



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.

Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, December 13, 2024 | 10:00 a.m.
Microsoft Teams Video Conference Call

Members present: *David Hoberg, Rob Wilkinson, John Helling, Catherine Jones-Ferk, Rowena Nelson*

Members excused: *Dave Ostness, Wes Martin, Beth Esser, Bob Borremans, Cookie Lough*

Others Present: *John Schnabl, Executive Director; Patrick Metz, Fiscal Manager; Nick Musson, OAA Consultant, Transportation Specialist; Richard Lavigne, Legal Services Manager; Sky Van Rossum, Special Projects Manager; Janet Zaner, Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator; Neal Minogue, Older Americans Act Program Supervisor State Office on Aging (BADR); Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator*

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Dave Hoberg, Treasurer

- **No motions could be made, no quorum for this meeting. A make-up meeting will be set up in January to make motions and vote on action items.**

Review and Approval of December 13, 2024 Agenda

No quorum, therefore, no motion possible.

Review and Approval of October 11, 2024 Draft Meeting Minutes

No quorum, therefore, no motion possible.



Public Comment **None**

Comments from Chair

- None, Dave Ostness not present

Executive Directors Report

John Schnabl, Executive Director

- Since we don't have a quorum, no motions can be made. Information can be relayed to the board, however. I will need to create a special make-up board meeting to have a quorum in order to vote on important actions items on the agenda.
- Elevance (the foundation), the parent company for Anthem, approached us for possible funding. Janet Zander and I met with them, and we gave them a proposal of possible things they could fund. They showed interest with a few things on our proposal and agreed to fund us some \$80,000. They were:
 - The Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging to do falls prevention initiatives.
 - Money and payment toward the advocacy platform that we currently utilize for Aging Advocacy Day which helps keep track of legislative contacts we have.
 - Payment towards some dietetic consultants to create recipes that can be used by the Elder Nutrition Programs that are medically tailored for all aging units to utilize if they wished.
 - Payment for translating Guardianship Support Center materials into different languages.
- The state got another caregiving grant (approximately a 2 or 3 year grant), and one of the items in that grant was the Trualta online caregiving platform. One of our roles in in this grant will make GWAAR the contracted entity with TRUALTA, and then we will receive the money from the state to pay for it. This should start early January, so Trualta is back.

- In Oconto County, the aging unit for the aging programs that reside in Oconto County, had been for many years, a non-profit organization. The County Board of Supervisors decided to allow that non-profit to administer aging services there. Well starting January 1, the county, through board resolution, has decided to remove the aging programs from that non-profit and bring it in house into Oconto County. This does not happen all that often.
- Marinette County Elderly Services will most likely be providing nutrition services for Oconto County. We have never seen another county aging unit take over the nutrition program for another county.

Finance Committee Report

[Patrick Metz, Fiscal Manager:](#)

[Dave Hoberg, Treasurer:](#)

- The Finance Committee reviewed and discussed the 2025 budget. In that budget, is a 2% wage increase for employees. The budget was approved at the Finance Committee level, however, it will have to be approved at the next board meeting where there is a quorum.
- A 2024 one-time 1% wage adjustment payment for employees was also discussed and is waiting for approval by the board.
- Sarah Fisher, from CLA, reviewed the 2023 audit with the board. Sarah said efforts will be made to get audits done in a more timely manner going forward. There were two findings, however compliance findings from 2022 have ceased. Please see written audit for all details. The 2023 audit was approved at the Finance Committee level and is waiting for approval by the board.
- We are using Tandem to conduct an employee assessment to see if each employee fits with the legal terms of exempt vs. non-exempt. We've requested that they have that information available, and the study completed, by our February Finance Committee meeting so that we can then take any action on the Finance and Board level the Friday of that week.

No quorum, therefore, no motions possible



Executive Committee Update

Dave Ostness, Chairman

Beth Esser, Vice-Chair

- For 2025, Ground Game Health has made significant changes in the payment amounts, reducing them by 88% from \$206 for a completed assessment. To cover the current program costs at these reduced rates, GWAAR would need 4 times the current monthly referrals (1200), need to make 4 times the calls, to complete 4 times the number of referrals, 240 payable events at \$25 each. This drastic change in compensation and the excessive workload required to breakeven, will not allow the program to continue in 2025. This is very disappointing as GWAAR was one of the nine inaugural partners in 2018, maintaining that contract for over 6 years. In the last year, franchised work with partners, has provided a growing revenue stream and educational opportunities for students in Public Health across Wisconsin, Minnesota and in South Dakota. In 2024, unallocated revenue after payables to partners through November 2024 has reached \$19,823. The program will conclude January 3rd, 2025.

