



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, April 10, 2026 | 10:00 a.m.

Microsoft Teams Video Conference Call

And

ADRC of Portage County

Members physically present: Cookie Lough, Dave Hoberg, Wes Martin, Rowena Nelson, John Helling, Steve Ahlgren, Catherine Jones-Ferk,

Members present virtually: Sandy Bergeron

Members excused: Sabrina Cyrus

Others Present: John Schnabl, Executive Director; Patrick Metz, Fiscal Manager; Nick Musson, OAA Consultant; Janet Zander, Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator; Polly Shoemaker, GSC Managing Attorney; Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator

Call to Order

Cookie Lough, Board Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Cookie Lough, Chair.

Review and Approval of April 10, 2026 Agenda (ACTION)

Motion by Catherine Jones-Ferk, seconded by John Helling, to approve April 10, 2026, agenda. Motion carried.

Review and Approval of February 13, 2026 Draft Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

Motion by Steve Ahlgren, seconded by Catherine Jones-Ferk, to approve February 13, 2026, draft meeting minutes. Motion carried.



Public Comment

- Steve Algren expressed interest in moving Executive, Finance and Board meetings around so as to have more advanced notice of the agenda and meeting documents. He also thinks that thought should be given to perhaps creating a secretary position, whereby this person in this position could attend special and/or other assigned meetings, keep track of terms, membership, correspondence and or review and sign off on minutes. [These are ideas that can be raised at an Executive Committee meeting.](#)

Comments from Chair

Cookie Lough, Board Chair

- Home Delivered Meal Major Gift Update:

On March 2nd and March 30th, I met with Jean Lynch regarding the Includa funding. Four applications were identified in February. Two were approved based on the priority authorization tool the committee is using. A total of \$116,349 was distributed from the funds GWAAR received for March; four applications were received and there was one carryover from February waiting for more information to be supplied. Of the four applications, three were approved for a total of \$144,132 issued for March. We have a total issued for February and March of \$260,041. Also, Includa has changed its name to Common Good Philanthropies. Counties thus far receiving funds: Brown, Kenosha, Jefferson, Forest and Racine.

- Attended a very informative virtual Advisory Council meeting on February 20th, where Tony Omernick spoke on his volunteer efforts with the Healthy Aging Coalition. He was instrumental in creating an informative flyer of services offered for older adults and/ or those with disabilities in his area. He was able to demonstrate by example how many agencies working together can accomplish goals in serving their communities. [I was really impressed with what he's done with the coalition and think he'd be a great person to eventually present to the board.](#)

Executive Director Report

John Schnabl, Executive Director

- We have three retirements: Janet Zander, Advocacy & Public Policy Director; Deb Smith, Accountant; and Doreen Goetch, Elder Abuse Later in Life Grant.



- We have a departure: Angie Sullivan, Health Promotion Project Specialist
- We have hired Megan Olsen as our part-time HR and Benefit Liaison Director
- Thus far we are happy to report that GLITC's two new hires Carri Chapman and Jenise Swartley seem to be working out and we hope that continues to bring stability to the program.
- I also wanted to mention that USAging, our national organization, gave us an award for the meal prioritization tool that we created for those counties and tribes that do have a wait list or reduction of services. They are now required to use that tool to determine how to determine who gets what when it comes to their nutrition program. We will receive the award at the national conference. One of the main architects of that prioritization tool was Pam VanKampen, part of our nutrition staff. So kudos to the whole nutrition team, but specifically Pam for a lot of work she put into it.
- A few weeks ago, Rowena, Bob Best from our Advisory Council, Janet Zander and I were in DC for our federal policy briefing, where we met with seven or eight legislative offices. It was a great opportunity and adventure, given the snowstorm's timing with our flights.

Guardianship Support Center

- Polly Shoemaker, Guardian Support Center Managing Attorney, gave an overview of the program. The Guardianship Support Center is funded through the state budget. It's a line item in the state budget to provide technical assistance, support, training, education for guardians, anybody and everybody who has questions and concerns about adult legal decision making in the state of Wisconsin, or people who are outside of the state of Wisconsin, but are working with somebody in Wisconsin. In practice, what that looks like is a helpline that gets about 1,800 calls a year. And it's about 50% consumers and the general public and the other roughly 50% are professionals of various kinds. That includes facilities, hospital social workers, other attorneys, corporation councils, adult protective services staff, ADRCs, schools, banks, and funeral homes to include presentations, training and outreach.



Election of Vice Chair

- Wes Martin Nominated Steve Ahlgren. He declined due to other meetings he has on Mondays.
- Steve Ahlgren nominated Catherine Jones-Ferk.
- Dave Hoberg nominated John Helling. Rowena Nelson seconded it.
- Catherine Jones-Ferk indicated that if John Helling wanted the position, she would decline and withdraw her name and defer the position to John.
- John Helling accepted the nomination.
- Wes Martin moved that the nominations be closed.
- *Vote taken, John Helling was unanimously approved as Vice Chair.*

Finance Committee Report

Dave Hoberg, Treasurer

Patrick Metz, Fiscal Manager

Dave Hoberg:

- Just a heads up that I was on a phone call with the auditors along with Patrick and the \$1.5 million dollar gift will be recorded as income in 2025. As such, we will see a loss for 2026 and 2027. Patrick brought up a great point that because it's for home delivered meals, that money gets added to the federal money for home delivered meals. And GWAAR has to do all kinds of reporting on this. This isn't the way I would have done it in private practice, but I understand that they've got to track a lot of costs and a lot of money moving through, so this is the best way. The 2026 budget will need to be adjusted.

