

Kern County Commission On Aging

Yolanda Prado, Chairperson
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REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING MINUTES

July 18, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

FLAG SALUTE & MOMENT OF SILENCE:

The flag salute was completed and a moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL OF COMMISSION MEMBERS

*(*Chairperson, **Vice Chairperson, *** Parliamentarian)*

Commission Members Present:

Susan Bodnar, Doris Duquette, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty, Jan Lemucchi, **Stephanie Lynch, Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, ***Judy Snyder, and Bill Wright

Excused Absences: Gloria Brown, Norma Jackson, Roland Maier, Sandy Morris, and Yee Vue

A QUORUM WAS PRESENT

Honorary Commission Members Present:

None.

Aging and Adult Services Staff Present:

Laura M. Juarez – Senior Office Services Specialist

Guests:

Leslie Devitt, Jens Blum, Jackie Lopez, Laura Rodriguez, Catherine Vasquez, and Joseph Anderson

CORRESPONDENCE:

Thank you letters will be sent to the Elder Abuse Prevention Conference speakers.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

None.

Commissioner Comments :

1. Chair Prado thanked Laura Juarez for providing a current COA member phone list. She asked that all Commissioners review their information and let her know if anything needs to be updated. She also asked that Commissioners share the COA member recruitment flyer with anyone who might be interested in serving on the COA. Chair Prado congratulated Jeremy Oliver and staff for hosting the first virtual Elder Abuse Prevention Conference.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for June 20, 2022 Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved with a few revisions to pages 5 and 6.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)
Grasty/Snyder/Duquette, Prado, Lynch, L. Oswald, R. Oswald/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF COA Bylaws Revised 07/06/2022** – The revised COA Bylaws were approved to send to County Counsel for their review.
(M/S/A/O) Lynch/Lemucchi/None/None - Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Josh Dhanens

Not in attendance.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Wendy Jewett

Wendy Jewett reported Kern County recently returned to high-risk status and they are recommending everyone, regardless of their vaccine status, to wear facemasks inside. There have been increases in COVID cases. Most cases have been mild. There are 89 hospitalizations and 12 ICU patients. Cases are expected to peak late July to early August. Many positive cases are not being reported because people are taking the home tests and not reporting if they have a positive test. The home tests do have an expiration date so that is something you should pay attention to. The home tests are not 100% accurate if they are showing negative. Positive tests are always positive. Anyone can request a home test online at www.covid.gov. She also reminded everyone of the importance of heat safety. People over 65 years, or persons who have heart problems, high blood pressure, poor circulation, or are taking certain medications are more apt to their bodies not handling the heat well. Their body temperature control system can get overloaded and not able to cool down. Please stay inside in air conditioning as much as possible, and drink more water, unless your Doctor has instructed you otherwise. Pay attention to how you're feeling (i.e. sudden headaches, excessive sweating, and confusion, etc.). There are currently three cases of Monkey Pox in

Kern County. The risk to the public is extremely low. There is a vaccine available but Public Health is not offering it. The Flu vaccine should be available at the end of August. Flu season usually begins in October.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Jens Blum

Jens Blum reported the Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) is a free one-year program for seniors 60 years and older. They meet clients at their home to try to help them with focus support, therapy if interested, and help link them up with resources in our community. The Department is still working 100% in the office. They have been doing more community outreach to get more clients who need their services. There is a new national suicide hotline number of 9-8-8.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes submitted her report via email and was read by Chair Prado. The new asset limits for the Aged and Disabled Programs started on July 1, 2022, and currently, the tentative end to the Public Health Emergency has been pushed out to October 2022, meaning that they will continue to push our Medi-Cal Renewal dates forward and take no negative action on our cases until then.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Not in attendance.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Catherine Vasquez

Catherine Vasquez shared information about their Home Access Grant program, which allows accessibility for individuals who are low income and have a permanent disability. They can include modifications to build a ramp, take out a tub and install a walk-in shower, add grab bars, widen doorways, etc. They also have the Home Improvement Loan program for homeowners to apply to have repairs to their home. There is no cost or monthly payments but it is a loan secured as a lien on the property that is paid when they move or sell the property. They can have repairs such as painting, plumbing, roof, etc. Kandi Mosqueda is the primary contact for both of these programs and you can reach her at (661) 862-5024.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Laura Rodriguez

Laura Rodriguez shared information about the 2022 ADA Conference on July 26, 2022 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Bakersfield. Admission costs \$55.00. You can RSVP by July 22, 2022, or can sign up at the door.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Leslie Devitt was this month's guest speaker prior to this meeting, where she shared information about Crime Prevention for Seniors. She also reported on the 2022 Elder trends: stolen vehicles, family violence, workplace violence, and homicides, with family violence being the most common trend. The Victim Witness Program moved over to 1415 Truxtun Avenue on the 7th floor. Her new phone number is (661) 868-7218.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

The Senate continues to work on the budget that will be submitted in September. Bill language for prescription drug reform as released last week that includes authorizing Medicare to negotiate prescription drug prices, expands Low Income Subsidy to people with incomes between 135% and 150% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and capping all part D enrollees' out-of-pocket costs at \$2,000 starting in 2025.

The Department of Health & Human Services has extended the Public Health Emergency (PHE) until October of this year. Plan is to notify all 60 days prior to ending the PHE.

STATE

State Budget approved by Governor on June 30, 20

Middle Class Tax Refund

Governor and legislature established and may see up to \$1050 return if you filed a joint tax return with a dependent and made less than \$150,000 for tax year 2020. Without a dependent, it would be \$700. Tiers change as you exceed \$150,000 to \$250K with a payment amount of \$500 and \$250K-500K receiving \$400 by end of October to January of 2023. Single filers may expect \$350, \$250, \$200 respectively without dependents.

