

Kern County Commission On Aging

Yolanda Prado, Chairperson
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**REGULAR COMMISSION ON AGING MEETING
MINUTES**

September 19, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Prado called the meeting to order at 1:04 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:

Gloria Brown, Doris Duquette, Devora Gonzalez, Barbara Goodlow, Kris Grasty, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, **Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, ***Judy Snyder, and Bill Wright

Excused Absences: Susan Bodnar and Sandy Morris

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, Janelle Capra, Lourdes Garcia, Sally Westlake, Peggy Langels, Josh Dhanens, Gayla Hughes, and Kandi Mosqueda

CORRESPONDENCE:

A thank you letter will be sent to CAPK thanking them for packing 882 32-pound boxes of food for seniors in Delano.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

None.

Commissioner Comments :

1. Commissioner Lynch reported that in July 2022, she participated with other volunteers in the food boxing event with CAPK. In 3 hours, they boxed 882 boxes of food to give to the seniors in Delano.
2. Chair Prado reported that she and four other Commissioners attended the viewing for former Commissioner, Jon Johnston. Later that week, his wife and former Commissioner, Toni Johnston, passed away.
3. Commissioner Brown is requesting the meeting packets be printed and mailed to her. If any Commissioner would like a printed packet, they are to call Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052. She will leave the packet at reception for pickup. If the packet needs to be mailed, please let her know and allow enough time for mailing.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for July 18, 2022 Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved with a revision to page 4.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)
Grasty/Lynch/None/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF REVISED COA BYLAWS:** The revised COA Bylaws were reviewed and approved by County Counsel. A motion was made to approve the COA Bylaws revised 07.06.2022 as prepared.
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

Josh Dhanens reported about the Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act, a new law that expands VA health care and benefits to Gulf War and post-9/11 era veterans exposed to toxic exposures and expands to Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange. They have added new presumptive conditions and locations. If veterans and surviving spouses applied and their claims were denied for these benefits in the past, it's always worth going back to the VA to try again because things are always changing. Since COVID VA have expanded the clients, they have been able to help. Everyone is encouraged to call the office first at 661-868-7300. In 2019, they served an average of 42 clients/day. In 2022, they average serving 60 clients/day. They are now able to send representatives out to assisted living facilities and home visits. They have gone out to Oildale, Frazier Park, Cal City, and Ridgecrest. On September 21, 2022, Assemblymember Rudy Salas' office held an hour-

long Senior Scam Stoppers presentation at the Bakersfield Senior Center. Sally Westlake, of the California Department of Financial Protection & Innovation, will be one of the speakers. Josh is working with Jeremy Oliver to look out for "pension poachers" who scam veterans and their spouses by charging them to complete paperwork for pensions (Aid and Attendance). This is a free service provided by the Veterans Services Department and people should not be paying to apply for VA benefits. Commissioner Gonzalez warned that veterans surviving spouses are receiving bills for services the veterans received while in a long-term care facility, not knowing a bill was accruing. Veterans need to be careful with the paperwork/contracts they sign. Commissioner Wright added that if you are a Power of Attorney for an individual, don't sign anything personally, instead, sign as their Attorney in Fact so that you are not responsible for their bill. Chair Prado shared an article that was in the Bakersfield Californian on September 11, 2022, about Josh Dhanens.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Wendy Jewett

Chair Prado reported the following on behalf of Wendy Jewett: Monkeypox is a rare disease that is caused by infection with the Monkeypox virus. Monkeypox is of public health concern because the illness is similar to smallpox and can be spread from infected humans, animals, and materials contaminated with the virus. Monkeypox is less transmissible and usually less severe than smallpox. Monkeypox was first identified in 1958 and occurs primarily in Central and West African countries. Historically Monkeypox cases have occurred in the U.S. rarely and mostly related to international travel or importation of animals. There is a recent significant increase in reported cases where Monkeypox is not commonly seen, including in Europe, Canada, the United States and California. While it's good to stay alert about any emerging public health outbreaks, the current risk of getting Monkeypox in the general public is very low. There are 16 confirmed cases in Kern County as of 9/16/2022. Her full report that includes information and tips about older adults and falling will be emailed to all Commissioners.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Lourdes Garcia reported September is Suicide Prevention and Recovery month. They have events throughout the month. They have an upcoming virtual Multi-County Suicide Prevention Summit on September 30, 2022. They will have various presentations with the goal to create more awareness. They have started having more in-person outreach for the Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) at the Richard Prado Senior Center, Retirement communities, and other areas, bringing education and awareness of their services. They are collaborating with Veteran Services, Independent Living Center, and Aging and Adult Services.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Gayla Hughes reported the public health emergency that was scheduled to end in October 2022 has been pushed out to January 2023 so their Medi-Cal renewals will continue to be on hold. They will not take any negative actions on their clients at this time. The asset limit was increased in July 2022.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Peggy Langels reported orientations and workshops are available online. Orientations are also available in person on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. by appointment. Job Squad is on Facebook Live every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. Veteran's Job Club is virtual on Tuesdays at 2:00 p.m. SER Jobs for Progress may be moving into offices on the first floor of the Southeast AJCC office. On September 23, 2022, Bolthouse Farms will have recruitment from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Olive Drive office. The Café 1600 is open for lunch at the Southeast AJCC office. We will have staff at the Veteran's Standdown on October 13, 2022.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Kandi Mosqueda

Kandi Mosqueda shared they have funding for their Home Access Grant program, which is to make accessibility improvements to the home for low-income persons who have a permanent disability. They can widen doorways, put in a ramp with handrails, higher toilets, grab bars, or replace a tub with an accessible shower. They must live within County limits. It is available to renters, with the homeowner's approval. Referrals can be made to Kandi Mosqueda at (661) 862-5024.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – TBD

Not in attendance.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Leslie Devitt reported on elder abuse trends in 2022. Outreach continues at Senior Centers within Kern County. Some of the presentations offered include Crime Prevention for Seniors, Elder Abuse, Elder Financial Abuse, Victim Services for Elders, Community Resources for Elders, Top 10 Senior Scams, and Restraining & Protection Orders. There will be a presentation at the Richard Prado Center September 20, 2022. If a senior center would like a presentation, she would be happy to come to the Senior Center to provide information and brochures. The DEAR Newsletter is a monthly information article that was created when outreach and presentations were nearly impossible to conduct to do the COVID Pandemic. The DEAR Newsletter features a front and back article pertinent to elders, their caretakers, staff of agencies that provide services to elders and family. Each month the distribution list grows. We are just about to complete our full second year with these information packed newsletters. The first newsletter went out October 2020. September's Issues includes information about "What is Elder Abuse?" October's Issues will be on "Medicare Enrollment". They would like to start reaching out to Financial Institutions in our community to provide trainings on what needs to be reported. Collaboration is an important part of fostering to the needs of people, but especially our most vulnerable population, elders. Due to different partner agencies having different roles and pieces of the puzzle, the collaboration efforts assist in making Kern County a safer place for our elder community to call home. Laura Juarez will share the full report with all Commissioners.

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

The Inflation Reduction Act in part:

1. Expands Medicare benefits: free vaccines (2023), \$35/month insulin (2023) and caps out-of-pocket drug costs to an estimated \$4,000 or less in 2024 and settling at \$2,000 in 2025
2. Lowers energy bills: cuts energy bills by \$500 to \$1,000 per year
3. Makes historic climate investment: reduces carbon emissions by roughly 40% by 2030
4. Lowers health care costs: saves the average enrollee \$800/year in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace, allows Medicare to negotiate 100 drugs over the next decade, and requires drug companies to rebate back price increases higher than inflation

STATE

They are awaiting clarification on some of recent Bills passed.

Statewide IHSS Back-Up Provider System (BUPS)

The permanent BUPS will become effective October 1, 2022. Public Authority will establish a list of enrolled providers who are eligible and able to provide emergency back-up services for recipients whose regular providers are unable to provide their IHSS. IHSS recipient would be eligible for a temporary back-up provider if they have an urgent need for back-up supportive services related to personal care services that cannot be met by an existing provider or the urgent need cannot be met because the recipient is transitioning to home-based care and does not yet have an identified provider. Recipient and/or their authorized representative should be advised that the BUPS is intended to be used for temporary assistance that is capped at 80 hours (or 160 hours for severely impaired recipients) and they will need to hire a permanent provider. Back-up providers will be paid \$2.00 per hour more than current locally negotiated wage rate. The BUPS shall be operated by Public Authority during normal county operating hours Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Locally

The Department continues to make efforts to fill vacant positions and participated in the County Career Expo held on Saturday September 17, 2022. The Department was able to hold interviews for Extra Help candidates and the event was well attended with some good prospective new hires to AASD.

IHSS Career Pathways Program Training Payment Incentive Claims (\$3,500)

Providers are eligible for IHSS Program Career Pathways Program training incentive payments when they have completed at least 15 hours of training within any of the five Career Pathways:

- Adult Education
- General Health/Safety

- Cognitive Impairment Behavioral Health
- Complex Physical Care Needs
- Transition to Home/Community Living

September 23, 2022 is Senior Day at Kern County Fairgrounds. The Department has rebranded with a new logo to match with County logo and groundless and boundless campaign.

