



COG Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2026

Members present: Commissioner Zoller

Members present by phone/Zoom: Councilor Fuentes, Commissioner Ferrell, Commissioner Farris

Members absent:

Members Excused: Commissioner Cothren

Alternates present:

Staff present: Mike Reardon, Claire Steiner, Christina Marnieris, Lois Chauncey, Karen Wolfe

Advisory Council member present:

Visitors present: AAADSW Staff members Donna Ganly, Rosemary Carey, Julie La Rocco, Amy Baldwin, Emily Maciel, Andrea Zamilpa, Katy McCallister, Brittney Coughlin, and Aona Koski; Miller Nash attorney Amy Robinson

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by COG Chair Zoller.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. Agenda Review. The Agenda for today's meeting was reviewed. No changes were needed. **Councilor Fuentes moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Ferrell seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

2. Minutes. The minutes for the January 23, 2026 meeting were reviewed. No changes were needed. **Commissioner Ferrell moved to approve the January 23, 2026 minutes. Councilor Fuentes seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

3. Public Comment (3-minute limit). AAADSW Staff member Donna Ganly, Care Coordinator, expressed her appreciation for the COG's advocacy of the Care Coordination program over the last year. She thanked the COG in advance for their continued efforts over the next year. She and her clients are all very happy and appreciative.

4. Anniversary Recognition.

5-year anniversaries: Recognizing Rosemary Carey, Julie La Rocco, Amy Baldwin, Emily Maciel, Andrea Zamilpa, Katy McCallister, and Nicola Cook. **10-year anniversaries:** Recognizing Brittney Coughlin and Aona Koski.

Rosie is retiring next month and Mike congratulated her on her anniversary.

Nicola Cook remarks: *"I began interning as an Ombuds in March 2019. While interning, I did a job shadow with J. Girard, and knew at that time that I wanted to work here. Two years later I began working as a Medicaid Case Manager. I did that for 3.5 years. I then took a position as a*

Community Services Case Manager and have been doing that for 1.5 years. I would like to say that I love this agency and the work we do. I am always so amazed how, regardless of department, the people who work here show so much dedication to helping one another and our clients. As an Ombuds, Medicaid, and Community Services CM, I have many clients tell me how grateful they are for our services. Many clients telling me that they do not think they would have been able to survive without our services, and that just knowing that they have someone they can call for help is great relief. It has been a wonderful 5 years and I am looking forward to many more!"

Julie La Rocco related she was hired during COVID and at first only did remote client visits. She is so grateful to have found this job.

Andrea Zamilpa loves being here and hopes she can stay here for a long time.

Amy Baldwin related that she has worked in both Medicaid and Community Services in both offices. It's the best company she's worked for and she's happy to have been here so long.

Brittney Coughlin stated this is a great agency to work for and she hopes to be here many more years.

Aona came here ten years ago. At first, she worked as a nurse only and now works as a nurse and a case manager. Sometimes the job is overwhelming, but the supervisors and management have been supportive. She looks forward to many years to come and it's a blessing.

Emily Maciel remarks: *It has been such a pleasure to work with so many amazing colleagues, and to get to serve my community while doing so. I have learned so much from my supervisors, colleagues, and clients. I want to thank everyone.*

5. Advisory Council. Christina reported on the February and March 2026 meetings, where Brian reported on the Felida Park housing project. The council is currently recruiting for vacant positions, and reviewed the Area Plan. March's meeting had a presentation from CDM.

Christina requested approval of new Advisory Council member, Arnold "Arnie" Dyer representing Clark County, to join the Advisory Council effective March 1, 2026.

Councilor Fuentes moved to approve Arnold "Arnie" Dyer, representing Clark County, to join the Advisory Council effective March 1, 2026. Commissioner Ferrell seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

6. Review of Financials. Claire noted this report was generated by our new accounting software and outlined the new column labels. Claire reviewed the January 2026 payments of \$2,654,890.24. Nothing out of the ordinary. Wages are on par with the average. Longview remodel contributed to the payments. Commissioner Zoller asked how Claire likes the new system and Claire expressed her happiness with it. Claire reported on the February 2026 payments of \$2,191,637.83. Wages were comparable to the monthly average, contractors were below average. The other categories were lower than the monthly average.

