and issues.
- Lawsuits, ballot boxes and fraud. GWAAR was involved in a lawsuit related to what we believe is confidential information about who's under guardianship and the details of those guardianships being made public to a group called the Voter Rights Alliance. We believe that those records are protected under our statute and so we submitted what's called an amicus brief to the court along with Disability Rights Wisconsin. They had an initial hearing in which it was pretty clear that the justices seemed to believe that it is confidential information. We aren't likely to get a final hearing on that for the next couple of months, but it seemed to be very favorable for what we were saying about why it's so important.
- The state budget process. The state government departments have submitted their budgets to the Department of Administration which include items important to GWAAR. Our advocacy work will happen with the governor's office in trying to get our priorities into his budget, that will come out likely around mid-February.
- Lots of stagnation on the federal front. It is not anticipated that the federal budget for 2025 will be passed anytime soon, even though we will be starting that budget period October 1st.
- I did want to mention that we submitted a grant as part of our role with the Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network. We have a group of core members who are older adults aged 60 and older who formed our Wisconsin Senior Advisory group.

They've only been around for a couple of years, and they are trying to grow their reach. They have about 45 members right now from various parts of the state, but they would like to have statewide coverage of advocates from around the state, as well as grow some depth within their leadership. They have a few key people who do the bulk of the planning work, and as we know life happens and when somebody's out for an illness or out due to caregiving responsibilities, it's difficult for them to keep moving that work forward and so this grant would help them provide some administrative support, training on building their leadership capacities as well as help them fund some outreach. We submitted what's called a letter of interest into the Inclusive Foundation. The Inclusive Foundation was formed when Inclusive managed care organizations and long-term care, specifically family care. They were bought out by Humana. So those proceeds, if you will, from that buyout went to a newly formed foundation that's located here in Stevens Point, that serves statewide. This is their second round of grants, and they plan to do two each year. We'll hear about that application at the end of October. If at the beginning of October and if they ask us to proceed, we have to have a full proposal to them by the end of next month. And the project would actually start in December. So it's a fairly quick turnaround for a grant cycle.

- And lastly, the Older Americans Act reauthorization expires in September of this year. We try to get the reauthorization done every five years. The issues now are more about how do we change the language in the Older Americans Act to reflect the current needs, and the future needs of this network. There are some critical revisions that have been proposed by the Senate that would improve the flexibility we have around how the funds are used in our health promotion program and our nutrition program, things that we learned coming out of COVID that will be continued needs as the needs of folks that we serve remain very high. Funding recommendations would increase.

GWAAR Advisory Council Departures

Nick Musson, OAA Consultant

- Due to health issues Mark Weisensel and Diane Cox found it necessary to resign from the Advisory Council. We thank them for their time and work on the council and we are now actively once again for new members. If you know of any individuals that might be interested, please send them my way.



GWAAR 2025-2027 Aging Plan

Nick Musson, OAA Consultant- Transportation Specialist

- A PowerPoint presentation was given going over the components and timeline of the tentatively completed GWAAR 2025-2027 Draft Aging Plan.
- There is a lot of text in the PowerPoint and plan, so everything presented will be emailed to the Advisory Council members so they can take their time and digest all of the information at their own pace so they can feel comfortable giving feedback, suggesting changes, and eventually approving the plan at the next Advisory Council Meeting on November 15th. There will be one more virtual meeting before then, however, to have one last final discussion of the draft plan on Oct. 18th. A public hearing will take place the end of October and the Advisory Council approval of the plan will take place on November 15th at the next meeting, as stated previously. On December 6th, the approved plan will then be brought to the GWAAR Board for final approval and then submitted to the state.

Adjournment: 12:00 p.m.

Next Meeting Dates: *October 18th and November 15, 2024*

Recorder: Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator