

Lewis County Senior Meals Update

February 23, 2021

2:00 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Stamper, Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, County Manager Erik Martin, Nicole Kiddoo, Meja Handlen, Glenda Forga, Becky Butler, Ron Averill, Nora Davis, Carol Brock

Guests: Frank Corbin, Claudia Yaw, Edna Fund

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Colonel Ron Averill said the Lewis County Senior Center has been short-staffed because of COVID-19 contact scares.

Glenda Forga provided updates about the budget. There have not been any hang-ups in funding, but the budget has been recently updated due to additional funding of \$178,000. The Lewis County Senior program received \$200,000 from FEMA funding, and \$100,000 from the Lewis County general fund. She said the group is primarily funded by the thrift store and donations. Glenda estimates \$878,978 is expected in revenue to pay for 2021 expenses. January and February saw a revenue that applied to 2020 as well as a final billing from 2020. Glenda noted the rest of the budget report includes 2021 funding of \$2,853 in contributions and \$11,069 donations. Nutrition supplies cost approximately \$23,302 for January and February. FEMA funding only covers the cost of staff wages through June. She currently has 19 total employees including four at the thrift store and fifteen at the centers. At this time, the FEMA funding pays wages for eight staff members. Glenda said that after June, there would be layoffs of persons working with the Lewis County Seniors program.

Commissioner Stamper asked Nicole Kiddoo if there was other funding available to the Lewis County Seniors and Nicole said the Lewis, Thurston, Area on Aging Agency received additional funding from the Older Americans Act, but she is not aware of any other funding at this time.

Glenda said meals served in December 2020 totaled 15,827 and 13,006 in January 2021. The snow in February did affect deliveries for February. 378 seniors came to areas to pick up meals themselves through the Meals to Trunk program, and 185 meals were delivered to seniors that needed the delivery options.

Colonel Averill believes that when vaccines become available to the senior population, that centers will reopen. At this time, it is hard for the seniors to have the opportunity to receive vaccines. He feels that the Lewis County Seniors can help provide information to or from the seniors to receive vaccines. He would like to collaborate with JP Anderson to help facilitate information or building sites to make the accessibility easier. Glenda said that meal contracts are still under negotiation.

Commissioner Stamper said he had heard news regarding another funding package for COVID relief. Becky Butler said there is a proposed bill according to the NACO website that is in negotiation. Washington State is working with FEMA to distribute funding when it becomes available.

Colonel Averill mentioned there is a program to help assist seniors in filing their taxes. He said there were still several people that had not filed 2019 taxes due to COVID. These services are provided at the Lewis County Senior Center and are available with appointments only to allow for proper social distancing.

Glenda said there was some turmoil that resulted in a change of employment situations at the thrift store. Nora is interim manager and they have had an increase of 35% in sales.

Glenda wanted to show her gratitude. Glenda said she appreciated the help from the former and the current Commissioners, Becky Butler and Meja Handlen. Without their support, they would have been unable to keep the Senior Center running.

Meeting ended 2:35 p.m.