



**STATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Thursday, September 7, 2023**

STATE COUNCIL MEMBERS			
Marie Brand, Withlacoochee, Chair	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	VACANT, West Central	Present <input type="checkbox"/>
Raymond "Sully" Sullivan, Northwest	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Donna Holden, South Central	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Marshall Kapp, Panhandle, Vice Chair	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Michael Alexander, Southwest	Present <input type="checkbox"/>
Sharon Lauter, North Central	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Paul Wilson, Broward	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tim O'Keefe, East Central	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Louis L.I. Grossman, North Dade	Present <input type="checkbox"/>
Donna Nagel, Brevard	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Maria Cristina Clark, S Dade & FL Keys	Present <input type="checkbox"/>
Diane Mongelli, First Coast South	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Margaret Riccardi, Palm Beach	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Linda Howard, First Coast	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Valerie Nubi-Collins, Treasure Coast	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vacant, Mid & South Pinellas	Present <input type="checkbox"/>	Mary Darling, At-Large Member	Present <input type="checkbox"/>
Jane Horowitz, Pasco & North Pinellas	Present <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

OTHER OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM REPRESENTATIVES	
Terri Cantrell	State Ombudsman
Diandra Taylor	West Region Ombudsman Manager
Jo Ann Quiles	East Region Ombudsman Manager
Renee Harkins	Legal Advocate, Central Office
Alice Terry	Government Operations Consultant II / Central
Audra Peoples	Staff Director / Public Relations Coordinator
Angela Andrews	State Council Liaison / Legal Assistant/Central
Lynn Penley	West Central District Ombudsman Manager
Samantha Kotz	South Central District Ombudsman Manager
Judy Carlson	West Coast District Ombudsman Manager
Alicia Salinas	South Dade District Ombudsman Manager
Tracie Rayfield	First Coast District Ombudsman Manager
Gloria Freyre	Broward District Ombudsman Manager
Sheila Mitchell	Palm Beach District Ombudsman Manager
Lisa Dale	First Coast South District Ombudsman Manager
Damaris Ortiz	West Central
Debbie Sitowski	West Coast
Edilia Diaz	South Dade
GUESTS	
District 18 with Bob Cochrane	



1. Meeting called to order – Chair, Marie Brand
  - a. Chair Brand called meeting to order at 10:02 am
  - b. Hoping to take care of our residents.

One correction... Present : Margaret Riccardi. Not present at last meeting.

Vote to approve.

Move Marshall Kapp, Second Maria Cristina Clark.

Terri Cantrell:

Working with Guidehouse. Diandra Taylor is officially our new Trainer. We are adding employees. There are 37. Recommended an additional 30. Our LBR asked for 6. Our DOEA Secretary will advocate for our program for this request.

The LTCOP wrapped up our policies and procedures, working with former State Ombudsman and consultant Jamie Freschi. She will come to our training in Orlando. The educational conference will be 25 through 27 for staff members.

2024 will be the year for retraining all our volunteers. We have a new focus. Our goal is to serve more seniors.

As far as our volunteers and the new districts: If you serve facilities in Leon co., then you can stay with the District Manager. If your facilities align under that district manager, then you will stay there. It does not matter where you live. We are undergoing lots of changes, and we appreciate your patience. We are here to serve seniors and we could lose some amazing volunteers, but we are here to serve more seniors.

Maria Cristina Clark:

How are we serving the seniors, if we are losing volunteers? We don't have enough to go around. We don't have Spanish advertising. How is this mandatory stuff?

Terri Cantrell:



You are here. You are here to serve the seniors. My hope is that people understand that the changes are for moving forward and making progress. Being a volunteer is in my heart. I am doing my best to be on board. I am only talking about outliers. I am going to let Audra jump in on the recruitment.

Audra Peoples:

We hired an agency (Moore Agency). We have English and Spanish slots. We can only buy in Miami at night. It would cost \$100,000 to advertise in just Miami. In just 2 weeks, we have over 350 new volunteer requests. I have special meetings to meet with Moore again. The campaign has been overwhelmingly successful. So much so, that we had to put a pause on it.

Maria Cristina Clark:

Will we have an input.

Audra Peoples:

Volunteers have already had input. Miami is having another strategy.

Maria Cristina Clark:

Can we listen in? It's not working. A few here and a few there. Who handles Facebook? I see a lot of people saying that they would be interested in volunteering.

Audra Peoples:

I handle Facebook, but I'm also speaking with the agency I spoke about. They place the ads. The ads generate volunteer leads.

Terri Cantrell:

There are a lot of things that are still being worked on. We are getting a new data entry program which will be huge. It will free up staff time to be able to go into the facilities more frequently instead of re-entering things. We are trying to get more laptops. I.T. is asking about unsecured information that might be getting out. Our DOEA General Counsel is looking at this strongly.