Advisory Council Report

Nick Musson, OAA Consultant- Transportation

Beth Esser, Advisory Council

- On December 5th, we approved a new Advisory Council member, and her name is Valerie Freres. She has 20 years of experience in senior living facilities and a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities that both seniors and industries face. Through her work, she travels throughout Wisconsin to support 20 different communities and she's passionate about advocating for the needs of older adults and promoting their well-being. We are happy to add her to the Advisory Council.
- The goal was to have the GWAAR 2025-2027 draft plan approved by the board today and sent to the state by the end of December. Due to the lack of a quorum, action will have to be taken at the next board meeting and Neil Minogue who was in attendance at this board meeting, approved the extension.
- Nick gave a quick update via a PowerPoint presentation on what was discussed regarding the GWAAR Aging Plan at the December 5th Advisory Council Meeting. He went over the feedback that was given by the state and how it was incorporated into

plan. The public hearing results and survey that went out to the network regarding getting feedback on our goals were also discussed. GWAAR wanted to acknowledge that our 2025-2027 Aging Plan does not represent the entire agency's programs and services. There are many programs and services that do not have a dedicated goal tied to it, but our work still continues without a dedicated goal.

- The draft plan will have to be approved at the next boarding meeting where there is a quorum.

Advocacy and Public Policy

Janet Zander, Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator

Some topics covered: (For all details please see her Advocacy Report.)

- Discussion on state budget and activity.
- Provided a quick overview of the lay of the land, the fact that we now still have a Democratic governor and a Republican controlled legislature, however, the percentages are much closer. We have 55% of the seats in the Senate and Assembly held by Republicans and 45% held by Democrats, and what that means for us going into the next legislative session. The margins are tight, and parties don't always vote the same way, and so it may require a little more cooperation across the aisle in order for legislation to get passed. We're looking at that as a real opportunity to build some bipartisan support for the issues that we work on.
- There are a lot of new faces. Six new members in the state Senate and 31 in the Assembly. That means a lot of people to provide some education to, and some potential champions on our issues that maybe we haven't been able to find before. There is a lot of redistricting so that means new people.
- We now know ten of the Joint Finance Committee members. We'll see many of the same players because of the makeup of our legislature. We will continue to have 12 Republicans on the Joint Finance Committee and 4 Democrats.
- We expect by next week to see the committee make-up for the state legislature. I think I've mentioned before that every 2-year legislative session, the structure of the committees looks a little different.

- The governor has kicked off his portion of the budget process. He received the department budgets in his office back in September. He's busy working on his budget, but now wants to hear from the people. Budget listening sessions have been held around the state.

Bureau on Aging and Disability Resources

Neil Minogue, Older Americans Act Program Supervisor, State Office on Aging (BADR)

- I wanted to thank John and Patrick and others for their leadership around the transition that's going on in Oconto County.
- It's very easy for me to approve an extension for the GWAAR Aging Plan because GWAAR and Nick Musson were very timely in submitting the plan, which allowed the state to do a timely review of the plan and provide comments and recommendations which were put into the plan as needed. We will wait for the board to approve the plan in January.
- I, like Janet, am watching very closely, the Older Americans Act reauthorization. I'd like to see some decent allocation amounts. I'm trying to be hopeful as we should be, that Congress will recognize our need for additional funding to meet the needs of older adults.
- On a positive note, there is some flexibility being offered under the new OA regs that allows grab and go and carry out meals costs associated, to come out of C1 funding up to 25% of that funding, so people can drive up or get a grab and go meal. We are very pleased about that flexibility.
- I'd like to express thanks to the GWAAR board for continuing to be a partner with the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources Office on Aging and other parts of our agency.



Adjournment:

Next Meeting Date: January 7, 2025

Meeting Dates for 2025

February 14, 2025

April 11, 2025

June 13, 2025

August 8, 2025

October 10, 2025

December 12, 2025

Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator; Recorder