The Department is preparing for Medicare Open Enrollment period October 15, 2022 to December 7, 2022.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

No report.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reported this year's Annual Session will be held virtually on October 25 – 27 due to the Capitol begin closed for renovations. Last year they had 10 CSL proposals picked up by the State Legislature. Of the 10 proposals, eight were actually Billed. Right now, we have six Bills on the Governor's desk. Current CSL members will have the opportunity to attend "A Day of Action: California for All Ages & Abilities" in Sacramento on September 20, 2022. Commissioner Snyder will be sworn in as CSL Assemblymember the week of October 25, 2022.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Roland Maier reported District 2 reappointed Gloria Brown. Her new term expires 06/17/2024. District 4 reappointed Linda Oswald. Her new term expires 06/17/2024. There were no new appointments, no new resignations, and no expired terms. Jan Lemucchi's term will expire 10/01/2022 but she was re-elected to serve for another 4 years. We have four vacancies: CSL Senior Assemblymember, District 1, District 3, 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 September 7, 2022. They discussed recruitment of Commissioners. Please encourage interested persons to apply. There was an article in the Bakersfield Californian in July sharing the Delano water bills had information about Meals on Wheels. This month's DEAR Newsletter had great information on elder abuse. Commissioners can start planning to meet with their appointees and then report back to the Commission. You can use the talking points checklist as a guide.

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

Commissioner Snyder reported the committee met September 15, 2022. IHSS is offering further training for care providers. They are also working on having backup providers. She also shared information about the Senior Celebration, and Laura Juarez shared information about Senior Day at the Kern County Fair. The next meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom.

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

Commissioner Gonzalez shared they are looking into billboards for advertising about Ombudsman services and how to reach them. They are starting to put some up now throughout Bakersfield, Delano, and Shafter. They purchased more digital pets. This program has been very successful with getting clients who haven't talked in months, to talk. They have a private funder next month who is looking into they can continue donating so they can hire a Family Counsel Specialist that would work with Family Counsel that is starting in Kern County. They would also help with the marketing campaign.

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

Commissioner Snyder reported the committee met last week. They are pulling together all of the details. All letters went out to vendors and we have had a good response. We have more than a dozen businesses interested. We have a grand prize from Chukchansi Gold Resort and Casino, which is a certificate for a free one-night stay, \$100 spa gift certificate, and \$50 dinner certificate. We will meet with Pacifica and Desiree at Rasmussen to discuss further details. Capacity is 130 people so everyone who attends must RSVP. The meeting will meet again Thursday via Zoom. Commissioner R. Oswald is working on getting more gift cards. We are asking all Commissioners to donate a gift card. We will ask a couple of vendors to help call BINGO. Pacifica is working on a dessert bar. Bakersfield Senior Placement is donating water. There will also be coffee. Laura Juarez is working on counting the bags we have to give away, and will work on creating the flyer. Commissioner Gonzalez suggested having some "fun facts" at the table for the seniors to read in between BINGO games.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – G. Brown; N. Jackson

No report.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow

Commissioner Goodlow reported the Bakersfield Senior Center is back in their cafeteria after the flood due to a broken pipe. They continue to have their exercise and diabetes classes. Everything is going well. She will get the senior nutrition volunteer certificates as soon as Lilly gets her the names. The Veterans Standdown will be held October 13, 2022. She will be there to represent the American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary. IF you have anything you would like to donate, she would be happy to accept them.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

No report.

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

William Wright reported Report from TACC meeting on September 6, 2022:

1. Aging & Disability Resource Connection Overview and Update
 - a. Presented by Carroll De Andreis and Wilson Tam
 - b. <https://www.sfhsa.org/about/departments/departments-disability-and-aging-services-das>
 - c. <https://www.sfhsa.org/contact/locations/das-benefits-and-resources-hub>
 - d. I have also attached the slide presentation from the meeting
2. Medi-Cal Overview and Update
 - a. Presented by Anastasia Dodson, Deputy Director, Office of Medicare Innovation and Integration
 - b. Elimination of assets means Testing
 - c. Cal-AIM
 - d. Cal MediConnect transitioning into D-SNP) and how changes will impact consumers
 - e. IMPORTANT! Beginning in October 2022 a notice will be sent to all Medi-Medi recipients in Kern County that beginning in January 2023 any person currently enrolled as a Medi-Medi plan will be automatically enrolled into a Medi-cal managed care plan if they do not respond to the notice that is sent in October 2022.
 - f. Anastasia Dodson, the Deputy Director, has said she would provide a presentation for our COA if we wanted one. I have her contact information if someone would like to follow up or I can as well.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado, J. Lemucchi

Chair Prado reported she was not able to attend the Transportation meeting, but they discussed the unmet needs for Kern County.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

No report.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- Senior Day at the Kern County Fair is Friday, September 24, 2022. Gates open at 9 a.m. Admission and parking is free for seniors 62+ years up to 4 p.m. Jeremy Oliver and Yolanda Prado will speak during Opening Ceremonies. Commissioners will again not serve as greeters this year.
- The 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.
- Chair Prado thanked the COA Foundation for their donation to the Richard Prado Senior Center for their “Welcome Back” Gala Fundraiser. There was 140 seniors in attendance. Seniors were dressed up and danced the night away.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, October 5, 2022 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, October 17, 2022 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 2:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary