



Aging & People with Disabilities (APD)  
<https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/agency/Pages/apd.aspx>  
Disability Services Advisory Council (DSAC)  
in partnership with the Area Agency on Aging  
Monday, March 3, 2025  
Virtual Meeting Minutes

**CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS & CHECK IN** – Called to order. This is a regular meeting of the DSAC. All DSAC meetings are open to the public. Visitors are welcome. This meeting was recorded.

**DSAC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Cody Guinn  
George Adams (vice chair)  
James Naegele (chair)  
Katy Callies  
Kerrie Walters  
Leslie McIntyre

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:**

Bonnie Huard

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCE:**

Denyce Gavin

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

**GUEST:**

Paul Golding, SAC  
Riah Safady – Health Equity Manager, Jackson Care Connect  
Tyler Johnson, Mid Rogue Foundation

**STAFF:**

Jeremy Wolf, APD District Manager  
Ann Marie Alfrey, Rogue Valley Council of Governments Executive Director  
Patrick Vejar, APD Disability Service Manager  
Diana Burney, APD District Office Specialist

**CALL TO ORDER & INTRODUCTIONS** – What is your favorite food to cook and/or eat?

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – James discussed issues that he and others are having with the ONE system. When the case managers at the DSO are not available, the front desk isn't able to take the paperwork and is turning people away. Also, the home care worker coordinator and home care workers are having miscommunications and have been told that Catherine is the only one that can help them. Jeremy will investigate it; it doesn't sound like what should be happening. He also suggested contacting the supervisor as these occurrences happen. If the supervisor is not able to help, then the district leadership can help (Jeremy & Ana). You should not be turned away; they should be able to take most paperwork. There is a separation of duties with setting up a home care worker (HCW) and those that

work on the HCW vouchers. Background checks can only be done by certain people as well.

George mentioned that several consumers and caregivers are finding that paperwork is going missing at the DSO. Jeremy suggested contacting a supervisor, as that is not normal and that should not be happening. If you can report the specifics to them, they can research the issue to resolve it.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** – None.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2025 MINUTES** – Minutes are unanimously approved as presented. (George, Katy 2<sup>nd</sup>)

**RVCOG SDS DRAFT FOUR-YEAR PLAN FOR 2025-2029** – Ann Marie Alfrey  
The Rogue Valley Council of Governments (RVCOG) is the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Jackson and Josephine counties. There are 16 AAAs in Oregon, and they receive federal funding under the Older Americans Act. This funding is targeted for not only adults who are age 60 and older, but also adults ages 19 to 59 who are experiencing physical disabilities.

One of the requirements of the funding is to come up with the area plan. The plan is updated every four years and there are annual updates. They start with a needs assessment survey with the community, approximately 727 were completed. Focus groups were also done, which our DSAC participated in, as well as the Senior Advisory Council (SAC), Age Wise Age Well, the Foster Grandparents program and others. They found that there is not much change in the community needs from year to year.

The common threads are – access to transportation and accessible parking, affordable housing and supports, financial insecurities for the unhoused, food insecurity, access to durable medical equipment, opportunities for social connections, the need for a single point of entry for resource navigation, caregiver consistency from home care agencies, training for caregivers, support & reimbursement for family caregivers. There were issues with safety for public spaces (lighting, accessible entrances), medication reviews, welcoming environments, lack of easy access to recreation and exercise, understanding of medical coverage and physicians not taking Medicare. There is also an emerging issue of digital literacy with access affordability and use of devices, which is creating what they call the “digital divide”.

Riah mentioned the 2023 Community Health Assessment (CHA) and the five-year 2024 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) and is wondering if this four-

year plan aligns with those plans. The RVCOG does participate with those assessments, but their plan is specific to their demographics.

Tyler discussed the issues of lengthy return calls from our local resources and used the Social Security Office as an example of how they want people to make an online appointment to come into the office and when they do go to the office in Medford now, there is a good chance they can wait all day and get bumped and still not be seen by anybody.

Tyler also mentioned that the Josephine County library system is doing some education, services and digital outreach. He asked if there are resources for training older adults in basic online functions. Ann Marie shared that we have the Rogue Valley Broadband Action Team, which is a consortium of Jackson and Josephine Counties. The Ashland Senior Center, Rogue Broadband, T-Mobile, and Jackson & Josephine County libraries are participating in it. They have classes in English and in Spanish and are working on bridging the gaps of the digital piece with several community partners. They have some funding and are working on infrastructure and getting hardware. Marketing is tricky though, as posting online won't necessarily reach the audience that needs it, it depends on community partners to spread the word.

George mentioned that there are still transportation and housing barriers for the disabled. Homeowners and contractors do not know where to start with ADA. Ann Marie reminded us that RVCOG has the Lifelong Housing program that assists with aging in place and can also help with those issues. It is easier to build ADA into new housing, but there is retrofitting that can be done. We will include the brochure and checklist with the minutes. She also mentioned that there is some legislation at the state level, but it is early in the session, which is working on requiring a higher minimum percentage of accessible units in developments and they are trying to define what accessibility means. Housing is a huge issue, but there are also not enough accessible rental units. A push for building codes that require accessibility is being done. Oregon is behind on all housing and very behind on accessible housing.

As for transportation, Medford only has one non-medical accessible taxi, with none after hours and we are not sure if there are any in Grants Pass. After hour medical pick-ups have been charging hundreds of dollars to people.

## **UPDATES & NEWS –**

### **Jeremy –**

- The Oregon Project Independence Medicaid (OPI-M) program officially opened 3/1/25.

- The Oregon Eligibility Partnership (OEP) Grants Pass lobby merge has had some challenges, with long wait times, but they are actively working on improving services and workflows. There are several vacancies that are actively being filled, they are re-designing the lobby, and they are purchasing more accessible furniture.
  - Cody suggested not having all the chairs in the lobby up against the wall, as the power wheel chairs stick out further and they do not line up with the other people in standard chairs.
  - George suggested making the lobbies look more professional / classier by having nameplates that lists the managers of the office and their roles.
  - Some of our lobbies are very small, for example the DSO is limited to making many changes.

### **Ann Marie –**

- SDS hired a new case manager, Deanna Herrera and they are recruiting for two to three more case managers. Applications can be found at <https://rvcoq.org>.
- Food & Friends lost their commercial kitchen lease, it is terminating effective 8/31/25 and they have six months to find a new one or they will not be able to provide hot meals anymore, only frozen ones that are not prepared locally. They are reaching out to the community for help in transitioning to a new commercial kitchen site as soon as possible. They serve up to 1,400 meals a day, using the kitchen from 3:30am to 3:30pm. The new location will need a large walk-in freezer, large walk-in refrigerator, dry storage, accommodate a hundred-gallon cooker, secure parking for four delivery vehicles and be along the I-5 corridor. Tyler suggested Amy's kitchen – Marcie Champion & Chris Boss would be good contacts there. Schoolhouse Brewhouse and Apple Peddler in White City were suggested, but they are looking for something more central. George has a friend that is retiring from the chocolate making business and may have items for sale, he will connect him with Ann Marie.

### **INFORMATION SHARING –**

- Accessible Parking Workgroup –
  - We are continuing to hand out the windshield cards.
  - Paul mentioned that there are only three sentences in the DMV driver's manual about disability parking and nothing about where you shouldn't park, and that public education needs to be addressed. When consumers get a placard, they should be tested that they understand rules. Diana will bring that information to the next accessible parking meeting.

- Tyler mentioned that education is needed so that family members do not use the placards and parking spaces when they do not have the disabled person with them. That information is in our brochure and windshield cards that can be shared.
- Disability Awareness for ODHS Event –
  - We have chosen our venue – the Phoenix Plaza Civic Center. Cody, James and Diana toured the facility last week. It's a great facility and we don't think we can find anything better. Originally, we had concerns about parking, but there are approximately 30 spaces at the event and a large gravel parking lot across the street.
  - Which date would we like, both are available – Tuesdays, June 10, 2025, and June 17, 2025. Diana will check with the EIC group to make sure there are no conflicts.
  - SDS / RVCOG will be providing us with the required insurance for the event.
  - The next planning meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2025, 2:00 – 3:00pm and we will be discussing the expectations for the presenters.
- SAC / DSAC Joint Advisory Council Update –
  - Leslie was unable to attend the last meeting. Diana will forward the minutes out. They will include links to the bills that they are watching.
- Announcements and Upcoming Events –
  - George – Medicaid Oregon house bill 2010 may have passed, here is the link to the bill - <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2025R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2010/A-Engrossed>.
  - George – Justice in Aging Webinar 3/11/25 11:00am to 11:45am, Campos et al. v. Kijakazi Settlement Agreement: What SSI Advocates Need to Know. Diana will forward the information.
  - George – OTC card – they are adding items to it.
  - George – non-emergency transportation – OHA wants to bring in Lyft and Uber for medical rides, many are against it as there is no policy to have wheelchair accessible vans. Currently the providers are often late, and appointments get cancelled.
  - George – ONE system committee – the current consent form requires Social Security number and entire birth date. They are trying to revise it to only have the year instead of the whole date.
  - Riah shared the link to their Health Equity Training & Resources page, which is JCC's list of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) - [JEDI Training & Resources Dashboard - Smartsheet.com](https://www.jcc.org/jedi-training-resources).
  - Riah would also like to encourage everyone to keep using their medical benefits, nothing has changed since 2024 yet.
  - Riah also shared that their Jackson Care Connect (JCC) spring conference is coming April 24, 2025 & April 25, 2025, anybody can

- attend. It will be at Bigham Knoll (School House Brewhouse) in Jacksonville. The link for registration and more information will be coming soon.
- Oregon Spinal Cord Injury Connection (OCI) is having a handcycle event 4/19/25 at Dawn Jones Park in Central Point.
  - George will be on KDRV 12 discussing SB 550: Relating to a right to repair consumer equipment.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** – 04:41pm

**NEXT MEETING** – April 7, 2:45 – 4:30

This message is also attached as a PDF file for accommodation purposed. This document will be provided in alternate formats upon request, including but not limited to language other than English, large print, captions, braille, audio file, American Sign Language interpretation. Please contact [APD.ServiceEquityCommunications@odhs.oregon.gov](mailto:APD.ServiceEquityCommunications@odhs.oregon.gov) for alternate format.