

Kern County Commission On Aging

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

October 17, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Video Meeting via Zoom

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair Lynch called the meeting to order at 1:00 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, Norma Jackson, Jan Lemucchi, **Stephanie Lynch, Roland Maier, Sandy Morris, Jeremy Oliver, Linda Oswald, Roger Oswald, *Yolanda Prado, ***Judy Snyder, and Bill Wright

Excused Absences: Gloria Brown, Devora Gonzalez, and Yolanda Prado

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, Joseph Anderson, Jose Lopez, Tammy Hartsch, and Kandi Mosqueda

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

COMMENTS OF GENERAL INTEREST:

Public Comments:

None.

Commissioner Comments :

None.

ACTION ITEMS

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** for September 19, 2022 Regular Commission on Aging meeting were approved as prepared.
Motion/Second/Abstained/Opposed (M/S/A/O)
Grasty/Lemucchi/Bodnar/None - Motion carried.
- **APPROVAL OF “CELEBRATE OUR CENTENARIANS”:** A motion was made to recognize and celebrate seniors in our community who reach the 100-year mark. The Sunshine Committee would take the lead on this program.
M/S/A/O – Lemucchi/Snyder/None/None - Motion carried.

SERVICE PROVIDER PRESENTATIONS:

GENERAL SERVICES - PARKS AND RECREATION – Leslie Wallace

Not in attendance.

VETERANS SERVICE – Jose Lopez

Jose Lopez reported they are reaching out to all corners of Kern County and helping veterans as necessary by phone, home calls, and walk-in services. They just had a successful Veterans Stand Down at Stramler Park. They also had a Stand Down in Ridgecrest. They had a great turnout at both events.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES – Wendy Jewett

Not in attendance.

KERN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY SERVICES – Lourdes Garcia

Vice-Chair Lynch gave the following report on behalf of Lourdes Garcia, who was not able to attend today's meeting. Kern BHRS is continuing to reach out to our community to offer and provide services. They will be going through some changes with their electronic health record in the near future with the goal of being able to reduce time focus on billing and progress notes and focusing more of their time on providing services to clients. They continue to share information about their Volunteer Senior Outreach Program (VSOP) to encourage referrals for services, as well as those interested in volunteering. They will be partnering up with Bakersfield College to have some interns who will be able to help with providing social calls to their senior's program. If you have any questions you are always welcome to contact them at 66-868-5021.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS) – Gayla Hughes

Not in attendance.

EMPLOYERS' TRAINING RESOURCE (ETR) – Peggy Langels

Not in attendance.

PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES – Kandi Mosqueda

Kandi Mosqueda reported that they have a shortage of contractors. If you know of any contractors who are interested in working on their two programs, please have them call her to find out how they can get started. They only have two contractors currently. Kandi shared they still 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 remove a bathtub and put in a walk-in shower. They must live within the County jurisdiction. Rental property and owner-occupied property are both qualified for this program. Referrals can be made to Kandi Mosqueda at (661) 862-5024.

INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER (ILC) – Tammy Hartsch

Tammy Hartsch provided an update at ILC. Effective September 16, ILC reopened up their doors to the public 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Their office doors were closed due to COVID pandemic, but they were servicing all their consumers and the community electronically, via Zoom, email, or by phone calls. They are working with Aging and Adult Services re: the Aging Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) grant. They are implementing some processes and procedures on their website to tailor towards the resource tools that should be available to anyone who accesses their website. They're also attending and having a lot of their staff go out to multiple outreaches in the community to educate everyone about ADRC, a no wrong door system. They can provide individuals who have multiple needs with services that they need without sending them to multiple locations for those services.

VICTIM WITNESS PROGRAM – Leslie Devitt

Leslie Devitt reported the following:

Outreach & Presentations

Senior Centers

Outreach is available for Senior Centers within Kern County This is a perfect venue to reach seniors with various outreach efforts and presentations letting them know about services with Victim Services as well as other outreach education opportunities.

DEAR Newsletter

Continues to expand readership monthly. Upcoming issues include:

- **October Issue:** *Medicare Enrollment*
- **November Issue:** *Top 10 Senior Scams*
- **December Issue:** *Senior Holiday Safety*

Elder Trends

- **Family Violence:** **Down 32% from Q2 (41) to Q3 –(28)**

- **Workplace Violence:** **Same from Q2 to Q3 (6 each Q)**
- **Stolen Vehicles:** **Down 15% from Q2 (14) to Q3 (12)**
- **Homicides:** **Down 75% from Q2 (4) to Q3 (1)**
 - *Currently have 10 Open Elder Homicides in various stages of the court process*
 - *All are family or acquaintances*

STAFF PRESENTATIONS

AASD SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION REPORT-

INTERIM DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Jeremy Oliver

Jeremy Oliver reported the following:

FEDERAL

Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for approximately 70 million Americans will increase 8.7 percent in 2023, the Social Security Administration announced. On average, Social Security benefits will increase by more than \$140 per month starting in January 2023. We should also see a decrease in Medicare premiums. Social Security and SSI beneficiaries are normally notified by mail starting in early December about their new benefit amount. The fastest way to find out new benefit amounts is to access their personal my Social Security account to view the COLA notice online.

STATE

The Middle-Class Tax Refund (MCTR) is a one-time payment to provide relief to Californians. If you are eligible, you will automatically receive a payment. Payments are expected to be issued between October 2022 and January 2023.

The Governor signed an additional 1.4 billion to support residential electric utility arrearages through the Department of Community Services and Development to mitigate the outstanding debt leading to increased utility rate by year end.

Medicare Open Enrollment period is October 15 to December 7. The Department's HICAP program is scheduling appointments and assisting clients with navigating Medicare options. Persons who are Medicare and Medi-Cal will be moved to Managed care plans under Medi-Cal unless they opt out. Through Medi-Medi plans, members will receive:

- Integrated materials, such as a single health plan card and one phone number to call for both Medicare and Medi-Cal benefits, leading to reduced administrative burden.
- Care coordination, including a unified Health Risk Assessment, a person-centered individualized care plan, and an interdisciplinary care team that includes their Medicare, Medi-Cal, and carved-out service providers.
- Continuity of care so they can continue to see their provider for up to 12 months in most cases, even if they are not in the health plan's provider network.

Medi-Medi plans will be initially offered in seven counties – Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Mateo, and Santa Clara – by the managed care plans that currently offer Cal MediConnect. During the 2022 Medicare open enrollment period, dual eligible members will have the option to voluntarily join a Medi-Medi plan, with a start date of January 1, 2023, if they live in one of the seven counties. Medi-Medi plans will be available to dual eligible members statewide by 2026.

Locally

The Public Health Emergency is anticipated to be lifted in January and the State is advising that nutrition programs return to normal operations within 6 months of the lift. The Department anticipates by February 2023 that we will return to normal nutrition program operations. The Department continues to work on plans for additional funding that will allow for purchase of equipment for the Nutrition program under the Home and Community Based Services funding allocated. Additionally, funding through Intergenerational Activities is being explored and will bring additional activities at the congregate meal sites.

Back Up Provider System (BUPS) has been implemented in IHSS Public Authority to allow for access to a backup provider during specific emergencies.

The Department will continue to expand the Digital Divide program through Access to Technology funding provided through CA Department of Aging.

Adult Protective Services continues to see an increase in referrals and is in the process of hiring additional staff. The Department as a whole is seeking to build out more workspaces to keep up with staffing expansions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

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

Commissioner Grasty reported the COA Bylaws would be going before the Board of Supervisors for approval on November 8, 2022. Once approved, Laura will make hard copies of the Bylaws for all Commissioners to pick up.

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

Commissioner Lemucchi reported their Annual Session would be October 25-27 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There are 16 proposals that they will be voting on. Commissioner Snyder will be sworn in and will become an active CSL member.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT – S. Morris, R. Maier

Commissioner Morris reported Jan Lemucchi was re-elected for another 4-year term as CSL Senior Senator. Her new term expires 10/01/2026. Judy Snyder was elected as the CSL Assemblymember. Her new term expires 10/01/2026. There were no resignations, no expired terms, and no soon to be expired terms. We have four vacancies: District 1, District 3, and District 5, and NOR (replacing Judy Snyder). New applications were received from Sherry Gomez and Mae Linder. Other applications received in 2022 are from Misty Newton and Tawny Rocha.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – K. Grasty, S. Lynch

No report.

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

Vice-Chair Lynch reported the committee met October 5, 2022. Chair Prado was excused absence from this meeting. They discussed today's agenda, Celebrating our Centurions, and the need to increase visibility and get people interested in becoming Commissioners. There was a lengthy discussion about the upcoming Senior Celebration.

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

No report.

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

No report.

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

No report.

NOMINATION COMMITTEE – G. Brown; N. Jackson

No report.

SENIOR CENTER ADVISORY – B. Goodlow

No report.

SUNSHINE COMMITTEE – D. Duquette

No report.

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

No report.

TRANSPORTATION – Y. Prado, J. Lemucchi

Commissioner Lemucchi reported their October Transportation meeting at KernCOG was canceled and will be rescheduled for November.

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION – G. Brown; R. Maier

No report.

INFORMATION ITEMS –

- **The Senior Celebration** - Scheduled for October 22, 2022 from 1-4 p.m. at the Rasmussen Senior Center. Everything is ready to go for BINGO. We will have a lot of door prizes and desserts. Setup begins at 11:30 a.m. Commissioners are asked to arrive at 11:30 a.m. to help get everything ready. Rasmussen will provide coffee, creamer and sugar. Commissioner L. Oswald will decorate. We received a lot of sponsors for this event and raised \$3,500. Jeremy has 65 door prizes (sheets, towels, and throw blankets) donated by IKEA. Eagle Mountain donated an \$850 gift basket.

Chukchansi also donated a grand prize. The vendors will donate gift baskets for BINGO prizes. All Commissioners are asked to donate a \$25 gift card. We will be playing 10 BINGO games. Commissioner Lemucchi and Commissioner Bodnar regret that they will not be able to attend the event.

- **Ethics Training** – The next Ethics Training offered by County Counsel is November 17, 2022, at 3 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. If you are due, please attend or take the training online and provide a copy of your certificate to Laura Juarez.
- **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.
- **Christmas for Seniors** - Commissioner Morris announced that due to personal medical issues, the Christmas for Seniors will not take place this year. She is hoping to regroup and start fresh in 2023.

NEXT MEETINGS

EXECUTIVE MEETING	REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, November 2, 2022 1:30 pm Via Zoom If interested in attending via Zoom, please contact Laura Juarez at 661-868-1052.	Monday, November 21, 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 1:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Oliver
Secretary

JO/lj