

WAVOAD General Meeting

August 1, 2023,

Hybrid Meeting led by Marty Grisham, WaVOAD President, LDS Charities

In Attendance – In Person

Marty Grisham – LDS Charities, WaVOAD President	Martha Reed – Red Cross
Dave Zablotny – Habitat for Humanity - WaVOAD Secretary	Hongwen Charng – Tzu Chi Foundation
Ray Shjerven - SWWA ELCA - WaVOAD Treasurer	Dave Baylor - Guest
Jim Mahon – Church of Scientology - WaVOAD Member-at-large	Attending Via Zoom
Kathy Bryson – PNW UMC Disaster Response, WaVOAD Vice President	Andrew Chadick - Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle – SAFE Washington, WaVOAD Member-at-large
Dana Bryson – UMCOR Disaster Services	Ann Forrest - Seattle Emergency Communication Hubs
Lisa Arellano – Salvation Army	Allen Scott – Team Rubicon
Kyle Christiansen – Whatcom County LTR – Dir. Client Supt.	Derek Lane – NW Adventist Community Svcs
Her Kait Seet – Tzu Chi Foundation	Nathan Emory – King County EM
Christian Burgess – Vibrant Emotional Health	Chris Aronen – FEMA Region X VAL
Patty Baker – Episcopal Relief & Development	Tom Sharp – King County EM
Cindi Barker – Seattle Emergency Communication Hubs	Quinn Butler – WA State OEM
Shaun Jones – Salvation Army	

Meeting called to order by Marty Grisham for August 1, 2023, at 10:02am

Marty welcomed all those present and those on the Zoom call. He noted this is the first in-person WaVOAD meeting since 2019.

Minutes Review

The minutes from the June 6, 2023, general meeting were presented with no edits. Ray Shjerven moved to accept. Her Kait Seet seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Review

Ray Shjerven shared to following review of the financials:

Segregated Savings	\$5,105.89
Interest earned	\$4.27
Segregated Savings - ending balance	\$5,110.16
Operational Checking	\$21,270.12
Reimbursement to Marty for NVOAD expense	(1799.80)

Operational Checking – ending balance

\$19,470.32

Jim Mahon moved to accept. Dana Bryson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

President's Report/Update on 2024 Mountain West VOAD Meeting

Marty Grisham reported that the Mountain West VOAD Conference will be hosted by WaVOAD in 2024. Kathy Bryson has helped to secure a site – the United Methodist church in Kent, WA. Marty and Kathy have toured the site and Marty noted it will be a great venue for the conference.

The Mountain West VOAD President, Joava Good, had hoped to join today's meeting and visit the conference site following the meeting but was unable to make it.

Marty advised he will work with Kathy on finalizing the site arrangements.

One sponsor has been lined up as a dinner sponsor. We will be looking for additional sponsors and speakers/presenters for the program.

Wildfire update – Marty noted there have been some small “spot” fires around the state but nothing major at this point. Martha Reed added that the Red Cross has set up some spot shelters in Oroville and the Spokane and Yakima areas as needed.

Refugee update – Marty mentioned participation in meetings about potential refugee assistance needs but nothing has transpired at this point.

Report Outs:

Long term Recovery Updates:

Okanogan County LTRG – Carlene Anders was not present to share an update but Dana Bryson shared information he had relating to the Okanogan LTRG. Ne noted that the 8th and 9th rebuilds are nearly complete and are scheduled to be dedicated in September. He noted that 203 open cases will be wrapped up by year end.

Whatcom County LTRG – Kyle Christiansen – Director of Client Support – Reported that World Renew and Habitat for Humanity have been assisting with rebuilding. There is a push on reconstruction efforts before the Fall when volunteer numbers typically decrease. He also noted that they are still working through unmet needs trying to assist some higher income families, without flood insurance, who need assistance.

For Clallam and Skagit County Dave Zabloutny noted that these efforts are coming to a close and this will be the last meeting they will be reported on. He shared final updates on each:

Clallam County – report from Justine Chorley - Clallam County EM – Clallam County is wrapping up unmet needs for the November 2021 Storms. Beyond the 136 households who applied for disaster

assistance, 18 households signed up for unmet needs funding through WA State. Of those 18 households, 11 did not meet the income or other eligibility requirements. Of the remaining 7, 2 were funded 3 dropped out and the remaining 2 households never responded to multiple attempts to contact them. The two households who were funded with grant monies received close to \$12,000 each for a total of around \$25,000 total in the form of reimbursement for work already completed. One of the 11 households who did not qualify was able to get some reimbursement through a referral to a community assistance agency.

Skagit County – report from Lauren Hazen – Red Cross - Over the last year we supported the community with navigating disaster related resources, local community resources, seasonal assistance and direct client assistance through donations and the State IA grant. We had 43 open cases and provided \$227,852.12 in direct client assistance through the State IA Grant.

Guest Presentation

Kyle Christensen – Whatcom County LTRG

Kyle offered a brief overview of his background. He was a volunteer fire fighter for 27 years. He was the Mayor of Sumas, WA from 2018-2021. He was the Whatcom County Flood Recovery Manager in 2022-23 and became the Director of Client Support for the LTRG in 2023.

November 2021 Flood – The ground at the time was extremely saturated. There was no place for the water that resulted from the heavy rains to go. The result was the most devastating flood in over 40 years with over 2,000 homes and businesses sustaining damage.

All emergency services were impacted with city hall and all local fire stations sustaining damage. Fire fighting apparatus was moved and staged elsewhere.

In the early days social media was used in response efforts. There were many offers of help but no central coordination. “Whatcom Strong” was formed by local churches and became the basis for the LTRG. Two donation centers were set up by churches to help provide basic food and necessities and community clean ups were staged to help with muck outs.

Team Rubicon and Samaritan’s Purse provided early support and the Red Cross and Salvation Army were mobilized. UMCOR provided funding for key roles – Reconstruction Manager and Volunteer Coordinator. The Whatcom Community Foundation was a key funding partner. World Renew and Habitat for Humanity continue to support ongoing rebuilding efforts.

Government support has been received from the following:

- Whatcom County – gathered information and performed damage assessments
- WA State – support received from the Governor’s office, Emergency Management, and the State Legislature (state funds supported management and staff roles and helped fund home repairs
- FEMA – Individual Assistance declaration in January 2023 was critical

All government funding has now been distributed.

Lessons Learned:

- Get partners involved ASAP
- Send reps to view damage ASAP
- Encourage participation in Unmet Needs Roundtable
- Invite local elected officials, community leaders to engage with WaVOAD Immediately

The biggest obstacles have been shortage of volunteers, staff funding and material costs.

There was good discussion following Kyle's presentation. A question was asked about whether a COAD would be formed in follow-up to this event. Kyle believes that will be a result.

Quinn Butler talked about the State IA program. He noted funding is needed to support the recovery staff needed to get the recovery efforts moving. He mentioned the goal of having a vote to fund the IA program during the 2024 legislative session and if unsuccessful will try again in 2025. Also working on ways to develop COADs prior to disasters occurring to be able to address disasters more effectively.

Kyle also touched on duplication of benefits and reimbursements and the obstacles and complications this can create.

Member Report Outs

Kathy and Dana Bryson – UMCOR – Have closed out Okanogan and Whatcom County grants. Kathy mentioned she will be part of an NVOAD committee working on preparedness and also noted UMCOR will be working in Guam on a recovery effort.

Ray Shjerven – Lutheran Disaster Relief – Mentioned their restructuring process going on in Chicago. Also noted their focus on climate resiliency.

Christian Burgess – Vibrant Emotional Health – Noted their helpline is available 24x7 and is confidential. They also have a Crisis Emotional Care Team. They will be a sponsor of the Tribal Emergency Conference taking place in mid-August and Christian will be attending the NVOAD mid-year meeting in Washington, DC October 24-26.

Her Kait Seet – Tzu Chi Foundation – They are partnering on a program with Seattle Community College and also partnering with Sound Foundation NW to build four tiny homes that will be donated. They will have a 30-year celebration on September 30.

Cindi Barker – Seattle Emergency Communication HUBS – Cindi shared a poster that was created having to do with medications. She also mentioned a grant from the City of Seattle OEM for planning for climate resistant HUBS.

Patty Baker – Episcopal Relief – Final report completed on heaters and dehumidifiers donated to Whatcom County following the floods. She also noted there are still some restrictions on volunteers.

Martha Reed – Red Cross – As noted earlier, busy with fires/shelters. Small numbers impacted at this time. Also mentioned their “sound the alarm” smoke alarm program in October and their wildfire prevention program taking place in Eastern WA.

Shaun Jones – Salvation Army – Updating their vehicle fleet with five new vehicles – three for deliveries and two for feeding. They have also added a new refrigeration truck. These were all grant funded. Lisa Arellano mentioned their Active Shooter and Disaster Preparation training programs.

Jim Mahon – Church of Scientology – They are participating in a festival in Kent and assisting at the Queen Anne Foodbank and Mary’s Place.

Dave Zablony – Habitat for Humanity – Noted that Habitat is now sending Disaster Corps members to disaster impacted areas including Florida, Kentucky, and Oklahoma where help is requested by local Habitat affiliates.

Next Meeting – Tuesday, October 3, 2023, 10am via zoom

Meeting adjourned by Marty Grisham at 12:17pm.

Respectfully submitted by Dave Zablony, WaVOAD secretary