Patrick Metz:

- Since Dave has explained the 1.5 million, I'll just mention that if you take the \$1.5 million out of the profit we showed for 2025, we still had a healthy profit and that's

generated by the VA program. Fiscal year 2025 is wrapping up nicely. We start with our new audit firm the first week of May. We have a lot of upfront reporting and discussion to have with the new audit firm.

- The week of April 20th, we begin our regional fiscal trainings. We'll be doing four of them this year. We'll be in Hayward the week of the 20th, and then we go around to Antigo, Beaver Dam and Tomah for the other regional trainings. We're getting the word out and we will be talking about the home delivered meals, the major gift and making sure people understand it. We will be doing a tribal specific fiscal training at Menominee on the 21st of May. We're working with GLITC to do that. At this point in time, we believe that our usual annual fiscal two-day training up in Wausau will be taking place.
- Right now, our operating reserve is right around \$3.2 million. We technically should have between three to six months of operating expense in your reserve and any given month we have over \$1 million of expenses, including the VA payouts generally around \$750,000 to \$850,000 per month. So to get to six months, we would have to be probably in the area of about \$6 million in operational reserves. Steve Ahlgren would like to know what the reserve balance is at each board meeting. Patrick agreed that an excess reserve fund policy should be developed with the help of the board for those excess funds to enhance statewide programing in the aging network. [This policy development should be an agenda item to be discussed at future finance and board meetings.](#)

Motion Catherine Jones-Ferk, seconded by Steve Ahlgren, to accept financial reports as presented and placed on file. Motion carried.

Board Stipends

- Dave relayed that board stipends were postponed from the last board meeting and they are now on the agenda for this meeting again.
- Dave Hoberg indicated that the Executive Committee would like to make a recommendation that only the Board and Advisory Council meetings, whether they be virtual or in person would be eligible for a stipend of \$125.
- Dave Ahlgren also made a motion:



Upon request (declinable), any member of the board (excluding Advisory Council) personally (in-person only, not virtual) attending in-person scheduled board meeting shall be awarded a stipend of \$125 to help defray the cost of attendance.

- John Helling felt that Board and Advisory Council meetings held both virtually and attended in-person should be eligible for the stipend of \$125 if requested. Sandy Bergeron agreed.

There was more discussion.

- John Helling decided to withdraw his stipend motion from the last board meeting.
- Steve Ahlgren amended his motion to be:

Upon request, any member of the board attending a scheduled board meeting, in-person or virtual, shall be awarded a stipend of \$125.00 to help defray the cost of attendance.

Wes Martin seconded it.

Roll call vote:

Cookie: YES
David: YES
Wes: YES
Rowena: YES
John: YES
Catherine: YES
Steve: YES
Sabrina: Absent
Sandy: NO

Motion carried.

- John Schnabl indicated the approximate yearly cost would be around \$6,700.

Executive Committee Report

Cooke Lough, Chair

Mission Statement



The board was given the task of deciding on an updated official mission statement to have uniformity and consistency going forward into the future. A sample mission statement was submitted by Dave Hoberg and there was much discussion. John Schnabl mentioned that the current mission statement is very focused on our role working with the aging units, our AAA role, the Area Agency and Aging Role. While it is a very important piece of what we do, it's not all that we do. Dave Hoberg's proposed new mission statement:

Our mission is to deliver innovative support to aging agencies and contracted partners as we work together to promote, protect, and enhance the well-being of older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers.

Motion by Steve Ahlgren, seconded by John Helling to approve Dave Hoberg's submitted mission statement. Motion carried.

Advisory Council Update

Nick Musson, Transportation & Aging Plan Program Specialist

- GWAAR's Advisory Council met virtually on February 20th, 2026. Doris Baaker was elected as our new Vice Chair, replacing Kathy Grauger.
- Organizational and program updates were given, including GWAAR's first "Year in Review" document, an update on the \$1.5 million gift for home delivered meals, staffing updates and Janet was there to provide advocacy and public policy updates.
- Tony Omernick gave an excellent presentation on the Healthy Aging Coalition's success in improving the lives of older adults by giving them easy access to much needed information.
- The volunteer driver insurance challenges, Older American Act funding changes, GWAAR public records request to OCI, and the impact of allocation shift on Aging units were discussed.
- The next GWAAR Advisory Council meeting is scheduled for May 15th, and that will be a virtual meeting. Our in-person meeting is set for September.



Advocacy & Public Policy Update

Janet Zander, Advocacy & Public Policy Coordinator

- Janet went over the most recent updates on state advocacy and public policy. Please see her detailed and informative written report for more information.

Bureau Report

Neal Minogue, Older Americans Act Program Supervisor (BADR)

- Neal was unable to attend as meeting went long and he had a scheduled call.

Adjournment: 2:15 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: *June 12, 2026 – ADRC of Portage County*

Meeting Dates for 2026

August 14, 2026

October 9, 2026

December 11, 2026

Rosanna Mazzara, Operations Coordinator; Recorder