



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, February 14, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.

Microsoft Teams Video Conference Call

Members present: *David Hoberg, Rob Wilkinson, Catherine Jones-Ferk, Wes Martin, Bob Borremans, Cookie Lough*

Members excused: *Dave Ostness, Beth Esser, John Helling, Rowena Nelson*

Others Present: *John Schnabl, Executive Director; Patrick Metz, Fiscal Manager; Nick Musson, OAA Consultant, Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator*

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Dave Hoberg, Treasurer

Review and Approval of February 14, 2025 Agenda

Motion by Catherine Jones-Ferk, seconded by Wes Martin, to approve February 14, 2025 agenda. Motion carried.

Review and Approval of January 7, 2025 Draft Meeting Minutes

Motion by Cookie Lough, seconded by Catherine Jones-Ferk, to approve January 7, 2025 draft meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Public Comment **None**



Comments from Chair

Dave Hoberg filling in for Beth Esser and Dave Ostness

- Dave Hoberg asked John Schnabl to give update on last Executive Committee meeting. John said he'd just go into his Executive Director report.

Executive Director Updates

John Schnabl, Executive Director

- As you probably are aware, we currently have attorneys that provide support to the Elder Benefit Specialists at the ADRC and county level. Those attorneys provide technical assistance, case supervision and training. They sometimes take on cases themselves, things of that nature. Currently some Older Americans Act dollars are used to support them. The federal government has now instructed us that those dollars cannot be used for that purpose by GWAAR and GWAAR is going to have to create a Request for Proposal (RFP) and award a contract to a legal services entity, who will then use that money as well as money from Milwaukee and Dane AAAs to create a new statewide legal services program that will be available to consumers throughout the entire state of Wisconsin. At this point we don't know what this program will look like, but the state is committed to still having some level of support for the Elder Benefit Specialists by attorneys. The problem is that in order to do that, funding is going to have to be found to support that loss of on our end, at least to about \$260,000. So GWAAR is going to have to do two things. The first is we are going to have to create an RFP process to solicit proposals to do this legal statewide legal services program. We're going to have to create a process to grant that contract to some entity as well as provide oversight for it using that money that we currently are using for our attorneys. Step two is solidifying funding to provide adequate support for our attorneys so that they can continue supporting the Elder Benefit Specialists throughout the state. Right now, we do it for most of the EBS around the state and then Disability Rights Wisconsin does it for the Disability Benefit Specialists at the ADRC's. I have a meeting set up with our state contact and we will be discussing the RFP process for the new legal services entity. We anticipate changes taking place 2026.
- Aging Advocacy Day is May 13th, and registration will be opening up shortly. Watch for Janet Zander's emails which will give you all the details. The first half of the day is spent learning about the issues and talking to the people in your districts to strategize on the meetings, and then the entire afternoon is basically meeting with



your legislators or legislative staff. So once again, I would highly encourage you to sign up and attend Aging Advocacy Day.

- We're currently in the process of rehiring for our Medicare Outreach Coordinator position and are having a little bit of difficulty finding the right candidate. This person provides education to Elder Benefit Specialists and other professionals and trains them on Medicare related issues.
- Jane Mullins, who is mainly in charge of our elder abuse coordination for GWAAR, is retiring mid-March. We will be looking to rehire for that position.
- Once again, I would highly encourage you just to peruse the staff reports to really give you a good idea of what everybody at GWAAR is working on, and if you have any questions about any of that, don't hesitate to ask.

Finance Committee Report

Patrick Metz, Fiscal Manager

Dave Hoberg, Treasurer

Dave Hoberg:

- The Finance Committee met and discussed the budget versus the actual. We're looking quite good on that. We also discussed the FLSA project that we had Vensure help us with. Please see that handout. We are going to bring the Finance Committee recommendation on the outcome of that project to the board, to vote on later in this meeting. Since there are no questions for Patrick on the balance sheet and income statement, I'll entertain a motion to approve financial statements as presented and placed on file.

Motion by Wes Martin, seconded by Rob Wilkinson, to approve financial statements as presented and placed on file. Motion carried.

- The Finance Committee had requested Vensure do an exemption test on GWAAR employees to identify where certain positions belonged. John provided some context in that GWAAR has been working with Venture, which is the organization that provides HR and payroll and benefits. We worked with our HR contact there to review job descriptions and discuss the various jobs within GWAAR. This included providing her with all of the job descriptions for GWAAR staff, as well as Patrick and John meeting with her for about two hours, to discuss and answer any

questions she might have, and further discuss these positions after review. She basically did an exemption test that looks at the criteria as to what makes an employee an exempt employee and what makes an employee a nonexempt employee. And she used that criteria during our discussions and review of job descriptions to ultimately recommend making six changes. These changes involve moving six people from exempt to nonexempt or nonexempt to exempt and ultimately the biggest difference is that it won't affect their salary or how much they make, but for those that move to nonexempt, they will now qualify for overtime pay at the point that they exceed 40 hours per week. Any hour over 40 hours qualifies for overtime.

- Bob Borremans was concerned that there should be a process in place for staff to request overtime, and Patrick Metz explained there was in the payroll software. Patrick went over the GWAAR handbook where it discusses how employees record overtime and what qualifies for overtime. Follow up is needed for traveling hours however and how that is handled.

Motion by Wes Martin, seconded by Catherineerine Jones-Ferks, to move identified employees from Vensure job description study, from exempt to nonexempt or vice versa. All but Bob Borremans approved; Bob Borremans opposed. Motion carried.

Executive Committee Report

Dave Hoberg, Treasurer filling in for Dave Ostness and Beth Esser

- The Executive Committee interviewed Beth Fields, a new board member applicant, who was an excellent candidate and was also recommended by staff due to her research/involvement in elder care and the community. However, she lives in Dane county. Unfortunately, there seems to be a disconnect between the bylaws and what is written on the board application. The application instructions state you must live in the GWAAR service area, which is the 70 counties and 11 tribes. The GWAAR service area does not include Dane or Milwaukee counties for our base programs, although many of our special projects that have evolved over time do include all counties. The definition of GWAAR service area has become muddy over time by and there are strong opinions in each camp in regards to remaining strict with definition of service area or evolving, as time has evolved GWAAR's service area in other programs, contracts or projects which do include Dane and Milwaukee counties. There was much discussion and varied opinion. Ultimately Wes Martin made a motion to approve her application.



Motion by Wes Martin, seconded by Catherine Jones-Ferks, to approve Beth Field's board application based on current bylaws.

Vote:

Wes Martin - Yes

Catherine Jones-Ferk - Yes

Dave Hoberg - Yes

Cookie Lough - No

Rob Wilkinson - No

Bob Borremans - No

Vote resulted in a tie: Motion does not carry. It can only be brought back by someone who voted against the motion unless one of the board members that was not present brings back the motion.

- Interim Chair Discussion: Unfortunately, due to Dave's unexpected serious medical issues, he may not be able to attend any board meetings through his tenure as board chair which ends this June. After much discussion, bylaws state that Beth Esser temporarily move up to the chair position until June elections. This opens up the Vice-chair position. Bob Borremans nominated Rob Wilkinson to fill in as Interim Vice-chair until the election of officers in June.

Motion by Bob Borremans, seconded by Cookie Lough to nominate Rob Wilkinson to Vice-Chair until the June elections are held. Motion carried

By-laws Ad-hoc Committee Report

Bob Borremans, Board Member

- The ad-hoc by-laws committee has taken considerable time in trying to define the process and procedures that GWAAR should in fact be following, and putting it into some kind of organized by-laws format. By-laws are the most important document that any organization can have and outline how an organization is going to operate. We've already had three meetings and are probably going to need at least one, if not two more. Our final draft will be reviewed by GWAAR's attorney. The ad-hoc committee will then meet to review attorney comments, make any edits if needed, and then proposed changes to by-laws will be brought forward as an action item at the April board meeting.



Advisory Council Report

Nick Musson, OAA Consultant-Transportation

- The final draft of the 2025-2027 GWAAR Aging Plan was approved by the board, and it was submitted to the state, so we are all set.
- A new Advisory Council member application was approved. Her name is Sheila Check-Moe.
- The next Advisory Council meeting is coming up next Friday, February 21st, and we will be welcoming a new Advisory Council member. We also will be reviewing a new member application, plus we'll be reviewing the 2022-2024 Aging Plan final goals that the consultants provided updates on, and then we'll also be discussing future agenda topics. The goal updates for the previous plan will be shared with you at the next meeting after the Advisory Council has an opportunity to go through the updates.
- This fall the Advisory Council will have an in person meeting which will take place at the Portage County ADRC.

Advocacy and Public Policy

Janet Zander, Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator

- Please see Janet Zander's written report.

Bureau Report

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

- We've been looking at the AAA aging plans for the past several months and the final submitted plans with their goals. All of our staff are leaning into meeting the requirements that are put forth by the Administration of Community Living about what needs to be in that plan. One of the big changes that has happened to the plan is that in reading the instructions related to the plan, we've noticed that there has intentionally been the absence of the words equity or inclusion. In particular, which has been replaced by greatest social need and greatest economic need. Initially, when we saw the instructions for this for the state aging plans, we were somewhat dismayed. But now we understand as we move forward into a new administration, why the language has been changed to greatest economic need and greatest social need. So, you will see that language appear in the state aging plan. Although we



asked counties, tribes, and AAAs to use the word equity in their goal development, we cannot go back and ask county aging units and tribal aging units to make adjustments to their plans. Since the state does provide oversight, particularly to a AAA plans, we may be asking for adjustments to AAA plans. How this will happen is yet to be determined. But I wanted to make you aware of that.

- There has been a myriad of new regulations, and concerns raised by the AAAs. In particular, contract administration and oversight and sub recipient monitoring and oversight. New regulations are looking to add closer oversight of AAA's and their goals. AAA's will have to have some responsibility for oversight of contracts and that was not required in the past, and again, these regulations came out in March of 2024, so compliance with the regulations is required by October 1, 2025. We expect we may be submitting an aging plan that speaks to how we come into compliance with the new regulations over the next several years. We have been told by ACL that would be acceptable, but we would be in a position of being in a corrective action by ACL. So I'm just kind of forecasting what may be seen and what is likely to be seen in the state aging plan. We're not concerned, nor are we concerned with being in a position of a corrective action. I know there are other states in similar positions as they try to rewrite or develop policies and procedures to come into compliance and support their AAAs in this process as well.
- We received some questions and concern from some of our sub grantees about OAA funding. I think it can be best said we're continuing on under a continuing resolution and that we will continue on with the administration and delivery of OAA programs and other programs at the state, until we hear differently. Our work doesn't stop just because what is happening in Washington at this time.

Adjournment:

Next Meeting Date: *April 11, 2025 – ADRC of Portage County*

Meeting Dates for 2025

April 11, 2025

June 13, 2025

August 8, 2025

October 10, 2025

December 12, 2025

Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator; Recorder