

## Senior Services Advisory Board

**Date:** October 9, 2025

**Location:** 22 South State St. Clearfield, UT

**Time:** 9:00 am -10:30 am

**Room:** 3rd Floor Boardroom

**Minutes Approval Date:**

**PENDING**

**SSAB Audio Recording**

### Board Members

Kelly Van Noy, Chair  
Lorna Koci, Vice-Chair  
Wendy Farr  
Mike Allred

Larry Millward  
Commissioner John Crofts  
Mark Perry

### Davis County Health Department Staff

Rachelle Blackham, Division Director  
Eric Applegarth, Senior Services  
John Cowan, Senior Services

### Guests

Shawna Mahan, Senior Services  
Debbie Draper, Senior Services  
Taiza Venstra, Senior Services

### Welcome/Call to Order (0:00:16)

(Kelly Van Noy)

The meeting of the Davis County Senior Services Advisory Board was held Thursday, October 9, 2025 at the Davis County Health Department, Board Room, 22 South State Street, Clearfield, Utah. The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by the Chair, Kelly Van Noy.

### Minutes (Action) (0:00:18)

(Kelly Van Noy)

The minutes from the August 14, 2025 meeting were presented to the members and reviewed.

*Kelly Van Noy called for action on the meeting minutes from August 14, 2025. Larry Millward made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Wendy Farr. All were in favor. The vote was unanimous.*

### RSVP Role of Board (Action) (0:01:18)

(John Cowan)

John Cowan explained that the board serves a dual role as both the senior advisory board and the RSVP advisory council. This dual function is in compliance with Americanore grant regulations, which require an advisory council for RSVP grants. John Cowan outlined the criteria for members of the RSVP advisory council, noting that the board members meet all requirements, including knowledge of community needs, interest in community service, and capability to assist Davis County with administrative and program responsibilities. John Cowan also listed potential roles and responsibilities for the advisory council, such as assisting in assessing community needs, fundraising, advising on volunteer recruitment, and linking the RSVP project with other community resources. John Cowan provided an overview of the RSVP program's performance measures, emphasizing that Americanore funding is tied to outcome-based measures that demonstrate the impact of volunteers in their communities. He detailed eight outcome-based performance measures for Davis County's grant, including nutrition and food support, companionship, increased food security, outreach, and tutoring. He also mentioned one non-outcome-based performance measure for stations where direct impact is difficult to measure, such as ushering and museum docent services.

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*Lorna Koci made a motion to add a standing agenda item for RSVP council matters, seconded by Wendy Farr. All were in favor. The vote was unanimous.*

### RSVP Program Overview (Information) (0:15:33)

(Tazia Venstra)

Tazia Venstra, the RSVP project director, discussed the upcoming volunteer recognition event, which will have a Vegas-style theme and be held at Warehouse 22. She explained that attendees would receive play money for games like "pequino" (bingo), blackjack, and Texas Hold'em, and highlighted the "human slot machine" as a unique attraction. Tazia clarified that no actual money exchange or gambling would occur, ensuring compliance with state law, and confirmed that attendance and participation in games are optional for volunteers. Tazia Venstra presented data from the previous grant year, showing 323 volunteers served 41,112 hours, amounting to \$1,416,381 worth of volunteer services. She also provided current numbers for the new grant year, indicating 317 active volunteers within the first six months, with 22,578.43 hours served. Tazia highlighted the significant impact of volunteers, particularly in programs like Meals on Wheels, which is almost entirely volunteer-based.

### Ombudsman Program (Information) (0:28:10)

(Jen Kay)

Jen, the Davis County long-term care ombudsman, explained their role in advocating for resident rights in assisted living and nursing home facilities in Davis County, which has 36 such facilities. Jen clarified that their work does not extend to hospitals, independent living centers, or group homes for people with disabilities. Mark Perry (DHHS) added that group homes for the intellectually disabled, known as ICFMRs, have largely closed due to a lawsuit. Jen discussed the rigorous training required for ombudsman volunteers, which includes online modules, live classes, and in-facility shadowing. She presented performance measures for the current year, noting that 136 cases had been opened and 328 complaints resolved. Jen also highlighted the significant volunteer hours contributed, stating that the Davis County program is "the best in the state".

Jen detailed the updated federal CMS requirements for discharge notices, which now mandate facilities to issue a notice for all discharges, regardless of who initiated it. Jen explained that many facilities are not sending emergency transfer notices correctly and that errors are common in the information provided to residents on these notices, such as incorrect contact details or reasons for discharge. Jen stated that they are seeing an increase in inappropriate discharges where residents are sent to unsafe locations, leading to civil money penalties for facilities. Jen discussed the potential for a new discharge portal within the Get Care software, which would allow facilities to enter discharge information, print notices for residents, and automatically transmit data to the ombudsman office securely. She stated that this portal would significantly reduce workload and improve data accuracy, though it is not yet mandated for facilities to use. The state voted to allocate funds from the 3B funding stream to enhance the statewide database portal, incurring a financial hit.

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### Medicare Open Enrollment (*Information*) (0:28:10)

(Eric Applegarth)

Eric Applegarth, identified as the "Medicare guy," detailed three key programs: the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for counseling and benefit checks, Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) for fraud protection and reporting, and Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA) to help reduce Medicare costs through programs like Extra Help and Medicare Savings Programs. Eric Applegarth reported that from January to August, they conducted at least 1,117 one-on-one counseling sessions, with 35% specifically assisting individuals under 65 with disabilities. They also noted 18 outreach events, making 714 individual contacts, and highlighted that nine active counselors dedicated 558 face-to-face counseling hours. Eric Applegarth announced Medicare open enrollment will run from October 15th to December 7th, with four appointments offered daily on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at various senior centers and the office. They confirmed that 88 different individuals participated in open enrollment last year, anticipating similar engagement.

Eric Applegarth shared anticipated increases for the upcoming year, estimating a \$20 rise in the base Medicare premium. They detailed health deductibles ranging from zero to \$1,000, drug deductibles up to \$615, and out-of-pocket maximums for drug programs increasing to \$2,100, while advantage plans have a broader range from \$3,500 to \$13,900. Eric Applegarth confirmed their office provides unbiased guidance on both traditional Medicare and Advantage plans. Eric Applegarth reported that as of April 2025, 49% of the population was on original Medicare and 51% on Advantage plans, with a trend towards Advantage plans. They emphasized prioritizing individuals' doctors and health needs, followed by their financial situation, and then additional benefits when determining the best health insurance plan.

Eric Applegarth discussed the Inflation Reduction Act's impact on reducing Medicare prices, noting the \$35 insulin cap and significant price reductions for 10 other medications. They also introduced the new Guide program for individuals with dementia or Alzheimer's, which helps cover costs but requires participants to switch to traditional Medicare and potentially face difficulties with Medigap plans due to medical underwriting. Larry Millward asked about representatives from Medicare or Advantage programs visiting senior centers, to which Eric Applegarth clarified that companies can hold informational presentations but cannot conduct enrollment events or collect contact information unless voluntarily provided by beneficiaries.

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### Commissioner's Report (*Information*) (1:22:59)

(John Crofts)

Commissioner Crofts announced the restart of the Miss Davis County and Miss Teen Davis County scholarship pageant, with the winners volunteering to help promote and sponsor county events, offering a new resource for outreach. Board members can contact Commissioner Crofts to get in touch with the program participants.

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### Director's Report (*Information*) (1:24:41)

(Rachelle Blackham)

Rachelle Blackham provided updates on Code Blue preparations, noting the new facility will be available November 1st, with plans for 30 beds, volunteer utilization, and UTA bus passes for transportation. They also

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highlighted strong social media engagement, with posts receiving hundreds to over a thousand interactions, and nearly 2,500 individuals signed up for senior center and community event updates.

Rachelle Blackham reported a heavy focus on food insecurity, with 300 new home-delivered meal assessments and 312 reassessments conducted in the last year, alongside increased nutrition counseling units. They also proudly noted passing significant financial audits for Older Americans Act funding and the VA's review of the veterans directed care program with zero findings. There was a discussion regarding state department legislative priorities, with nutrition as a top request for ongoing funding and the aging waiver program seeking \$953,000 to serve more older adults and reduce the waitlist. Mark Perry confirmed that federal funding has been reallocated internally to APS, allowing for the hiring of five new staff members to address increasing caseloads.

Updates were shared about the WISE initiative, which is developing actionable recommendations for a statewide plan based on feedback from listening sessions, with four groups focusing on wealth, independence, security, and engagement. Despite rumors of cuts, they anticipate a small increase in senior funding and are proceeding as if federal funding for programs like RSVP, SHIP, SMP, and MIPPA will continue. An invitation to a recognition event and shared details about the Senior Expo on October 22nd-23rd, which will include a shred event. They also highlighted the annual senior gift drive, providing gifts to 70-85 isolated or low-income seniors, and encouraged donations.

Rachelle Blackham clarified that the WISE initiative is a multi-year plan incorporating feedback from older adults and still includes the governor's proposal to eliminate the tax on social security. They noted that this proposal, if passed, would significantly benefit seniors in Utah, which is one of only eight states that still taxes social security.

### Chair's Report (*Information*) (1:41:27)

(Kelly Van Noy)

The chair had nothing to report at this time.

### Meeting Adjourned (1:41:30)

*Lorna Koci made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Larry Millward The meeting ended at 10:41 a.m.*