

**MASON COUNTY LEOFF DISABILITY BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES  
MASON COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS  
March 4, 2015**

**Members Present:** Mike Longan – Firefighter Representative; Nick Patterson – Law Enforcement Representative - Chair; Sylvia Florez-Milsom – Member at Large; Randy Neatherlin – Mason County Commissioner; Mike Olsen – City of Shelton Commissioner; Diane Zoren, Secretary. Several LEOFF 1 members were also present.

*Chairperson Nick Patterson called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.*

**Approval of Minutes**

*Mike Olsen/Longan moved and seconded to approve the meeting minutes of February 10, 2015. Motion carried.*

**Old Business:**

Continued Discussion of Long Term Care

Nick Patterson brought up the reference to an assessment agency to evaluate the member's home health care needs and asked if that is allowed by RCW. In the past, the LEOFF Board has asked a medical doctor.

Mike Longan stated that in the RCW, the LEOFF Board will set minimum health standards and does not state its limits.

Cmmr. Neatherlin stated the question is how much to set as a reasonable amount. He leans towards being very lenient so the member's needs are met.

Sylvia noted the RCW talks about minimum reasonable charges.

Nick stated that he has always been under the understanding that LEOFF 1 benefits take care of what his medical insurance does not take care of and that's what the members understand.

Cmmr. Neatherlin doesn't believe that any member believes they can choose whatever facility they want and it would be completely paid for.

Longan asked why a limit is being set when nobody has abused the system. He believes there is no need for this policy.

Sylvia stated that the LEOFF Board is not telling a doctor what to do but believes there are people who could take advantage if no policy is established.

Discussion of what is a reasonable charge.

Nick stated the Board has used past practice as the guideline for benefits. Nick does not support adopting a policy for long term care.

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Cmmr. Neatherlin wants to define the reasonable rate as an average from Mason, Kitsap and Thurston counties with an additional percentage allowed, such as 25%. He supports a semi-private room unless otherwise prescribed by the doctor.

Sylvia believes the Board would support what level of care is doctor ordered but she doesn't understand why Randy is suggesting an additional 25%.

Cmmr. Olsen stated he is willing to adopt the policies as proposed.

### Public Comment

Cecil McClain stated he has always understood the coverage for reasonable and necessary care and it's up to the doctor.

Mrs. McClain asked how a policy would overlap with City's LTC policy.

LEOFF policy would serve as secondary to any other applicable insurance and benefits.

Cmmr. Neatherlin compared setting this policy as similar to setting the dental policy.

Ed Haefliger stated the dental policy is an extra coverage above what is required by the RCW and he believes this policy is different than that. His opinion is the Board's job is to protect the RCW and skilled nursing is a covered benefit under the RCW and that the Board is trying to administer something that is not legal. He stated the members have relied on this coverage and that could have legal ramifications if it's limited.

Cmmr. Neatherlin stated he appreciates Ed's opinion but Ed is using the same arguments when they were establishing the dental policy. Randy wants to establish what is reasonable and necessary.

Doug Haskins commented that members have a fear of setting a schedule. He likes the word reasonable and appreciates what the Board has provided.

Dave Evander noted that the proposed policy refers to a 2013 rate; he asked how to determine the average rate for skilled nursing. He agrees with an average of Mason, Thurston & Kitsap Counties as a reasonable rate. He wants the reasonable rate set for the area the member is located. Members have to have faith in the system.

Sylvia stated she doesn't believe any LEOFF Board member would deny coverage due to an emergency. They are looking at coverage based on member's choices.

Cmmr. Neatherlin then proposed to base the average on the three counties (Mason, Thurston & Kitsap) or average of location they reside, whichever is greater, as long as medically necessary.

Nick believes the Board has right to determine what is reasonable.

Cmmr. Neatherlin asked that before adopting any policy they request legal review.

Longan stands by his opinion there is no limit.

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Randy/Sylvia moved and seconded to forward the proposed long term care policies to the Prosecuting Attorney and change the wording to reflect the average of semi private room in the three counties (Mason, Thurston & Kitsap) or the county of residence of the member's choice. All coverages require a doctor recommendation.

Longan interjected there is a LEOFF 1 Board member who said LEOFF 1 doesn't exist and another member who said spouse benefits were reduced. For these reasons, he believes they are biased and asked if they can vote.

Chair Patterson ruled they are sitting members and have the right to vote.

Motion carried; 3 in favor; 2 opposed.

### **New Business:**

#### Executive Session - Review of Bills

3:25 p.m. The Board met in Executive Session for 5 minutes to review submitted bills. Diane added the request for hearing aids from a member. He provided two estimates, per the policy.

Randy/Olsen moved & seconded to approve bills and the lower bill for hearing aids. Motion carried.

### **Calendar:**

Next LEOFF meeting will be April 7.

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

### **Adjourn:**

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Zoren  
LEOFF Board Secretary

Approved:

Randy Neatherlin  
Acting - Chair