Housing & Homelessness

The Budget includes the continued historic investments in our Housing and Homelessness programs. These one-time funds will allow the Department to continue to support children, families, former youth, people with disabilities and older adults. The budget provides \$55 million in operating subsidies for Board and Care Facilities. This is a one-time investment will assist settings that provide housing and assistance for at-risk Californians, many of whom are receiving Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP).

The Budget includes \$150 million for an SSP Payment increase in January 2023, which will increase the grants for all SSI/SSP and Cash Assistance Program for Immigrant recipients. Equates to about \$39/month increase.

CARE COURTS

Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment (CARE) Court. Allocates 39.5 million to new Care Court system that will compel people living on the streets with severe mental illness into treatment.

IHSS

For the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, the Budget includes \$34.4 million total funds ongoing to establish a permanent back-up provider system for IHSS recipients to avoid disruptions to caregiving due to an immediate need or emergency. Provides a \$2 wage differential for backup providers.

APS

For the Adult Protective Services Program (APS), the Budget includes \$4.6 million ongoing for the continuation of the APS training program.

Department of Aging

Modernizing the Older Californians Act—\$59.3 million General Fund to provide one-time funding to pilot restoring various local aging programs such as Community Based Support Programs, Family and Caregiver Support, Aging in Place, and Senior Volunteer Development.

Locally

The County Budget is in process of being enacted with an evening session on July 25, 2022. The Department has submitted a proposed budget and will await the outcome of the budget process to proceed.

The Department continues to seek additional staff to fill vacant positions and will be expanding into an additional suite 5375 formerly Residential Design space. Will be placing Protective Services staff in this new location.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

BYLAWS COMMITTEE – L. Oswald, K. Grasty, B. Goodlow

No report.

CALIFORNIA SENIOR LEGISLATURE (CSL) – J. Lemucchi, Vacant

No report.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Laura Juarez reported on behalf of the committee. There were no new appointments, no reappointments. No resignations. There are two expired terms: Gloria Brown and Linda Oswald. Laura sent letters for their reappointments. There are no terms soon to expire. We have three vacancies: CSL Senior Assemblymember, District 1, and District 5. No new applications were received.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – K. Grasty, S. Lynch

No report.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – B. Goodlow, K. Grasty, J. Lemucchi, S. Lynch, L. Oswald, Y. Prado, J. Snyder

Chair Prado reported the committee met July 6, 2022. They discussed today's agenda and in-person meetings. We will be meeting via Zoom until it is safer to meet in person again.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) ADVISORY – J. Snyder

Commissioner Snyder reported the next meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

LONG TERM CARE – S. Bodnar, D. Duquette, D. Gonzalez, N. Jackson, R. Oswald

Commissioner Gonzalez shared information about their digital pet program. The Ombudsman program will be working with Georgianna Armstrong in October 2022 to have a disaster preparedness program (fire) to present to Long-Term Care facilities, focusing on the skilled nursing facilities. There is increased zones now in facilities. The Red Zones are COVID positive residents. We are assisting residents and family with visitation rights and making sure the facilities continue to respect visiting rights. If any residents and family are having issues with in-person visitation due to COVID, have them contact the Ombudsman.

MARKETING & ORIENTATION COMMITTEE – Y. Prado, D. Duquette, S. Lynch, S. Morris, J. Snyder

Chair Prado reported the committee needs to meet to discuss orientation for new COA Commissioner, Yee Vue, and to discuss the upcoming Senior Celebration. Commissioner Snyder shared that Pacifica Senior Living will be preparing a dessert bar for the celebration and we have already made contact with some new vendors.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – G. Brown; N. Jackson

No report.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow

Commissioner Goodlow reported they are working on sending certificates to the senior nutrition volunteers. The Bakersfield Senior Center does not have a plaque for their certificate. She is working on getting the names of volunteers for Tehachapi and Lake Isabella. The Bakersfield Senior Center was closed today due to a power outage. They will be reopened tomorrow. Chair Prado added that she, Commissioner Lynch, Commissioner Grasty, and Commissioner Snyder would help distribute the certificates to the local senior centers. Commissioner Grasty reported all senior centers received plaques for their certificate but not sure what is happening to them. We will look into purchasing another plaque for Bakersfield Senior Center.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

Commissioner Duquette reported she sent two birthday cards in July and two birthday cards in August.

THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING COUNSEL OF CALIFORNIA (TACC) – Wright, Vacant (Alternate)

Laura Juarez reported for Commissioner Wright that he received information from TACC and will be going to a meeting in Sacramento on September 6th for a meeting.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado, J. Lemucchi

Commissioner Lemucchi reported the committee met and discussed the upgrade of the public transit system buses going from diesel to electric and the challenges they have with that. The next meeting will be in August to discuss the unmet needs.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

No report.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- A checklist was created to help Commissioners prepare for a meeting with their appointing entity. Chair Prado is requesting that these meetings take place within the next six months (September 2022 through February 2023).
- Senior Celebration is scheduled for October 22, 2022 from 1-4 p.m. at the Rasmussen Senior Center.
- Smile Amazon – As a reminder, please continue to use “Smile Amazon” when making purchases through Amazon, and select “Kern County Commission on Aging” as your charity organization of choice. A small percentage of proceeds will go to the COA Foundation. Be sure to click “Support Kern County Commission on Aging” each time you log in.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, September 7, 2022 (dark in August) 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, September 19, 2022 (dark in August) 1:00 p.m. Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.

ADJOURNMENT - The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary