

WAVOAD General Meeting

June 4, 2024

Meeting led by Kathy Bryson, WaVOAD President, UMCOR PNW United Methodist Disaster Response

In Attendance

Kathy Bryson – UMCOR/PNW United Methodist Church Disaster Response - WaVOAD President	Christian Burgess – Vibrant Emotional Health
Marty Grisham – LDS Charities - WaVOAD Past President	Tom Link – St Vincent DePaul
Christie Merrill – Red Cross – WaVOAD Vice President	Jennifer Thomas – Spokane Region - LTRG
Ray Shjerven - SWWA ELCA - WaVOAD Treasurer	Jill Watson – City of Seattle
Andrew Chadick – Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle – SAFE Washington – WaVOAD Member-at-large	Carlene Anders – Disaster Leadership Team
Jim Mahon – Church of Scientology – WaVOAD Member-at-large	Tory Stine – Medical Teams International
Jim Cooper – United Way PNW – WaVOAD Member-at-large	Michael Ervick – Team Rubicon - Everett
Dave Zablorny – Habitat for Humanity - WaVOAD Secretary	Cindi Barker – Seattle HUBS
Kyle Christiansen – Whatcom County LTR – Dir. Client Supt.	Patty Baker – Episcopal Diocese of Olympia
Lisa Arellano – Salvation Army	Kate Urwin – Washington 211
Brian Brozovic – Operation BBQ Relief	Her Kait Seet – Tzu Chi Foundation
Emily Goertz - Mennonite Disaster Services	

Meeting called to order by Kathy Bryson for June 4, 2024, at 10:02am

Minutes Review

The minutes from the April 2, 2024, general meeting were presented. Tom Link moved to accept the minutes. Marty Grisham seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Review

Ray Shjerven shared to following review of the financials:

Segregated Savings	beginning balance	\$5125.25	
	interest earned	\$ 6.43	March, April, May
	new balance	\$5131.68	

Checking Account	beginning balance	\$20,560.12	
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Income:	5 dues payments	\$1920.00	
	Mountain West VOAD	\$2351.90	
	Balance	\$23,512.02	
Expenditures	MWVOAD	(4,497.37)	Conference expenses
	NVOAD	(3,994.31)	Travel, scholarships, auction basket
New Balance		\$15,020.14	

Christie Merrill moved to accept the Treasurer’s report. Tom Link seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

President’s Report: Kathy Bryson

Conference Recaps:

Mountain West VOAD Conference:

- 117 total participants representing about 25 organizations
- Keynotes on Maui recovery and FEMA presentations were well received
- Next year’s host will be Idaho

National VOAD Conference:

- Over 850 attendees and more than 50 exhibitors
- Community service project assembling heat kits
- Next year’s conference will be in Louisville, KY from May 19-22

Kathy noted that an important takeaway from attendees at both conferences was that the opportunity to engage and connect with others in person is a major benefit of attending. She also noted that WaVOAD funded a scholarship to Lauren Hazen from Salvation Army to attend the NVOAD Conference.

Christian Burgess mentioned that the NVOAD would like to hold its Fall members meeting in the Northwest and is looking for a venue. Christian shared the details and asked anyone who may be interested to contact him.

Updates:

Kathy mentioned the Grays Harbor Emergency Preparedness Expo that will be held on July 20.

She also noted that our FEMA partners have asked that if our organizations are engaged in disaster response on a national level (addressing recent storms and tornado activity) that we should let them know. You can email to FEMA-VAL@FEMA.dhs.gov

Ray Shjerven mentioned that in his follow up for member dues he found that Bill Gillespie from SARVAC had passed away in March. Bill was a long time WaVOAD member. There will be a celebration of life in his honor on July 28 at the Lacey Community Center at noon. Ray asked for a moment of silence.

New Member Election:

Kathy noted that Medical Teams International (MTI) has applied to WaVOAD for membership as a Partner organization. She introduced Tori Stine who provided a brief overview of the organization.

Tori has been a nurse for 33 years and has been with MTI for about three and a half years. She is currently the Disaster Response Program Manager. MTI is a humanitarian organization founded 33 years ago. Its main office is in Portland, OR. They primarily partner with health-based organizations. Before 2011 most of their work was done overseas. They provide medical and dental support through their Care and Connect mobile health program and in the future will focus on health risk assessments. Over the past five years, they have provided services in 21 Oregon counties and 23 Washington counties.

Ray Shjerven made a motion to add MTI as a Partner organization. Patty Baker seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Report Outs:

Long term Recovery Updates:

Okanogan County LTRG – Carlene Anders reported that work is nearly complete with only three cases remaining open from the 2020 fires and they hope to complete those by August. She again shared about the 10-year Reflection and Appreciation event to be held 7/11-7/14. Invitations will be sent out soon but anyone who was involved in the efforts in any way is invited.

Carlene said they are also assisting with development of the Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP).

Whatcom County LTRG – Kyle Christiansen – Director of Client Support – Kyle reported that they have been approved for State IA funding for another year. He noted that there were 650 client cases opened after the November 2021 floods. Most required minimal assistance. They still need help to finish interior work on three homes (mostly general carpentry type work).

Spokane County Wildfire Update – Jennifer Thomas – Executive Director – Spokane County LTRG – Jennifer has been on the board since the Fall of 2023 and became Director in March of 2024. Over 500 structures were impacted by the August 2023 fires.

She said they have permits for eight new homes and are ready to break ground on three in Medical Lake and five in Elk.

The Salvation Army has the contract for Disaster Case Management. There are two DCMs being trained for each area. The Unmet Needs Roundtable has begun weekly meetings to review cases. 43 cases remain open of nearly 250 that were initially opened.

Lisa Arellano from Salvation Army noted that they are dealing with a lot of trauma.

Guest Presentation – Matthew Dehr – Meteorologist – Dept. of Natural Resources – DNR Preparations and Outlook for 2024 Fire Season

Matthew is currently the Lead Wildfire Meteorologist. They are currently in the process of hiring a second meteorologist and expanding staff.

Matthew talked about the upcoming fire season in the Northwest – focusing on comparison to 2023, the current wildfire fuel status, the temperature and precipitation outlook, the fire potential outlook and the wildfire smoke review. https://www.wavoad.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/WAVOAD_24.pdf

Fire season 2023 began with dry conditions in WA but was in fairly significant drought conditions by the end of the season. There was some relief from precipitation, but we are starting the 2024 season in moderate drought conditions. A big driver of drought conditions is the diminished snowpack with some areas down 50%. Therefore, wildfire season is starting a bit earlier than normal.

Over the past 60 days temperatures have been cooler than normal and precipitation has been normal but east of the Cascades has been dry.

The current fuel status shows that plants are pretty stressed out, especially in the North Cascades and also along the coast. Fuel moisture is about average around the state.

The El Nino pattern is fading, and it looks like La Nina pattern will emerge this summer. The longer-term impact is typically a snowier winter season.

The temperature and precipitation outlook improves later in fire season with a better chance of increased precipitation.

The National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) outlook projects an increased fire potential in NW WA beginning in July and Eastern WA is projected to have a normal (but active) fire season.

Matthew recommended the WA Smoke Blog for information on wildfire smoke conditions.

Member Report Outs

Ray Shjerven – Lutheran Disaster Services – Have been providing support to weather disasters in Kentucky. They have a FT person on site there.

Carlene Anders – Disaster Leadership Team (DLT) – Have been doing mentoring work in Lahaina and in Spokane region. They have done some visioning sessions in Lahaina. They have been invited to Ohio to assist in response efforts and doing other Long Term Recovery work nationally. Also shared they are finalizing their NVOAD application. Working on finalizing a National LTR organization.

Jim Mahon – Church of Scientology - They have been helping in Iowa and in Texas. Jim also shared a WA State wildfire preparation resource with the group – [ready.gov.wildfires](https://ready.gov/wildfires)

Kathy Bryson – United Methodist Disaster Response – Kathy shared that UMCOR has been responding to the tornados in the Midwest and in Texas. Put a call out for volunteers.

Marty Grisham – LDS Charities – Have provided support for severe weather events in the Midwest and also involved in emergency relief efforts in Africa. Focus on water and schools.

Lisa Arellano – Salvation Army – Lisa mentioned the Lauren Hazen appreciated the WaVOAD scholarship she received for the NVOAD conference. Lisa shared that 40% of NVOAD attendees were first time attendees. She also shared about available training on Disaster Training and wildfire Prep (1 hour) and Active Shooter training (3 hours). The Salvation Army has been active in Texas, the Midwest and Hawaii. Lisa also mentioned the PSPS Plans in place (Power Safety Power Shutoff) in WA where power could be shut off in the event of a wildfire.

Brian Brozovic – Operation BBQ Relief – Shared that they have had recent deployments in the Midwest.

Her Kait Seet – Tzu Chi – They have provided support in California on wildfires and also shared about a wellness event they have done in the Chinese community.

Government Partners:

Jill Watson – City of Seattle Human Services – No major projects at the moment. Preparing for the heat and wildfire season coming up. Recommended resources at [Heat.gov](https://heat.gov).

Next Meeting – Tuesday, August 6, 2024, 10am via zoom

Meeting adjourned by Kathy Bryson at 11:45 am.

Respectfully submitted by Dave Zablony, WaVOAD secretary