



**Aging & Family Services Advisory Council Meeting**

Wasatch County Health Department, Conference Room B

Thursday, Sept 14, 2023

1:30 pm

**MINUTES**

**Conducting:** Kendall Crittenden, Chair, Wasatch County Councilmember

**Attending:**

Kendall Christenden, Chair, Wasatch County Health Department  
Gena Bertelsen, Vice Chair, Orem Friendship Senior Center  
Jonelle Fitzgerald, Wasatch County Health Department  
Elen Holdaway, Caregiver Coalition  
Jan Kirkham-Jonsson, Lehi Senior Center  
Kena Mathews, Orem City Community Services Manager  
Carla Merrill, Alpine Mayor  
Cheri Tuckett, Utah County Senior Volunteers  
Jessica Wilde, Summit County Senior Services  
Mary Lucero, Aging Director, MAG  
Linda Cole, Aging Deputy Director, MAG  
Heather Dorius, MAG Aging Nutrition Program Manager  
Jimmy Golding, MAG Volunteer Operations Manager

**Excused:**

Michelle Carrol, MAG Executive Director  
Sandra Curcio, Ability First Utah  
Tori Eaton, Springville Senior Center  
Amelia Powers Gardner  
Jamie Jensen, Lindon Senior Center  
Gale Pace, Retired Senior Volunteer Program  
Tana Toly, Park City Senior Senior Center  
Judy Maedel, Park City Senior Center  
Mike Winward, Wasatch Senior Center

**Guests:**

Erika Noonan, Noorda College of Osteopathic Medicine

**Minutes**

Council Member Crittenden called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to approve the July 13, 2023 minutes. Jonelle Fitzgerald made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes, and Cheri Tuckett seconded the motion. The motion was carried and minutes approved.

## **DISCUSSION & ACTION AGENDA:**

### **Overview of Noorda College and Osteoporosis Education Grant**

Dr. Erika Noonan, clinical faculty at Noorda College of Osteopathic Medicine, shared information regarding a grant received by the college to conduct osteoporosis education. Dr. Noonan is seeking input for venues to provide this education in the community. Osteoporosis education will be delivered and then a research study will be conducted on the efficacy of the education by asking participants to complete a pre-test and post-test survey. This is an initiative that may be expanded in the future. A suggestion was made to include the osteoporosis education with the Wasatch County Health Department classes. These classes are held at the Wasatch Senior Center, and there is a possibility of utilizing the timeframe afterwards to perform the research survey. Dr. Noonan explained that each survey may take 20 minutes to complete.

### **Meals on Wheels America Conference Update - Heather Dorius MOW Program Manager and Mauryn Grande MOW Operations Coordinator, MAG**

The Meals on Wheels (MOW) America conference was attended by MAG employees Heather Dorius, Mauryn Grande, Mary Lucero, Linda Cole, Jimmy Golding and Michelle Carroll in Phoenix, Arizona. Heather expressed that the conference was an enriching experience for her role as the MOW manager. A variety of national trends were discussed at the conference. In particular, the MOW pet initiatives were of interest. Other organizations that perform MOW pet programs have partnerships with Petco and Petsmart to fill the need for food for MOW clients' pets. This may be something that develops in the MAG region in the future and could utilize MOW volunteers. Salt Lake and Davis counties are both providing pet food to MOW clients and would be good resources for additional information. Heather explained that there are roughly 10-15 clients in the MAG MOW program currently who could benefit from pet support. Nationally, collaboration with veterinarians and grooming services have also been successful. Pet adoption agencies may also be able to support pet adoption for aging adults. Companionship of a pet is important to help address the loneliness that is often experienced by aging adults.

Another discussion point at the conference was the need for Area Agencies on Aging to make the March for Meals initiative a greater priority. MAG has historically supported this initiative by partnering with local mayors and other elected officials who take a day to deliver meals to seniors. The MOW program at MAG would like to expand their efforts with partners, media, mayors and other elected officials. This has the potential to increase funding for the MOW program.

There is also a national trend for MOW organizations to provide expanded medically-tailored meal options. This is something that is gaining traction, and it is expected that it will become a nationwide initiative for all MOW programs. Currently, there are some medically-tailored needs addressed, like mechanical soft food and gluten free meals. However, there is a gap in meeting the need for diabetic meals, meals for renal failure or vegetarian meals, for example. The Utah County Jail is willing to adjust meals further to meet this need. This will be explored in the future to better serve the medical needs of MAG MOW clients.

There is also an interest from clients for culturally-relevant meals. These are comfort foods specific to certain populations. These meals could be provided by catering businesses that are already making culturally-specific meals. Training in MOW dietary guidelines for meal preparation would be necessary to participate in preparing these meals for the MOW program.

