

# Governor's Advisory Council Meeting

SLTC – 1100 North Last Chance Gulch

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## Meeting Minutes for

July 26, 2022, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

In-person Location: Armory Bldg. 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conf Rm – Helena  
1100 N. Last Chance Gulch – Parking lot (corner of 11<sup>th</sup> & Lyndale)

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**Attendance:** Alex Ward, Roberta Bigback, Ryan Clark, Bob Meyers, Gayle Carlson, Peggy Tombre, Lori Brengle, Kerrie Reidelbach

Not present: Wally Melcher, Curly Burns

Member Update: Marianne Roose decided to not renew her term due to many other commitments and Rita Harden moved to North Dakota. This leaves two council positions open.

Welcome and Introductions – Everyone introduced themselves and Bob pointed out that this is our first in-person meeting since July of 2019. This was actually our first hybrid meeting and Lori joined us via zoom.

Guests: Lianna Waller, APS; Nikki Thennis, Conference Coordinator; Jeannie Etchart, Event Planner; and Barb Smith, Div. Administrator

**Adult Protective Services (APS) Project:** Leanna Waller, Interim APS Bureau Chief:

The primary goal of APS is to investigate abuse, neglect and exploitation. Investigators also carry guardianship as a last resort through a court order. They have carried a caseload as high as 250 across the state and in 2021 is decreased to 110 and now it's running at approximately 92. Statewide APS employs 36 investigators to cover all 56 counties. The Opioid grant focuses on substance abuse, which also allows for identification of gaps within their structure. Investigators now have the tools to help screen for opioid/substance abuse. Documenting the problem and severity of opioid and substance misuse problems for both the adult victim and perpetrator, facilitating and documenting service delivery and, measuring the outcomes of cases are the main focuses of this grant. They now have the ability to auto send referrals to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) network through Jump Technology software. In addition, a new Social Services Unit was developed and began in 2021 with one social services worker and by May of 2021 three more were hired and currently advertisement for three more are in the works. These Social Services Workers will follow up with the victim at 30-days to ensure services were implemented and are working for the individuals referred to them. This also identifies how well services are working across the state. If it's found that services were not

set up, a follow up to the AAA is completed to find out what happened. Additional follow up on case referrals is completed through contractual agreement funded by the grant with M4A providing a 30-60-90 day follow up to track data on the quality and quantity of the services received. Improvements to the auto referral are currently being looked at by Jump Technology. These changes will promote better electronic communication. By offering this program, APS is hoping that victims will get the help and services they need, therefore, keeping them safe and out of harm. Lianna mentioned that Montana and Nevada are the only states doing this work currently.

Alex asked about referrals for family members when appropriate and yes, the program now allows APS to refer other individuals, including the family, perpetrator, and the victim. APS, with grant funding from the University of Purdue currently has a contract with Dept. of Justice who have now hired Mike Fanning as a prosecutor for APS cases. Mike is also involved with the Elder Justice Committees. They are in the process of recruiting for these committees and figuring out the roles of the council. Lianna will find out who is on each of the four councils. The APS number for reporting is 844-277-9300 or APS.mt.gov.

### **Governor's Conference on Aging Planning Update**

Jeannie Etchart, Event Planner was introduced to the group and is under contract to help with the conference planning and coordination with the hotel and the virtual platform Whova.

Nichole Thennis, Conference Coordinator gave an update with her efforts of raising funds for the conference. Nikki's goal is to reach \$35,000 and at the meeting she reported she was at \$9,910. To date she is at \$15,260. She asked the group if anyone has ideas or contacts for additional sponsorships to please let her know. She also announced that the centenarian luncheon will be covered by the Wish of a Lifetime of AARP. You can check out their website, this is an amazing program <https://wishofalifetime.org/>

**Update:** Funds raised for the conference as of 8/30/2022 is \$26,360. Nice job Nikki!!

Mini-grants selection committee: Al, Peggy, Bob and Gayle volunteered to review and score proposals. They are due by September 15<sup>th</sup> and to date we have not received any. We will send out a reminder to the AAAs to share with their networks.

Update: We have received three mini grant applications to date.

Mini-grants awards ceremony: We will discuss the planning for this when we meet in Butte Monday evening.

Silent Auction oversight & collections: Lori reported that she is getting some commitments from the AAAs for auction items. Areas I, II, IV, V and VI are participating. We have a robotic cat, emergency preparedness kits, a couple of Starbucks baskets, quilt, and more to come. Thank you, Al, for offering your photography once again! Lori is asking for photos, lists (if needed) and value of the items so that we can easily put them on Whova for the virtual auction.



### **Legislative and other updates-Barb Smith:**

Jill Sark has resigned as the Bureau Chief for the Community Services Bureau and Denise Brunett has been hired for this position. Trevor Tangen has been deployed and Lianna Waller is filling in as Interim Bureau Chief in his absence for the next year.

The executive budget process is underway. Initial work includes drafting legislation to change the number of AAAs allowed in the state to 10, a provider rate increase for the AAAs and additional funding for the Ombudsman program. SLTC also has APS proposing one-time funding only for a contract to review current guardianships, establish guidelines in line with law and develop policy and process to assist county attorneys with guardian requests.

We have seven skilled nursing facilities which some are closing, and some are at risk. All are running at 50% or less occupancy. This situation is the perfect storm with lots of beds and little staff. Facilities must give 60 days' notice to OIG, State Ombudsman, residents, and family members, as well as file a closure plan for approval. SLTC staff will assist with difficult placements, coordinate with DDP and Mental Health. Following COVID, facilities are back to receiving normal provider rates.

There is now available a public communication email for questions: SLTC Help – [sltchelp.dphhs@mt.gov](mailto:sltchelp.dphhs@mt.gov)

### **State Plan on Aging Update-Kerrie**

Statewide Needs Assessment update: Our review meeting with POLCO for the survey overview is scheduled for August 24<sup>th</sup>. Over 7,000 completed the survey statewide. You are all welcome to attend this meeting via zoom. We will record this meeting and use the information to present at the conference.

**Update:** For those of you unable to join the meeting with POLCO here is the recorded link: [View Detail \[mt-gov.zoom.us\]](https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/9201111111)

**Next meeting:** Will be held in Butte, Monday October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:00 PM at the Copper King to finalize tasks for the conference. We will also schedule a follow up meeting within the week to discuss the conference; what worked well, what we would do differently, etc. The next meeting is January 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30, most likely zoom.