Councilor Fuentes moved to approve the January 2026 payments of \$2,654,890.24 and the February 2026 payments of \$2,191,637.83 respectively. Commissioner Ferrell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Claire reviewed the November and December 2025 Fiscal reports. November balance sheet – position is strong with assets 3x our liabilities. November statement of revenues: over budget for revenue and under budget for expenditures. Interest is over budget. Nutrition expense is over budget due to the timing of executed contracts. \$219,000 made in November. Commissioner Zoller asked if we have heard from the State regarding the Fund Balance. Mike responded we have not heard anything from the State.

Claire reviewed the December balance sheet. Assets still exceed liabilities. Plenty of cash on hand. Mike noted he thought we might be at break-even at the end of 2025, and to have made about \$800k is a good accomplishment.

Claire reviewed the December statement of revenue and expenditures. Over budget on revenue, at budget on expenditures. Claire noted she took a conservative approach to revenue during the budget process. In-home services personal care program was also conservatively budgeted. Area Plan Grant was slightly over budget. Caregiver Training and Home Care agency worker insurance was under budget. Mike asked Claire what she attributes the higher level of interest earned on our investment account. She stated it was likely due to her conservative budget approach.

Claire reviewed the December 2025 Fiscal Dashboard pages. Mike complimented Claire and her team on their work on implementing the new accounting software. He believes their work will help with budgeting individual programs in the future.

7. Director's Report. Mike thanked everyone for attending today. He reported on the following topics:

- W4A/Legislative Advocacy – State Legislative session ended 3/12/26. Mike shared the advocacy we did to continue funding for Care Coordination and we got longer funding than we were advocating for. This gives us more time to implement organizational changes. There was \$5M Medicaid case management funding for the unit rate. The rate is indexed annually and due to that Mike believes the rate will either stay the same or have a slight increase. Mike reported on attending the Aging Policy Briefing in DC earlier this month, where he met with Senator Cantwell's and Congresswoman Gluesenkamp Perez's legislative aides. The first ask was reauthorization of the Older Americans Act (OAA); the second ask was to protect Medicaid Home and Community Based services which help clients age in their homes rather than shift to nursing homes.
- Governor Ferguson and DSHS Secretary Ramirez received a letter from the House committee on Energy and Commerce regarding waste, fraud and abuse (WFA) and what the State is doing about it. Mike feels it puts the State on notice about federal scrutiny. One of the targets is Medicaid Home and Community Based services. Mike is not concerned because we monitor everything. Mike also shared a Kaiser Family Foundation analysis on how CMS is tracking WFA. Previously they reduced funding if WFA was found. The new CMS approach is now to cut funding if WFA is suspected, which raised Mike's level of concern.
- Contracts Report – Mike noted we have a new revenue contract for the Benefits Enrollment Center for \$200k, some of which will be allocated out to our rural communities. Open procurement is underway for Senior and FCSP transportation services and also for HRSN medically tailored meals.

8. Executive Session. At 1:44 p.m. Chair Zoller announced 1) the meeting will be closed to the public in accordance with [RCW 42.30.140\(4\)\(a\)](#); and 2) the COG will go into Executive Session to discuss potential litigation, with Miller Nash attorney Amy Robinson. The COG will return from Executive Session at 2:05 p.m.

At 2:05 p.m. Chair Zoller announced the COG had concluded their Executive Session to discuss potential litigation with Miller Nash attorney Amy Robinson and the public meeting would now resume. No decision was made.

Director's Report continues:

- Executive Director Search – Mike updated the COG on the process of Executive Director recruitment and interviews. 28 outside applicants after 10 ten days of the posting. 3 internal candidates. First interviews of the top 5 were conducted last week. The panel consisted of Senior Heroes Awards founder Dick Halvorsen, AAADSW Advisory Council vice-chair Rick Seekins, Executive Director of Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington Lynn Kimball, W4A Executive Director Cathy Knight, and Mike. 2nd round interviews will be for four candidates Starting on April 20th. The panel will consist of COG vice-chair Cothren, Councilor Fuentes, COG Chair Zoller, Commissioner Ferrell, and Advisory Council Chair Apryl Schneider. Outlook Calendar invites will be sent by HR Specialist Olga Dacy. She will send the applicants' packets and the interview questions. Mike polled the COG if one day for all four interviews will work for everyone. Yes.

9. Good of the order: none

10. Adjourn. There being no further business, Councilor Fuentes moved, and Commissioner Ferrell seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.