



MEETING MINUTES

Aging Advisory Council

Wasatch Health Department Conference Room B

January 11, 2024

1:30 pm

Conducting: Kendall Crittenden, Chair, Wasatch County Councilmember

Attending:

Gena Bertelsen, Vice Chair, Orem Friendship Senior Center
Tonja B. Hanson, Summit County Councilmember
Elen Holdaway, Caregiver Coalition
Jamie Jensen, Lindon Senior Center
Cheri Tuckett, Utah County Senior Volunteers
Jessica Wilde, Summit County Senior Services
Linda Cole, MAG Aging Deputy Director
Heather Dorius, MAG Aging Nutrition Program Manager
Jimmy Golding, MAG Volunteer Operations Manager
Amy Lewis, MAG Administrative Assistant
Kena Mathews, Orem City Community Services Manager

Excused:

Gale Pace, Retired Senior Volunteer Program
Jonelle Fitzgerald, Wasatch County Health Department
Michelle Carrol, MAG Executive Director
Mike Winward, Wasatch Senior Center
Tom Hogan, Community Action Services & Food Pantry
Jan Kirkham-Jonsson, Lehi Senior Center
Sandra Curcio, Ability First Utah
Tori Eaton, Springville Senior Center
Judy Maedel, Park City Senior Center
Carla Merrill, Alpine Mayor
Stan Street, American Fork Senior Center
Tana Toly, Park City Senior Senior Center
Amelia Powers Gardner, Utah County Commissioner

Guests:

Heather Dorious, MAG Meals on Wheels Program Manager
Mauryn Grande, MAG MOW Operations Coordinator
Geri Lehnardt, MAG Case Management
Caroline Rodriguez, High Valley Transit

Discussion & Agenda Items

President and Councilmember Kendall Crittenden opened the meeting at 1:41 pm. and welcomed members and guests.

AGENDA ITEMS

1 APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Cheri Tuckett made a motion to approve the Meeting minutes from December 5, 2023. This was seconded by council member Cheri Tuckett.

2 AGING DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Linda Cole, MAG Aging Deputy Director

Mary Lucero, Director of the Aging Department, has resigned. Michelle Carroll, MAG Executive Director will be occupied with the legislative session until March, thus filling the position for a new Aging Director will be postponed until the end of the session. To maintain continuity, Linda Cole will continue as the Aging Deputy Director, with Jimmy Golding working as the Aging Co-Deputy Director. Aging services programs will be divided and supervised by Linda and Jimmy jointly until a decision about a new director is made.

Having Summit County added to the rotation to host Aging Advisory Meetings was addressed. A suggestion was made by council chair, Kendall Crittenden, to return to the following rotation as in past years: Orem, Wasatch, Orem, Summit, and continue repeating this rotation for the rest of the year. A suggestion was made for a contact at the Richins building as a potential location to host the meeting in Summit County.

3 HIGH VALLEY MICROTRANSIT PROGRAM

Caroline Rodriguez, High Valley Transit

High Valley Transit, a free public transit service located in Summit County, offers three modes of transportation. There are fixed-route bus lines available, as well as flexible microtransit and paratransit services. Important to note when using the High Valley Transit system, travel between Summit and Wasatch counties only exists on fixed-route bus lines. Microtransit and paratransit are smaller vehicles that provide shared transportation and arrive at the origin or customer's location.

The microtransit and paratransit services seem to be most beneficial to the senior population's needs. An additional benefit is that, when you call High Valley Transit for assistance with specific needs, you will speak with a live person. A phone app is also available for High Valley Transit requests, but access to a real person is valuable when serving the aging population. Accessibility features of High Valley Transit vehicles include a low platform and grab bars for entry. With advance notice, persons with mobility problems may request that the car pull into their driveway. Furthermore, the driver may assist people into the car from outside their home.

A new service for public health providers is set to begin soon. They will be able to schedule an appointment with High Valley Transit ahead of time through a portal. This may be beneficial in a variety of situations, and it is believed that it would improve overall population health.

Advertising with the High Valley Transit is a possibility as well, to include digital advertisements in the vehicles.

It was noted that requests for transportation options are among the most frequently sought items coming through the Aging Department phone line—especially transportation for medical appointments. Utah County currently does not provide a transportation voucher program. Utah County transportation services are provided by only one provider, Utah Valley Rides, which, due to limited schedules, is insufficient to meet the needs and demand. Additional transportation funding options need to be explored..

4 RSVP MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Jimmy Golding, MAG Volunteer Operations Manager

The RSVP program held an annual day of service to collect food and socks. There were almost 250 pounds of food and many socks donated. The community action network will then coordinate and distribute donations to 80 non-profit groups throughout all three service areas. There were fewer donations collected this year than in previous years, but the day of service was still a success.

Bonnie Lewis, who had led the program for the previous ten years, has retired. It is expected that the MAG Aging Department will introduce the council to a new RSVP Program Manager in the near future.

5 FOOD BOXES

Mauryn Grande, MAG MOW Operations Coordinator

During the calendar year 2023, an initiative was launched to disseminate shelf-stable food boxes to seniors. The recipients were Meals on Wheels clients who had been assessed and found to have greater demands than their peers. This meant raising the number of food box distributions from once a year to twice a year, both in summer and winter. Summer distribution depended primarily on MAG employees to prepare and distribute the boxes. The winter distribution took place in December via volunteers. Many of the volunteers were also Meals on Wheels volunteer drivers, and the turnout was incredible. Both occasions, shelf-stable food boxes were successfully provided to all three service zones. One-hundred and fifty boxes were distributed, including 15 in Wasatch and 15 in Summit Counties.

The food was purchased with MAG funding directed to senior nutrition. The boxes featured foods such as fruit, protein, and grains that were simple to cook and eat. Those who received food expressed gratitude. Several stated that they lacked shelf stable food or were impoverished. MAG Meals on Wheels hopes to accomplish something similar in the calendar year 2024.

A collaboration involving MAG's volunteers and the Utah Senior Supplemental Food Box Program was previously investigated. There are important considerations, including storage space and volunteer delivery coordination. Pickup sites need to be increased, such as through the Community Action Network. There may be challenges with keeping the various food products categories for different purposes separate. Kena Mathews can contact Tom Hogan at Community Action Network to see if there has been any further conversation about the senior food box initiative. MAG may be willing to provide volunteers to distribute food to senior citizens.

6 MARCH FOR MEALS

Jimmy Golding, MAG Volunteer Operations Manager

Every March, Meals on Wheels celebrates the significant event in 1972 when a nationwide nutrition program for seniors was incorporated into the Older Americans Act. Employees from MAG Meals on Wheels will be preparing for the March for Meals 2024 in Utah, Summit, and Wasatch counties. This March for Meals week, we will partner with elected officials to deliver Meals on Wheels to their senior citizen constituents who already receive these services. It is an excellent opportunity for elected officials to recognize the need and potentially support older adult initiatives such as Meals on Wheels.

Invitations will be given to elected officials as well as members of the Aging Advisory Council to participate. Aging Advisory Council members who would like to participate may reach Amy Lewis, MAG Administrative Assistant, at 801-229-3808 or alewis@mountainland.org.

7 ANGEL TREE

Geri Lehnardt, MAG Case Management

A photo of a 99-year-old client in Park City receiving an Angel Tree gift was shared with permission. The gift contained a monetary donation, a gift card to a local food store, and a handcrafted bar of soap. The money was used to purchase heart medicine for the receiver, which was extremely helpful.

The Angel Tree project is a collaboration with Covington Senior Living and MAG Aging and Family Services. This has been an established relationship with Covington Senior Living with the Angel Tree for several years and is well-known in the community. There were 18 seniors at Covington Senior Living that were Angel Tree recipients. The Angel Tree information and delivery instructions are hosted by United Way; monetary gifts and gift cards for specific needs were accepted. The case managers were able to go to the client and identify their specific needs.

Caregivers will attend the March movie at Pleasant Grove's Water Gardens. Also, upcoming for Valentine's Day in February, a rose will be delivered by volunteers to caregivers in Wasatch and Summit Counties.

8 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Jimmy Golding, MAG Volunteer Operations Manager

The Utah Association of Area Agencies on Aging (U4A), met prior to the Aging Advisory Council. At this meeting, the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Directors and lobbyists came together in order to advocate for a budget increase. Currently, the governor's budget for Meals on Wheels includes 2.1 million one-time funds; lobbyists will want 3.2 million in ongoing funding. Some Utah programs are falling short of meeting the needs of the Meals on Wheels program. Utah is addressing the problem collaboratively, with all AAA Directors working together for the increase in funds.

9 ROUNDTABLE

Ellen Caregiver Coalition in Utah County

New caregiver support groups are now operating in Heber City and Spanish Fork.

Kena Mathews - Code Blue Nights in Utah County

If there is someone in Utah County who is homeless, cold, and in need of a place to stay, there are warming center locations in Utah County. Currently, only Utah County has warming center locations. Warming centers in Wasatch and Summit counties are being developed to meet demands in the future. Regardless of the county the senior is in, they are able to stay in a hotel for a few nights. Reach out to

Kena for more information at any time should there be someone who requires shelter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Next meeting:

Thursday, March 14, 2024 1:30 MAG Orem Conference Room

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