During the conference, MAG employees were able to report to other program representatives that 72% of MAG meals are delivered by volunteers. This was met with surprise by other programs as most do not have such a robust volunteer program that delivers at this level.

MOW programs across the nation report that COVID increased the need for meals. Now, the funding for COVID is ending and programs are struggling to meet the increased need with the decrease in funding. There was a lot of discussion at the conference regarding the challenges of facing this funding gap. Like programs across the country, MAG is also struggling to find funding to match the current need. Mary and Jimmy focused on attending fundraising classes during the conference to look for innovative ideas to increase MOW funding.

#### **Meals on Wheels Summit County RFP Update - Linda Cole, Aging Deputy Director MAG**

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was circulated over the summer to contract with a new food vendor for MOW food preparation in Summit County. The Summit County Chamber of Commerce was asked to aid in getting the word out as well as the Park City Restaurant Association. Direct contact was made with all of the restaurants, catering businesses, and other food preparation vendors in the Park City area. There were two responses, with a couple of other vendors who expressed interest but withdrew when they became aware of the dietary and other various requirements. Denise's Homeplate and Summit County Jail submitted applications for consideration. A committee was organized to review the applications. Site visits were also conducted to view the food preparation areas and ask questions. The committee scored and voted on which proposal best fit the RFP. It was unanimously decided to continue to contract with the previous provider, Denise's Homeplate of Coalville. One favorable point was that, at Denise's Homeplate, everything is homemade, even the hamburger buns. The location of the 2 applicants and the history of the MOW program meal providers in Summit County was discussed briefly. The availability of MOW drivers and volunteers in Summit County was discussed.

#### **Aging Department Summit/Department Updates - Mary Lucero, Aging Director MAG**

MAG held its annual retreat. It was renamed "summit" instead of "retreat" this year. The theme was, "Reaching New Heights." The agenda mirrored the MAG management retreat held previously to ensure that information was consistent and strategic. The two day retreat was held at the Zermatt in Midway. A SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Outcomes, Threats) was performed which yielded some interesting focus areas and findings. MAG Executive Director, Michelle Carroll, also participated in an AMA session (Ask Michelle Anything) with questions that were submitted by aging department staff in advance. The final day of the summit included a question and answer session with directors from other Area Agencies on Aging. MAG employees were able to ask about different issues in aging services and discuss how these issues are handled in other regions. The final activity for the summit was a group hike.

For her legislative update, Mary reported that MAG has a new lobbyist. His name is Dan Hemmert, and he was previously a state senator. He will be working hand in hand with the other MAG lobbyist, David Stewart. The purpose of the new lobbyist is to focus energy on developing funding for the MOW program on a statewide level. A meeting held with the lobbyist prior to the council meeting resulted in some action items. One of these assignments was to collect data on MAG programs to create a "white paper." There will also be an infographic created to share with the legislators with concise information to assist with a quick understanding of the program and funding needs.

An invitation to the annual Older American Act (OAA) training was extended to the council members. The training is free. The two-day conference is split by topics and programs so that participants can attend the session/s they are most interested in. Many of the aging programs that MAG offers are funded under the OAA. The training will be held at the Multi-Agency Building in SLC the address is: 250 North 1950 West. An agenda for the conference will be sent to council members.

Board development for fundraising efforts are continuing and, recently, a new member, Jeri Briggs

from Wasatch County, was added to the board. There is also a recommendation by the CEO of the Utah County Chamber of Commerce to reach out to Rachel Mabey who is a lawyer and sits on the Provo City Council. More representation from Utah County is needed on the board. Utah County is the largest region and will need the majority of the funds raised. If there are any other recommendations that come to mind, Mary would welcome the input. Fundraising efforts will start gaining traction at the beginning of the new calendar year. The new MAG Communication Manager, Jonathon Knapton will help with fundraising outreach. Additionally, the council was asked for any ideas for directing MAG's fundraising efforts.

### **Roundtable**

Information regarding the 18th Annual Caregiver Conference sponsored by MAG was discussed. The conference will be held on November 3rd at DoTerra in Pleasant Grove. This location has been a success in the past. The conference is free. A flier was presented to the council members and a digital version of the flier was also requested to help with distribution. A survey was given at the end of the conference last year and there were numerous requests for more dementia training. This year's conference will have a track that focuses on dementia. The agenda is located on the website with the registration.

A reminder was given for the Utah County Alzheimer Walk on Saturday, September 16th at 9:00. The walk will begin at the stage/gazebo at the Riverwoods Mall in Provo where information booths will be set up. A MAG client who has been diagnosed with early Alzheimer's, wrote a letter to express her appreciation for the senior center she attends. The letter of appreciation was summarized during the meeting and this person will also be speaking at the Alzheimer's event.

The meeting was adjourned.

**Next Meeting – December 5th 2023 - 1:30 pm  
MAG Conference Room and Zoom**