We are rolling out Guidehouse recommendations in phases. You have not seen all of it yet. Some recommendations we are not going to do. We need to add more staff to make sure we have people in roles to implement this stuff is first and foremost. We are definitely doing more



than just 10%. The huge influx of volunteers needs to be trained. This is why it is good that we have Diandra. The staff raises are still being worked on. Because you don't see it yet, does not mean I am not all in, defending this program.

Margaret Riccardi:

What is included in our hours? Is it 40 hours?

JoAnn Quiles:

It has been reduced to 15 hours.

Margaret:

Fifteen hours includes what? In the facilities? The new people really need to know.

Terri Cantrell:

We have been doing a deep dive into the (policies and procedures) P&P. JoAnn can better explain the hours. To some volunteers, 15 hours is a lot. All volunteers are different, and we want to be more flexible when it comes to them.

JoAnn Quiles:

Fifteen hours is minimum requirement. There are some volunteers that do double or triple that. But this is a minimum. We are talking to Diandra – different volunteers have different needs.

Terri Cantrell:

Bottom line, we are rolling out this new training with Diandra.

Margaret Riccardi:

The laptops – This is one reason that we all need ONE system. We all had the same templates. All went to the same place. I don't know how much it would require to do that.

Terri Cantrell:

There are so many things that I am not updating you all on because we are getting into the weeds. We are working on making sure all are on the same page. This is a challenge. I saw Bob send a news clipping of a newscaster interviewing the mayor in front of a facility.



The volunteer that went out a month prior had said it was “all good”. There is no way all of the things alleged in that facility happened within only a month. It is a challenge to make sure that every volunteer is following every single protocol. We all have to be on the same page. The forms all need to be named the same, etc. Just because I don’t come on here and say “hey – we are changing all these forms” does not mean we are not doing it.

Margaret:

That did answer my question about the hours. I understand that we all do things a little differently.

Terri Cantrell:

We have to protect residents’ information. I wanted to get 20 volunteers a laptop and it opened up a line of questioning from IT. We have opened ourselves up for scrutiny. These are the kind of things that are going on in the background. I know the staff are out there working hard to make this program work. The good fight is happening here.

Lewis Grossman:

I am so inspired with Terri’s enthusiasm. It’s coming in waves, and it makes me feel so inspired. I am learning so much. You mentioned a call of a facility. Was this district 13?

Terri Cantrell:

Edilia is in the loop.

Mary Cristina Clark:

I was not aware of that.

Gloria Freye:

It was not in your area. We can discuss this later.

Terri Cantrell:

I got some pushback on the budget review, and I responded quickly with an email. Seniors are really forgotten about. The seniors that are forgotten about are the ones that we need to make sure we are looking out for and helping them. I know past ombudsmen have done a good job, but a lot of what I read about the way things were done in the past does not make sense at all. I



want to make sure that I change the things that don't make sense. We are raising the bar – not lowering it. I want you to know that we are trying here. I want you to know that Seniors are first.

EVERYONE seen on this screen is passionate about this program. For the staff on this call – those program changes – there was going to be yet another HR delay – with the positions. I wish Cindy, Charlotte, Rita were on this call.

We are at 10:52 and ready for workgroup updates.

Marie Brand: We have not had any workgroup meetings. Are there any plans to bring the recruitment tool back?

Audra Peoples:

I know about that template. Marketing is always evolving and changing. I have sent out emails for RRR meetings but have not heard anything.

Margaret Riccardi:

Thanks to Diandra. We had a meeting. We discussed 10-hour field training and upcoming ombudsmen interview questions. Also, Coordinating with Mentors. As you know we are mentors for the new ombudsmen. Diane brought up some new training policies. We spoke about the meetings some of our volunteers miss. How important it is to be in these meetings, because of the insight the meetings bring into things we do when caring for the seniors.

JoAnn Quiles:

Diandra took some notes that day.

Diandra Taylor:

Yes. I will be sending that out. 3 assessments, 3 cases – out in the field. I think it will be smoother for the volunteers. We covered a lot. These things will be rolling out shortly.

Renee Harkins:



Like a lot of folks on here, I appreciate all of you on the call and all the volunteers. I want to say thank you for all you do and for working alongside one another. I went out to some facilities with Marshall Kapp in August 12. The advocacy meeting was Aug 23. We discussed Personal Needs allowance.

I have subscribed to other rule making notices by other agencies that are doing any rulemaking that might affect our program. Another item as far as session – there are no bills filed at this time. The budget meetings are the only thing going on now. There are no committee meetings that are going on now.

After this meeting, I will send you the link. You have until Sept 11 to make comments on the NH Staffing Rule. The group of State Ombudsmen are collectively sending a response. If you want to comment as a citizen – outside the program – you are welcome to. The group discussed having the director of Legislative Affairs speak at one of our meetings.

Louis – I want to add – I don't know if there was information sent but want everyone to know that the Legislative and Advocacy groups were rolled into one.

Jane H.:

Yesterday a few of us went to the Assisted Living Association. There were 3 legislators that were there and met. Diandra was there. They listed their agenda. They are advocating to Increase PSA for ALF residents. Lynn Hearn drafted a memo. If we were going to pursue this then we need to speak with the AFF and get more detail and see if it is an organization we can partner with.

They found that if they give the residents a notice – this helps the resident move to the top of the list for financial assistance.

It appears that the AFF has more emphasis on the lower end / less fortunate people with less income.

Terri Cantrell:

I will talk about this with Renee. Did you send me the contact (AFF)?

Jane H.: I can find the name.



Diandra: I have this information. I can send it to you, Terri. The DOMs want their local legislators to know what is going on. There may be more incoming calls asking us to visit.

Jane H: There are other forums in Miami next week.

Tim with RRR – I did not receive an email.

Audra Peoples: I will send a text message from now on.

Judy: Leg mtg. In the last St Council meeting, we had requested to know what the official procedure for inviting them to our meetings. Never heard anything.

Diandra Taylor:

The senators that were at our meeting yesterday, they want to be involved. They want to hear about everything that is going on. Some didn't even know the difference between a NH and an ALF.

Marshall Kapp:

Something happened with a council member. Volunteer appreciation month. A leg member showed up to say "thank you for volunteering". We did not subject them to any in depth information, but it was a good idea to get names and connect, and foster a relationship in a non-threatening way. Perhaps give them an opportunity to know when volunteers are going to be recognized and invite them to these meetings.

Lynn Penley: I agree with Marshall. We invited them to recognitions. We would also send our invitations to all our open meetings.

Valerie Nubi-Collins:

There used to be a General Letter when it came to Volunteer Week. We had a letter that was scripted from the DOM. We would go to the local office or to the police with the letter.

JoAnn Quiles:

The advantage to having the letter, it makes us all on the same page as a program. I will find that.





## NEW BUSINESS

Lynn Penley:

Our council in the last meeting made a recommendation. I have no state rep right now so I am acting as that position. The goal here is the lack of participation of voting of residents. Other actions – their right to vote. One thing we were impressed with – there is an option for supervised voting – the Super of Elections staff will actually come to the facility and assist someone to vote. The other thing is that they will actually bring the ballot to them. They leave it up to the facility admin to get this done. So we wanted to get the word out that we may need to get involved in assisting with this.

Terri Cantrell:

How do we roll this out?

Diandra Taylor:

We would change our assessment form to reflect whatever is going on that we were looking to address.

JoAnn Quiles:

We used to use the information off the NORC website, that we can provide to the facilities.

Sharon Lauter:

The residents that she is familiar with did the voting and they loved it. It was a very good program. We could promote it.

Tracie Reyfield:

My only suggestion with the voting. We need to include the Resident council president instead of going through the administrator – because of the high turnover.

Marshall Kapp:

In 2022, In doing visits and/ or assessments, leading up to the election, we would ask the administrator, what were they doing in the effort to assist the residents for voting. One thing we would ask of the people who had the ability to respond, have they had anyone help them with the upcoming voting / election.



Jane H.: The activities director could be involved as well. How can we partner with the local offices. Have they sent anything to the ALF's and Nursing Homes?

Lynn Penley:

The person we had at our meeting was the Supervisor of Elections Outreach Manager. I could see us partnering with the Supervisor of Elections in our area.

OLD BUSINESS:

Marie Brand:

AHCA and Ombudsman Program collaboration. Invitations to district meetings? I mentioned to an AHCA person the other day.

JoAnn Quiles: That would be on the district manager to invite them. It is only quarterly – that is all they can do.

Audra Peoples: I was at Judy's meeting, Tracie's and Lisa – there was an AHCA rep at each one of these.

Terri Cantrell: If you don't have the relationship, try to reach out and invite them. I want to leave this up to each DOM individually.

Jo Ann Quiles: A good way to start the relationship, respond to them (messages from AHCA) on a regular basis.

Deborah: I have scheduled with AHCA a few times only to have them cancel at the last minute each time. It really depends on the management.

Marie Brand - Anything new happening?

There have been 100% visitations this quarter.

Margaret – Motion to Adjourn; Marshall – Second. Adjourned 12:07.